SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS

FOR THE

UNINSTRUCTED;

NOT LESS PROPER

For the Use of Infirmary PATIENTS,

THAN FOR

The UNINSTRUCTED in all CONDITIONS.

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My Heart's Desire, and Prayer to GOD *is, that they might be saved.* ROM. X. 1.
The meek *will He guide in Judgment; and the* meek *will He teach his Way.* PSAL. XXV. 9.

THE TENTH EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed by CHARLES RIVINGTON,
For JOHN RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEREAS Objections may be made to the *more minute* Explanations annexed to ſome of theſe DIRECTIONS, it ſhould always be remembered, that a *Traveller* inquiring after a Road, to which He is an abſolute Stranger, will receive from a ſkilful *Director*, ſuch Information, as to another already acquainted with the Way, would appear tedious and ſuperfluous: Yet the Stranger's Attention to the ſeveral Particulars will *only be neceſſary*, till by Uſe the Road becomes familiar to Him, and He will then find himſelf able to proceed without them.—In like Manner, the *Explanations here given of the* DIRECTIONS are intended for ſuch, as being utterly unacquainted with the Ways of Religion and Piety, are ſuppoſed to be ſetting out upon a new Courſe. Some of them likewiſe are of a greater Length, that they may lie within the Apprehenſion of the loweſt Capacities; ſuch for Inſtance are the Inſtructions concerning Prayer; —eſpecially ejaculatory Prayer, of which they ſuppoſe the Reader totally ignorant.—HABIT will render many of *theſe* no longer neceſſary: And, it is well known how far *that alone*, will, by Degrees, render thoſe Things, not only eaſy, but natural, in which we *at firſt* apprehended great Difficulty.

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SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS

FOR THE

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CONDESCEND *to Men of low Eſtate*, is a Precept our great MASTER has taught us, by *his own* Example, as well as by his *Apoſtle*, Rom. xii. 16. And I have *endeavoured* to act upon this benevolent Principle, in thus ſupplying the Poor and Uninſtructed with SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS, for the *daily* Conduct of a *real* Chriſtian's Life; and though I have added *Explanations* more *familiar*, and more *minute*, than might be *neceſſary* for thoſe of a *higher* Rank, and *better* Education, yet the Subſtance of them may, I hope, be uſeful to many others;—and I perſuade myſelf, no wiſe Readers will deſpiſe what is Matter of *univerſal* Concern, becauſe it is *particularly* calculated for the Uſe of thoſe who may, in many Reſpects, be inferior to Themſelves.

DIRECTION I.

Conſider that Faith, (or Belief *) in Jeſus Chriſt, is that Corner Stone upon which all your Hopes of Salvation, and Succeſs in your religious Duties muſt neceſſarily be founded.

WHEN I am exhorting you to Acts of religious Worſhip, you muſt not imagine, that I am inviting you to be *a mere Formaliſt*, and to reſt upon the *Deed*

* By a *Belief in Jeſus Chriſt*, is meant what the Apoſtle calls "*Believing with the Heart*," Rom. ix. 10. that is, ſuch a lively Perſuaſion of the Power and Grace of Chriſt, and of our very great Need of *his* Favour, as engages us to receive *him* under all his

Deed done: No,—I invite you to come as a Believer, or *a real Christian*, without which you should dread to appear in the Presence of GOD, "*for our God is a consuming Fire.*" "CHRIST is the Way, the Truth "and the Life; and there is no other Name given among "Men, whereby we must be saved:—He that *believes* in "HIM, out of his Belly (as the Scripture expresses it) "shall flow Rivers of the Water of Life; and HE that "*believes not* on HIM shall not see Life, but remains "under the Wrath of God."

And as all our Hope of Salvation is dependent on a lively Faith in Christ, so is all our Success in our religious Duties. Examine yourself therefore most strictly, whether you have indeed a true Faith, and ask yourself seriously, whether, above all Things, you desire Union and Communion with CHRIST? Whether you long to be delivered from the *Power*, as well as from the *Guilt* of Sin? Whether Faith works by Love, not only to GOD and CHRIST, but to your Fellow-Christians? Whether you endeavour to make the Love of GOD your Principle, his Word your Rule, and his Glory your End in all your Actions? Whether you strive to add to your Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Brotherly Kindness; and to Brotherly Kindness, Charity?—If these Things be in you and abound, they will be sure Signs of a lively Faith; but without you have them in some Measure, you are not purged from your old Corruptions.

Offices, *viz.* as our Prophet, our Priest, and our King, that we may obtain the Salvation which *he* has *promised*, and in the Way which *he* has appointed in his Gospel.---And remember it is in *this* Sense, *Belief* (or *Faith*) is to be understood, when the *whole* Stress of our being saved is laid upon it.---Compare the following Texts: "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved*; *And they said*, BE-"LIEVE *in the Lord Jesus Christ*," Acts xvi. 30, 31.---"*And this is* "*his Commandment, that we should* BELIEVE *in the Name of his* "*Son Jesus Christ, and* LOVE *one another.*" John iii. 23.

Not

Not that He, who finds himself at present utterly destitute of divine Grace, has any Reason to despair; for the Ground of Faith is the *free Promise* of God made to such Sinners (not yet believing) that they, *believing in Christ*, and *forsaking their Sins*, shall be pardoned: Tho' Faith and Repentance are not in themselves *the Cause* of Pardon, (for *the Cause* is the Mercy of God and the Merits of Christ) but they are *the Means*, without which it can never be obtained: Thus opening our Eyes is no *Cause* of Vision, but it is the *Means* without which we can never see. If we repent not, our Sins shall not be forgiven; if we believe not in Christ, we shall not have everlasting Life; if we abhor not our past Sins, we cannot be said to sincerely repent of them, nor can we justly hope that they will be forgiven.—Christ freely pardons all who accept his Invitation, and by Faith we pray to Him that we may not only freely be PARDONED, but SANCTIFIED likewise.—He grossly deceives himself, who imagines that God will grant Him a *Pardon*, and a Permission to continue in wilful Sin.—A Change to Holiness in his Mind and Affections, and the Consequences of that in his future Conduct, is to him the Evidence of that saving Grace, which has been freely bestowed on him by Christ, to cure his Sin-sick Soul.

And here let me, once for all, give you *two* most important CAUTIONS, which I must intreat you to bear in Mind, not only whenever you use this little Treatise, but during the whole Course of your Life, in order to prevent your running into either of those *opposite Extremes*, which alas! too naturally flow "*from* "*a Zeal without Knowledge*;" and are equally dangerous, and subversive of true Christianity. The Want of Attention to these two Cautions has greatly distracted some, and misled other pious and sincere Christians.

The *first Caution* is, that you by no Means admit a Thought tending to the Opinion, *that Faith in Christ, and the Atonement made by him* (*on which* alone *our Hopes of Salvation are fixed*) *may be ever so understood, as if you were* thereby *freed from the Necessity of Obedience to all*

God's Commands. The second is, *that you always retain an equal Abhorrence of the false Supposition, that Obedience, on your Part, can in any Degree be meritorious.*

As to the *first*, I must observe, that such a Supposition would indeed totally destroy the Fundamentals of Religion; make practical Godliness of no Signification, and open a Door to all Manner of Licentiousness.—Let us not deceive ourselves: God has redeemed us by the Death of Christ, that we might be a peculiar People to himself, zealous of good Works. He has lent us Talents *, and will call us to an Account for the Use and Improvement of them.—Real and vital Holiness is inseparably connected with a living Faith. It is an *essential* and very *distinguished* Part of the Salvation procured by Jesus Christ, who died not only to purchase our Pardon by his Blood; but He ascended likewise on High, that He might lead Captivity Captive, give Gifts to Men, and send his Holy Spirit to restore our fallen Nature to that Image and Resemblance of the Divine Nature, wherein consists the Happiness of the Angels in Heaven; and by which Resemblance alone, we can be prepared to enjoy it with them.

I shall endeavour to illustrate this very important Truth by the following Comparison, which I have placed in opposite Columns, that it may *more clearly* be apprehended by common Readers.

Suppose some wretched Malefactor condemned for his Crimes, to suffer an ignominious Death.

Of what Importance would a PARDON be to such a one, if, at the same Time, he was languishing in the last State of a Consumption, or under a Complication of Diseases, for which he knew NO CURE?

Suppose likewise some miserable Sinner condemned for his Transgression, to suffer eternal Torments.

Of what Importance would a PARDON be to such a one, if he was still under the Power of his deadly Lusts, the accursed Sickness of the Mind, for which he knew NO CURE?—And which Lusts, as they pre-

* See Matth. xxv. 15.

—And

—And which Diſeaſes, as they prevent his Body from receiving its natural Nouriſhment, muſt inevitably and ſpeedily bring him to the Grave.

But could he obtain a PARDON by the Hand of a Phyſician, who, at the ſame Time, would bring, as a ſure Remedy, ſome ſovereign Medicine to operate powerfully upon him, till his drooping Nature was revived, and the Cure performed:

Then a PARDON would *indeed* avail, and he would have true Reaſon to rejoice for ſo complete a Deliverance, becauſe, by efficacious Medicines, he would be reſtored to that Health of Body, which would enable him to enjoy the Society of his Fellow-Creatures.

vent his Soul from receiving its ſpiritual Nouriſhment, muſt inevitably and ſpeedily bring him to Deſtruction.

But could he obtain a PARDON from the Hand of Chriſt, who, at the ſame Time, would bring, as a Remedy, the Holy Spirit, to operate continually upon him, till the New Man was raiſed in him, and he had attained an utter Abhorrence of Sin, and a Delight to do the Will of God:

Then a PARDON would *indeed* avail, and he would have true Reaſon to rejoice for ſo complete a Deliverance; becauſe, by the conſtant Operations of the Holy Spirit, he would be reſtored to vital Holineſs, that Health of Soul, which would enable him to enjoy the Society of the Bleſſed.

Happy it is for us (and Oh that we were but ſufficiently ſenſible of the ineſtimable Bleſſing) that polluted as we are, we have a Phyſician in our Judge, able to PARDON our Sins, and to HEAL our diſtempered Souls.—Let every deſponding Sinner then * attend for his Conſolation, to our Saviour's Call, "† Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt." "Remember that he is the Fountain ‡ opend for Sin and "Uncleanneſs; thither come therefore and waſh away "your Sins, calling upon the Name of the Lord.—Go

* Eph. v. 14. † Matt. xi. 28. ‡ Zech. xiii. 1.

" boldly to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain " Mercy, and find Grace to help you in Time of Need."

My *second* Caution is, that *you always retain an equal Abhorrence of the falſe Suppoſition, that Obedience on your Part can be in any Degree meritorious.*—This moſt abſurd and arrogant Suppoſition, I ſhould think, could never enter into a Mind endued with human Reaſon, and conſcious of human Infirmities.—It appears ſo ſhocking to *my* Apprehenſion, that I charitably hope and believe that *few*, if *any*, really hold this Tenet of SELF-SUFFICIENCY, whatever may be ſuppoſed. It will be difficult, perhaps, to produce even one, who will dare to avow it, without ſuch Qualification or Reſtriction as may ſerve, upon Occaſion, to explain it away; which, by the by, is no uncommon Artifice in Diſputes on ſuch Subjects. —That *Church*, whereof I am a Member, leaves no Room in her public Offices, for a Suppoſition of any ſuch Tenet. Every Prayer in our Liturgy (or Book of Common Prayer) is preſented to God in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, purſuant to the Declaration of Scripture, " *No Man cometh to the Father but by me**— " *Whatſoever ye ſhall aſk the Father in my Name, he will give it you*†."—Shall *we* then preſume to take Delight *in our own Worth*, when we are not judged worthy ‡ ſo much as even to *aſk Pardon* for our Sins, without the Mediation and Interceſſion of the Son of God? — *Two* Things are abſolutely neceſſary to conſtitute a Work *meritorious*, namely, that it is wholly our own, and that He for whom we perform it, wants it on his own Ac-

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* See John xiv. 6. † See John xvi. 23.

‡ *See the Collect for the twelfth* Sunday *after* Trinity; *which may be uſed at any Time when you implore God for the Forgiveneſs of your Sins.*

ALMIGHTY and everlaſting God, who art always more ready to hear than I to pray, and art wont to give more than either I deſire or deſerve; pour down upon me the Abundance of thy Mercy, forgiving me thoſe Things whereof my *Conſcience* is afraid, and giving me thoſe good Things which I am not *worthy* to aſk, but through the Merits and Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt thy Son our Lord. Amen.

count.

count. As to the *first*, St. *Paul* assures us, that we are not of ourselves sufficient to think any Thing of ourselves (2 *Cor.* iii. 5.) — And if not, then we are not sufficient of ourselves to begin a good Work: For surely before a good Work can be begun, we must first think of it, and reason concerning it. What then have we which we have not received? And if we have received it, the Obligation must doubtless lie on the Receiver, and not on the Giver.—As to the *second*, granting that our Works were pure and perfect (the very best of which are far from having such a Claim) nay, granting that Angels or Archangels could not perform better, still they would have no *Merit* towards God, because he wants no Aid from *us* in any Respect.—Indeed, one *Mortal*, however great and elevated his Station may be, wants the Service of another: A Master wants the Assistance of a Servant, and a King the Help of his Subjects; but our supreme Master, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, is neither the stronger, the richer, or the happier for any Services *we* can render Him; nor the weaker, the poorer, or the less happy for any Omission of such Services. Our Obedience therefore is not required for *his* Sake, but for *our own*; because we can obtain Happiness no other Way, than by obeying his righteous Laws, and conforming to his holy Will, and consequently our good Works, tho' profitable to ourselves, are of no Advantage to God.

Add likewise, that the most refined Nature derived from *Adam* by natural Generation, was never yet found without Imperfection. The Scripture has pronounced all to be under the Dominion of Sin; there is none in a State of Nature righteous, no, not one.

Briefly—It is in Christ alone, that God is well pleased; and with *us* in Him; so that no Man can come unto God but by Him, and every Thing that we would receive we must ask in his Name.—A Consideration methinks which should comfort the Weak-hearted, while it humbles the Haughty and Self-sufficient: For let your Prayers be ever so proper in the Form and Expression; or let your Heart accompany them with a Devotion ever

so

ſo intenſe, ſtill they become acceptable to God through Chriſt *alone*; and are the *Means* indeed to *make you good*, but the *Goodneſs itſelf* is not in *them*; no more than a Favour amongſt Men can be ſaid to be *deſerved*, becauſe *aſked* with Humility, Propriety, and Elegance.—If therefore you was to truſt in *them*, as meritorious in any Degree, it would be making IDOLS of your PRAYERS; it would be putting *them* in the Place of Chriſt's *Atonement*, which is quite contrary to praying, as an unworthy Sinner, in the Name of Chriſt. Theſe *two* Cautions being ſufficiently explained, and *both* Extremes being of ſuch dangerous Conſequence, it is hoped that they will be frequently conſidered, and duly regarded.

DIRECTION II.

Pray without ceaſing; that is to ſay, be continually in a praying Diſpoſition, and on every Exigence let your Requeſts be made known unto God in the Name of Chriſt, for yourſelf and others, and praiſe him for every Bleſſing you have received.

IT has been obſerved by St. *Auguſtine*, "That he who "conſtantly deſires eternal Life of GOD, prays al-"ways, or without ceaſing." This Thought is juſt; but, however, in the Apoſtle's Language, he is ſaid to do that continually, which he does at ſtt Times daily: So the Sacrifice offered Morning and Evening, is called the continual Burnt-Offering, *Exod.* xxix. 39, 42.—And in Alluſion to this, perhaps St. *Paul* might tell *Timothy*, that *without ceaſing*, He had Remembrance of Him in his Prayers Night and Day, 2 *Tim.* i. 3. But more particularly Prayer, I think may with Propriety be divided into *ſudden*, and *ſolemn*. By the *former* we offer up ſhort and *ſudden* Petitions at the Throne of Grace, on every Occaſion, in the Midſt of our worldly Employments. By the *latter* we quit our worldly Employments, that we may in a more enlarged and *ſolemn* Manner

Manner addreſs our heavenly Father: The *latter* has appropriated the Name of Prayer to itſelf, tho' *both* are equally ſo, and equally acceptable in the Sight of God, if offered up in the Name of Chriſt, according to his Will. Petitions of the *former* Sort are called *Ejaculations*.—Perhaps the uninſtructed Reader will beſt underſtand me, if I give ſome *Inſtances*, in this Kind of Prayer. Thus the firſt Office every Day, ſhould be Thankfulneſs, which may be expreſſed in ſome ſuch Ejaculation as this.

Praiſed be thy holy Name, O LORD *my Redeemer, for preſerving me from all the Dangers of the Night paſt, and for adding one Day more to my Life. Give me, I beſeech thee, Grace, that I may, to the utmoſt of my Ability, employ it to thy Glory, and the Salvation of my immortal Soul.*

But, beſides the Morning, there will other Occaſions offer for pious Ejaculations all the Day long; and I would earneſtly recommend them as the beſt Means of guarding againſt the firſt Aſſaults of Temptation, and of keeping up conſtant Communion with God. So on ſome remarkable Deliverance, you may ſay—"Bleſſed be "thy holy Name, O LORD, for this Mercy."—On ſome good Work performed—"Thanks be to God who "has enabled me to perform this Work; I am never-"theleſs an unprofitable Servant."—On ſome ſudden Appearance of Danger—"Good LORD deliver me "from this Danger." *Or* "Take me, O GOD, under "thy Protection."—On ſome ſudden Temptation from Satan, the World, or the Fleſh—"Guard me "againſt this Temptation."—On ſome Fall into Sin through Infirmity—"Pardon, I beſeech Thee, this my "Sin."—On ſome Sight of your own Corruption—"Give me a new Heart, and renew a right Spirit "within me."—On hearing of the Death of Friends—"Teach me, ſo to number my Days, that I may ap-"ply my Heart unto Wiſdom"—and ſuch like.

Every Sentence of the LORD's Prayer likewiſe may be conſidered, and uſed, as a diſtinct Ejaculation; as may every Petition, or Thankſgiving, in the Bible; or in any other Prayer, if it ſuits your Caſe: Endeavour therefore

fore to become "a Scribe well instructed to the King-"dom*;" and make the Word of God your Study, and you will never want † Expressions to carry on this heavenly Correspondence.

Solemn Prayer may well be divided into two Parts, *occasional* and *stated*. OCCASIONAL, as in Times of Affliction, or Sickness; the Mind of Man being then like a weak Plant under Pressure, and God its only Support; and every important Occasion in Life will furnish Matter for Prayers suitable to it.—STATED, or fixed to certain Times and proper Opportunities, as Morning and Evening Prayers.

When you are dressed in the Morning, offer up the following Prayer (or somewhat to the like Purpose) before you are engaged in any worldly Business. An Awe of GOD on your Hearts, will direct you to use the most humble and devout Postures and Gestures, when you make your Addresses to him; such as Kneeling, Hands uplifted, a dejected or serene Countenance, Tears, *&c.* But in Company, where any of these cannot be complied with, as among Servants, Travellers, or the Sick, *&c.* then pray either as you sit, as you stand, as you ride, or as you lie. GOD at all Times, especially at such Times, regards not so much the Posture of the Body, as the Disposition of the Heart:—"*Son* "*give my thy Heart*," is his Demand in Scripture. Whether therefore your Prayers are long, or short, keep your Heart with all Diligence; and be sure they are not short for Want of Fervour.

Let me prevail on all my Readers to rise early, for the Pillow is a treacherous Counsellor, and TIME is too precious to be lost in an *unnecessary* Indulgence;

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* Matt. xiii. 52.

† Nature directs every Man, even the most profligate, to utter sudden Ejaculations, in Cases of Surprize, or imminent Danger, where there can be no Time for Premeditation, (such as "Lord "have Mercy upon me," *&c.*) The natural Language too of the Illiterate, will readily express their own sincere and devout Sentiments, on any Emergency; and not the less acceptable to God, for what we, weak Mortals, should esteem an Impropriety or Defect.

which

which may, in many Circumstances, be more criminal than the Generality of us are aware: For if they cannot comply with *so small* an Instance of Self-denial, how can *others*, which may be more difficult, be expected!—Only consider how greatly the Gain of an Hour or two, every Day from Sloth and Insensibility, really adds to the Term of your Life, as well as conduces to the Preservation of your Health.—For in Effect, he can scarcely be said to live, who has no Sense of his Being, or Use of his Faculties; and the Habit of more or less Indulgence, is known to make an astonishing Difference in these last, when we are awake, and capable of using them.

A Prayer * for the Morning.

N. B. *The Reader will observe that the Words* me, myself, my, *&c. are printed in a different Letter thro'* the whole *of the Prayers for Morning and Evening.—When therefore they are used for Family Prayers, read* we *instead of* I, our *for* my, us *for* me, *with such other Alterations as Circumstances may require:—But I would by no Means have these Prayers improperly repeated by using them on the same Day, first in* secret *Devotion, and afterwards in* public *with the Family—nor yet imagine, that the Performance of* one *of these Duties will be sufficient without the* other, *where* both *are practicable.*

Thanksgiving. ALmighty and most merciful God, with *my* whole Heart *I* thank thee for *my* Preservation during the past Night, and for adding another

* Observe, that for the Benefit of such as are very weak, or have frequent Returnings of violent Pain, which may render them incapable of using, with due Attention and Devotion, any large Forms of Prayer, Care has been taken that these here given, should not be long, or diffusive, and yet regular in the Division. *Servants and Day-Labourers, would do well to consider how small a Portion of Time will be required for their early rising, in Order to perform the necessary Duty of Prayer before they enter upon that, which belongs to their several Stations. Such as cannot* read, (*especially Patients in an Infirmary*) *might, by some charitable Friend, be taught*

ther Day to *my* Life, while so many are cut off unprepared, and unwarned.

Self-Dedication to GOD. To thee, and to thy Service, *I* most humbly dedicate *myself*, with all the Powers and Faculties both of *my* Soul and Body. Every Talent which *I* have is indeed thine own; but *I* sincerely resolve, and will most earnestly endeavour, to improve it to thy Glory and *my* own Salvation, for which Ends *I* was created.

Petition for Grace. Let thy all-powerful Grace possess and fill *my* Heart, without which, *I* am utterly unable to pursue these sincere Purposes: *I* know *I* can do all Things, necessary for Salvation, thro' Christ, who strengtheneth *me*; grant, O LORD, that through him *I* may be enabled to run, with Delight, the Race which is set before *me*, and so run as to obtain the glorious Prize.

Petition in Behalf of others. Send down thy saving Health upon the whole Race of Mankind, and give them the Love and Fear of thee; but particularly bless *my* Relations and Friends.—Pardon *my* Enemies, and turn their Hearts; and grant to all Men whatsoever is needful or profitable, either for the Welfare of their Bodies, or the Salvation of their Souls.

Petition for God's Blessing on the Business of the Day. Enable *me*, LORD of all Power and Goodness, faithfully to perform the several Duties belonging to that Station in which thy Providence has placed *me*, and bless *me* in the Execution of them. May *I* live all the Day long under a grateful Sense of thy fatherly Protection, and in a lively Hope of everlasting Glory, thro' JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

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taught to repeat them by Heart; *which may to the* Teachers, *as well as the* Learners, *be a very profitable Exercise, during their Confinement, if their Illness be not extreme.*

Those who have very weak *Memories, and many Children of five or six Years old, may be taught to get these short Forms of* Prayer *by Heart.---But if even* these *should be thought too long,* (*which I hope will seldom be the Case*) *I would then recommend the Use of the* LORD'S PRAYER only, *with the important Words of* St. Paul; *namely,* May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, *&c.*

On *Sunday* Morning, let what follows between the Hooks [thus] be us'd inſtead of the Petition for God's Bleſſing on your Buſineſs.

[Bleſſed be thou, O LORD, for ſetting apart a Day for the nobleſt Employment of created Beings, that of ſerving and glorifying their divine Maſter.—Teach *me* to remember this thy Command; and to ſhew *my* Obedience in devoutly attending upon thy Service, and fervently joining in the ſeveral Parts of it. Let thy Words delivered, and explained by the Mouth of thy Miniſters, find a ready Admiſſion into my Heart, and not be loſt through Careleſſneſs, or rendered fruitleſs by the vain Purſuits of the World. *Amen.*]

The following may be added, or not.

O Thou that heareſt Prayer, hear theſe my imperfect Petitions, humbly preſented in thy Son's Name; by whoſe Goſpel *I* have been inſtructed, encouraged, and injoined thus to addreſs Thee.

Our FATHER, which art in Heaven;—Hallowed be thy Name.—Thy Kingdom come.—Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.—Give us this Day our daily Bread.—And forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that Treſpaſs againſt us.—And lead us not into Temptation; but deliver us from Evil:—For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Whether you conclude your Devotions with the Lord's Prayer, or without it, it will be equally proper to add theſe important *Words of the Apoſtle, which contain a Summary of* all *the* ineſtimable *Bleſſings you have been imploring; and of* all, *that conſtitutes the Happineſs of a Chriſtian.*

2 *Cor.* xiii. 14.

May the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,—and the Love of God,—and the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with *me* [or *us*] and with all, whom *I* [or *we*] ought to remember in *my* [or *our*] Prayers this Day [or *Night*] and for evermore! *Amen.*

When you ariſe from your Knees, be very thankful that GOD has allowed you, through the Merits and Interceſſion of his SON, the Privilege of Prayer. Re-

flect ſeriouſly on the Temper, in which you preſented your Addreſſes at the Throne of Divine Mercy; as whether you prayed with Underſtanding, ſenſible of your Sins and Wants; with Fervency, with Hope to ſucceed, and with Love to your Brethren. Remember likewiſe that you *live* ſuitably to your Prayers, and continue heavenly-minded all the Day long.

At Evening Prayer be particularly watchful againſt Drowſineſs, and never fix the Hour too late in your Family, as they will then be unavoidably fatigued and ſleepy.—Go not, therefore to your Knees in ſuch a Diſpoſition, and with Careleſſneſs and Indifference, merely out of Cuſtom, and only to keep up *the Form of Prayer*, frequently gaping and half aſleep; but be conſcientious in this ſolemn Duty, with an Eye to the great God of Heaven and Earth; always remembering, that inattentive lifeleſs Prayer is an unacceptable Offering, and all Confidence in *that* is an Abomination to the moſt High.—Conſider too, that one Sentence iſſuing from the Heart, and ſincerely accompanied by the Affections, is of more Value than many Pages careleſsly read over, or the moſt complete Forms *inattentively* repeated.—Let every one of you, when you pray, be ſlow in your Utterance, and earneſt in your Affections;—make a Stop at the End of every Petition, that you may ponder upon the ineſtimable Worth of the Bleſſing you implore; that it may be the Deſire of your *Heart*, as well as the Requeſt of your *Tongue*; and may the God of all Goodneſs enable you, "in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thankſgiving, to let your Requeſts be "made known unto him." *Phil.* iv. 6.

A Prayer for the Evening.

☞ *When this is uſed as a* Family *Prayer, ſee the Directions given before that in the Morning.—Namely, uſing* we *for* I, us *for* me, *&c.*

Thankſgiving. MOST Great and Glorious GOD, with the deepeſt Humiliation, and utmoſt Gratitude, I thank thee for all thy Mercies which thy bountiful Hand hath beſtowed upon *me*, particularly thoſe

of

of this Day; and above all, for the reviving Hopes and Expectations of a far better Life in thy eternal Kingdom.

Confession. *I* acknowledge *my* Ingratitude, and am truly penitent for *my* manifold Breaches of thy Commands by Thought, Word, and Deed, especially by the Sins* of this Day. *I* am grieved and ashamed, that *I* have omitted or neglected the Duties which *I* ought to have observed.

Petition for Pardon. But thou, Lord God, aboundest in Mercy, and thy Son Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners. For his Sake, Father of everlasting Compassion, forgive all that is past, and cleanse *me* from all Unrighteousness. *I* have destroyed *myself*, but in him there is plenteous Redemption.—*I* desire to rely on him as *my* Saviour; to submit to him as *my* LORD; and to comply with his most reasonable, and most gracious Terms of Pardon and Salvation.

Petition for Grace. Grant *me*, O LORD, thy all-powerful Grace and Assistance, to supply the Weakness of *my* Endeavours, and to reform and regulate *my* depraved Will and evil Affections.—Preserve *me* from the Sin of Unbelief in thy Promises, and let *me* ever remember them, to *my* great and endless Comfort.

On *Sunday* Evening let what follows between the Hooks [thus] be added to this Prayer, but at no other Time.

[Most gracious God, *I* lament, as *my* Unhappiness as well as *my* Fault, that *I* love thee no better; and *I* am grieved to think of *my* Coldness and Inattention, which has too often appeared during *my* Attendance on the solemn Service of this thy *Day*. Accept of such imperfect Offerings as *I* have been able to make. Grant that *I* may meditate upon thy Law with Profit and Delight; and that the good Seed sown in *my* Heart, may take deep Root, and bring forth abundant Fruits; that so *my* Conversation may be such, as becometh the Disciple and

* Here make a short Pause for Recollection, and secret Confession of the Sins and Failings of the Day:---But a more particular Confession may be made in private, either *before* or *after* Prayer, as we have Time for a fuller Self-Examination.

Follower of *my* bleſſed Inſtructor, and Maſter JESUS CHRIST.]

Petition in Behalf of others. Be merciful, and gracious to the whole Race of Mankind, particularly thoſe to whom *I* am more immediately related, as likewiſe to this Family. *I* beg thy Bleſſing on all thoſe *I* ought to pray for, and on thoſe who pray for *me*, particularly on the Afflicted. Reconcile them, O Lord, to their Sufferings, and all of us to thyſelf; and give them and us, whatſoever thine infinite Wiſdom knows to be neceſſary, both for our ſpiritual and temporal Welfare.

For Reſt and Protection. *I* commit *myſelf* unto thee, O GOD; this Night, beſeeching thee to give *me* Reſt, and to keep *me* in Safety: Or, if *my* Soul ſhould be required of *me* before the Morning Light, receive *me* to thy Mercy, through the Merits and Mediation of JESUS CHRIST, in whom thou art always well pleaſed. *Amen.*

The following may be added, or not.

O Thou that heareſt Prayer, *&c.* See Page 13.

Our FATHER, *&c.* See Page 13.

The Grace of our Lord Jeſus, *&c.* See Page 13.

Theſe Prayers I have divided regularly, as ſuch Diviſions may be of very great Uſe, by preſerving Order, and preventing Confuſion in our Addreſſes to GOD, particularly in reminding us of what we want, and for what we ought to aſk. It is therefore hoped, that the ſeveral Heads, or Diviſions, will by carefully obſerved and imprinted in our Memories; with a View to which, I have inſerted the Diviſions in the Margin on the Sides of the Prayers.—By the Bleſſing of God upon the Uſe of of theſe Means, we may be enabled *in Time* to purſue the ſame Order and Method both Morning and Evening, in our *own* Words and Expreſſions; namely, in Thankſgivings and Petitions formed out of our *own* Hearts. A Circumſtance greatly to be deſired, as it will form the Mind to a *Habit* of *regular* Prayer; but this can only be attained by a diligent Uſe of *our* Talents; that is to ſay, by devout and conſtant Practice.

The

The Uſe too of theſe Diviſions, I think may be extended ſtill farther; as by this Method, ſuch as are young, may happily become acquainted with the Deſign and Meaning of what they repeat; ſo as more early in Life to acquire the ineſtimable Habit of *Praying with the Underſtanding*, and performing to their Creator, in their Youth, a reaſonable Service.

There is alſo a *ſtated* Time of ſhort Addreſs to the Almighty, when we ſit down to our common Meals. Our SAVIOUR, while on Earth, glorified GOD, by ſolemnly looking up to Heaven, and bleſſing the Loaves and Fiſhes, before he diſtributed them to thoſe, who ſat down to eat: (ſee *Mark* vi. 41.) And St. *Paul*, though in Bonds, in Preſence of a numerous Company of Heathens*, would not omit this neceſſary Duty.—GOD intended we ſhould *uſe*, with Moderation, *all* his good Things, but *Thankſgiving* is the *Condition:* That therefore the moſt Ignorant may not want proper Words to beg God's Bleſſing on their daily Food, and to return him Thanks for it, the following Graces may be conſtantly uſed.

Grace *before* Meals.

Bleſs, O LORD, theſe thy good Creatures, to our Uſe, and us to thy Service, through JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

Grace *after* Meals.

Accept, O LORD, our humble and hearty *Thanks* for theſe, and all thy other Mercies, through JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

An Addreſs to God ought, doubtleſs, to be moſt ſerious and ſolemn, let me intreat you therefore to be very compoſed and reverential in the Diſcharge of this Duty; ſince to perform it in a ſlight and negligent Manner, muſt be *ſhocking* to all *good* Men, and ſinful before God;—more ſinful, perhaps, than even the Omiſſion itſelf: And if he, who aſks the *Bleſſing* of, or return the *Thanks to* the Almighty, in the Name of the reſt, ſhould *preſume* to do it in an *irreverent* Manner; every one preſent will, I hope, remember, that he is as much obliged to repeat the Grace in his own Mind, as if *nothing* had paſſed at Table. This is eaſily done without appearing ſingular,

* See *Acts* xxvii. 35.

or giving any Offence, ſhould you happen to be in the Company of your Superiors, whom it may not be *at all Times* conſiſtent with Prudence to admoniſh: For, in ſome Caſes, the very Attempt would be productive of Sneers, Ridicule, and perhaps Profaneneſs. It is no Man's Duty, to give an ill-timed, or an unbecoming Reprimand; and it is the Province of Reaſon to determine how far ſuch Admonitions are decent, and likely to do Good or Harm.

As little Children are too often uninſtructed, at a Time when they are moſt ſuſceptible of Improvement, the following Prayer, either for Morning or Evening, will not, I hope, be without its Uſe.

MOST gracious *Father*, look down, I beſeech thee, upon a *helpleſs Child*. Incline my Heart to remember, love, and ſerve thee in the Days of my Youth; and keep me from every evil Thought, and Word, and Work: Make me dutiful to my Parents, loving to all my Relations, obedient to my Teachers, and always in a Diſpoſition to hear Advice and receive Inſtruction. Keep me this Day [or Night] from every Danger, and grant all my humble Requeſts, for the Sake of JESUS CHRIST my Saviour, in whom alone thou art

Our FATHER, *&c.*

The Grace of our LORD, *&c.*

As I cannot but be ſolicitous leſt any one (be his Station or Capacity ever ſo mean) ſhould be deſtitute of proper Aſſiſtance for the Performance of Prayer; and as many ſtand in Need of *Forms* for this Purpoſe, I have, for the Help of ſuch, added what I apprehend to be of the moſt general Uſe. Yet I am very ſenſible that no precompoſed Forms can be ſo compiled as to ſuit the *particular* Circumſtances of every Man; conſequently, he muſt often lie under the Neceſſity of cloathing *his own* Thoughts in *his own* Language, when he approaches the Throne of Grace; and he is undoubtedly obliged (as far as he is able) to endeavour after proper and reverential

tial Expreſſions, though it is not expected that a Clown ſhould pray, any more than behave, with the ſame Elegance as the Gentleman.

It is to be hoped, that ſuch as are Heads of Families (if they have any Regard to their own eternal Salvation, and that of their Domeſticks) will not fail to pray with them every Morning, when it can be complied with, as well as every Evening; and that they who have been Patients in an Infirmary, and learned to pray there, will be careful to *practiſe* that neceſſary Duty at *Home*, with thoſe whom God has committed to their Care, as well as in their own Retirements.

It is of *ſmall* Importance to us what ſuch or ſuch a Man *does* or *ſays*—or what Notions the World may entertain of *outſide* Appearances.—*Is the Goſpel true?*—If it be, (as it *ſurely* is) then the ill Lives, Negligences, or Ignorance of *others*, will be no more an Excuſe for *our* Diſobedience, than the Extravagance of *another* in ſpending the Means of *his* Subſiſtence, would be a Relief to *us*, if we had been ſo indiſcreet as to ſpend *our own*.

The too *general* Diſuſe therefore of FAMILY PRAYER, cannot afford even the leaſt *Shadow* of a Pretence to countenance our Neglect of it. Conſult the Scriptures, and emulate the *heroick* Reſolution of the *brave Joſhua*, when he ſaid, even upon the Suppoſition of his being deſerted by the whole Nation, "*As for* ME, *and* MY *Houſe*, "WE *will ſerve the Lord.*" Joſh. xxiv. 15.—We will faithfully *retain*, *aſſert*, and *adorn* Religion.—Surely this *ought* to be the *ſincere* Reſolution, and *conſtant* Practice, of *every* Chriſtian Maſter or Miſtreſs of a Family.—Without this, none can *reſonably* expect to have *dutiful* Children, or *faithful* Servants—nor *juſtly* hope to have God's Bleſſing in *this* World, or his Favour and Acceptance in *that* which is to come.—The Depravity of that World, in which we are about to enter, and the various Temptations and Dangers, which we are unable to foreſee or prevent, may well ſuggeſt to us the great Propriety of imploring the *Grace*, *Protection*, and *Bleſſing* of God before we go abroad; and will alſo afford a very

very ſtrong Argument for *uniting* our Petitions for it, *as a Family*, if Providence gives us an Opportunity.

It remains to be obſerved likewiſe (in order to render the Influence of Family Prayer more laſting and extenſive) that were all the Members of every Family frequently and *ſeriouſly* to recollect, that they are *daily* to join together in the ſolemn Worſhip of the living God, and to beg for each other the Fulneſs of all heavenly Bleſſings, the previous and conſtant Expectation of being ſo engaged, would help to prevent bitter Words, to ſuppreſs all Inſtances of Unkindneſs, and to unite their Hearts in Love, *that their Prayers be not hindered*, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

And let it be recollected, upon *every* proper Occaſion, that to *intercede* for each other, either as a Family, or as a Community in general (how little ſoever it my *now* be regarded) is one of the moſt important Acts of Chriſtian Charity; the Means of bringing down upon *others*, Bleſſings from on high, and of filling *our own* Hearts with extenſive and brotherly Love.—It is alſo an Act of ſpiritual Charity, which the *pooreſt* are ſo capable of *exerciſing*, that they may be *even rich* in interceſſionary Alms; and ſurely *none* can allow themſelves to deſpiſe *ſuch Alms*, ſince the *chiefeſt* of the Apoſtles *moſt earneſtly* and *frequently** ſolicited them.

Having now made what Remarks I propoſed on *Forms* of Prayer, and on the Duty and Benefit of *Family* Prayer, I think it neceſſary to add (as without a conſcientious Performance of *this*, in vain will be all my other Directions) ſome further Remarks on Prayer *in general*.

No Man living from the higheſt to the loweſt, whether he be learned or unlearned, can have a reaſonable Excuſe for the entire Omiſſion of daily Prayer to God; ſince the Refuſal of ſuch Homage, is to act contrary to the Example *and* Command *of Chriſt, and in Effect to diſown his* Power *over us; his* Goodneſs to us; *his* Juſtice *to puniſh Tranſgreſſions; and to queſtion his* Faithfulneſs *in fulfilling his* Promiſes.

Nor is PRAYER *to be conſidered* merely as a Tribute *which we owe to God, but as the Means likewiſe of deriving*

* See Rom. xv. 30.—Col. iv. 12.—1 Tim. ii. 1.

Strength

Strength and Comfort to our own *Souls.—And* a ſincere *Chriſtian* (*one* duly *concerned for his ſpiritual Health*) *would no more think of omitting* Prayer To-day, *becauſe he practiſed it* Yeſterday, *than of abſtaining from Food* To-day, *becauſe he* Yeſterday *took it at the proper Seaſon. The regular Returns of either may indeed be omitted on ſome* very urgent *Occaſion, when the Honour of God, and the Good of our Fellow-Creatures plainly require our immediate Attendance on ſome other Service; but the* ſpiritual *Life can no more be maintained in a long and frequent Neglect of the* one, *than the* natural *Life can be in that of the* other.—"*Our* "*Wants are daily; and the Temptations, which draw our* "*Hearts from God to the Things of this World, are daily;* "*and, upon* both *theſe Accounts, our Prayers ought alſo to* "*be daily* *."

PRAYER is indeed generally acknowledged by all, who profeſs any Regard to Religion, to be a neceſſary and eſſential Part of it.—"Sit ye here, ſays our bleſſed Sa-"viour, while I go pray yonder." (*Matt.* xxvi. 36.) *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, were three good Men, but Chriſt bid them tarry while he went aſide for private Prayer. There are indeed Seaſons, when the Chriſtian would not be willing that the deareſt Friend he had in the World ſhould be with him, to hear and underſtand what paſſes between God and himſelf.—Prayer too muſt at certain Seaſons be performed with peculiar Solemnity, in which, Fitneſs of Time and Place are no leſs to be attended to, than in thoſe of our ordinary Calling.—Indeed, the Zeal of the true Chriſtian ſhould always be tempered with Modeſty and directed by Prudence. Moreover, Prayer ſhould be *conſidered* as an excellent *Means* of obtaining an *End*, yet more noble and valuable than itſelf:—For the chief Deſign of Prayer is, that we may procure the Grace of God,—to ſubdue our corrupt Affections, and to *enable* us to live in this evil World, as Candidates for a much better.—If it produces not theſe Effects, it is only a Lip-Labour, a Tree without Fruit, a ſpecious *Self-Deceit*.

* See Dr. *Gibſon*'s (Biſhop of *London*) Treatiſe on Family-Devotion.

DIRE?

DIRECTION III.

Read carefully every Day some Part of the Holy Scriptures.

WHEN your Prayers in the Morning are ended, if your Time will permit, improve yourself by reading some Portion of the Holy Scripture, or hearing it read; and that you may the better profit by it, beg the Blessing of GOD in the following Prayer, or some * other to the same Effect.

"O LORD GOD, who hast given thy Word to be a "Lanthorn to my Feet, and a Light to my Path: Give "me also the Assistance of thy HOLY SPIRIT, that from "the same Word, I may learn thy Will and my Duty, "and so direct my Course, as shall most promote "thy Glory and my own Salvation, thro' JESUS CHRIST "our Lord. *Amen.*"

When you read, or hear the Bible read by others, let it be with Reverence: Attend to it, not as the Word of Men, but of GOD; of that GOD, who will regard such as are poor in Spirit, have a contrite Heart, and tremble at his Word: Let this then be always your Frame, and it will so awaken your Fear and Attention, that you will be ever profited, and long retain it.

Be sure likewise, that you are solicitous to learn your Duty. The new-born Babe desires the Milk of the Breast, that he may grow by it; and in like Manner, will you desire the sincere Milk of the Word, if you are a Child of GOD.—Every Time you read, be careful to apply the Commandments for your Direction, the Threatnings to deter you from Sin, or to humble you, and the Promises for your Comfort and Encouragement.

Take Heed, likewise, that you credit the Truth: Look upon every Word in that sacred Book, as true and certain, and as what shall, in its due Time, be accomplished, or has already happened. Thus believe in the LORD your GOD, and so you shall be established; believe

* See the second Collect for *Advent* in the Common-Prayer-Book.

his

his Prophets and Apoſtles, and ſo you ſhall proſper: But if the Word of GOD, be not regarded with ſuch a Faith, you may read it eternally, and it will be of no Service to you.

In this divine Book you will always find the SAVIOUR is exalted, the Sinner is humbled, and Holineſs is promoted: I muſt therefore earneſtly intreat you to examine frequently and thoroughly, your Principles and Practices by theſe Rules; which will be equally certain to you, as the Touch-Stone on which Gold is tried, is to the Goldſmith: For unleſs you perceive, that the Doctrines you have embraced tend to exalt the SAVIOUR, to humble the Sinner, and to promote Holineſs; or if they tend to it, unleſs they have that Influence on your Practice, you may be very ſure, that your Knowledge is not ſaving, and that you have hitherto read in vain.

Thus *ſtatedly* I would have you, if poſſible, to read ſome *Portion of the Holy Scripture Morning and Even-

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* Particularly read ſome of theſe Inſtances of the Life of Chriſt, which I have here tranſcribed from Mr. *Burkitt*'s Expoſition on the New Teſtament, at the Cloſe of his Remarks on St. *John*'s Goſpel; where all, who have the Book itſelf in their Poſſeſſion, may find proper Comments on each of the following Heads.

I. His early Piety. See *Luke* ii. 46, 47.

II. His Obedience to his earthly Parents. See *Luke* ii. 15.

III. His unwearied Diligence in doing Good. See *Acts* x. 38.

IV. His Humility and Lowlineſs of Mind. See *Matt.* xi. 29.

V. The Unblameableneſs and Inoffenſiveneſs of his Life and Actions. See *Matt.* xix. 27.

VI. His eminent Self-Denial. See *Phil.* ii. 7, 8.

VII. His Contentment in a low and mean Condition in this World. See *Luke* ix. 58. *Phil.* iv. 11.

VIII. His *frequent* Performance of the Duty of private Prayer. See *Mark* i. 35. *Luke* vi. 12.

IX. His affectionate Performance of the Duty of Praiſe and Thankſgiving. See *Matt.* xi. 25. *John* xi. 41.

X. His Compaſſion towards thoſe who are miſerable, and in Diſtreſs. See *Matt.* xx. 34.

XI. His ſpiritual, entertaining, and uſeful Diſcourſe. See *Luke* xiv. 7.---xxiv. 13.

XII. His free, familiar, ſociable Behaviour. See *Matt.* xi. 19. *Luke* v. 29.

XII. H's

Evening; but if this cannot be done in the Morning (as I know that in the Winter it cannot by many Day-Labourers, and others, who must quit their Houses in the Dark, and leave their Families in Bed) yet in the Evening there will certainly be an Opportunity; and if you delight in the Law of GOD, as you ought to do, you will as certainly embrace it; and not only then, but at all other Times of the Day, when such happy Seasons offer themselves.—And you might select a Text of Scripture, and get it by Heart, in order to meditate on it next Morning as you work. That you may seize such Occasions, I shall give you *two important* Directions as the principal Furtherances of every religious Duty; and without a due Observance of which, all my *other Directions* must be ineffectual.

1. Watch.—2. Redeem Time.

1. You must WATCH *before*, *in*, and *after* every Duty. *Before*, to prevent Impediments, to take Opportunities, and to mark Occurrences that may fit you for it:—*In* the Duty, you must watch against Carelessness, and wandering Thoughts:—And *after* the Duty, you must mark what Improvements you make; whether you grow in Wisdom and Grace, or whether the Duty is not barren and unfruitful.

2. You must also *redeem Time*.—Remember *Time* is precious, and if lost is irrecoverable. Every Friend, and every Thing, will be apt to be stealing *this* from you, therefore it behoves you to be very careful of it.—That you may be so, ask yourself every Morning soon after

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XIII. His Patience under Sufferings and Reproaches. See 1 *Pet.* ii. 21, 22.

XIV. His Readiness to forgive Injuries. See *Luke* xxiii. 34.

XV. His laying to Heart the Sins, as well as Sufferings, of others. See *Mark* iii. 5.

XVI. His Zeal for the publick Worship of God. See *John* ii. 17.

XVII. His glorifying his Father in all he did. See *John* xvii. 4.

XVIII. His Impartiality in reproving Sin. See *Matt.* xxiii. 23.

XIX. His universal Obedience to his Father's Will, and cheerful Submission to his Father's Pleasure. See *Matt.* xxvi. 39.

XX. His Love and Practice of universal Holiness both in Heart nd Life. See *Luke* iv. 34.

you rise, the following Questions, and make Memorandums * accordingly.

1. What Business have I to do this Day, and in what Order?

2. What Opportunities can I this Day contrive for doing Good to others, or for improving myself?

3. What Temptations am I likely to encounter, and in what Instances have I lately failed?

Remember *Punctuality* is the very Life of Business; and though, strictly speaking, not a Virtue, yet, from its great Use, very nearly allied to one; and sure I am, that most of the Inconveniencies in Life arise from the Breach of it.

DIRECTION IV.

Meditate daily upon the Word, and Works of GOD.

BEfore I proceed upon this Subject, it will be proper to caution the Reader, that it is not only lawful, but absolutely necessary, at proper Seasons, to set our Thoughts upon the Concerns of this Life: The Works of our Callings are what GOD has appointed us to do; and which, being followed in a holy Moderation in Obe-

* In the Affairs of *this* World, it is of known Use to make *Memorandums* of the several Businesses to be transacted every Day.---In our *spiritual* Life it would be of no less Utility carefully to examine into our Minds, and imprint on them, what (if the Expression may be allowed me) I would call our particular Business with God; that is to say, what we more especially and immediately want with God.—For my own Part, it has long been a Custom with me to ask myself (either in my Chamber, or as I ride, or walk) "*What Business have I this Day with God?*" namely, What Mercies have I to acknowledge? What Helps and Assistances to implore? What Sins to repent? *&c. &c.* I shall only observe, that the great Advantages of *such a Habit* will be more readily felt than described: I was induced to mention *this* for the Benefit of such sincere Christians, as would be glad of any likely Method to advance their spiritual Improvement; especially at such Times, as they are *unavoidably hindered* from performing the more solemn Devotions of the Closet.

dience to his Commandment, are so far from separating the Heart from him, that they unite it more closely to him. Many ingenious Trades demand the most intense Application of the Mind to become Masters of them, and it is not the *Design of Christianity* to make Men negligent in the Business of their respective Callings: This *may*, this *must* be done, and yet we may be heavenly-minded. "One Thing is needful," and blessed are those who, like Mary in the Gospel, choose that better Part which can never be taken from them.

It being very evident, that the Subject of THIS DIRECTION, (*viz. Meditation upon the Word and Works of* GOD) must comprise every Creature in the World, and every Article of Religion; it cannot be expected, that I should enter into a Detail of the Particulars; it is enough for me to shew, how we may, in this Manner, begin and end the Day with God; and to give Hints of some Subjects, that are more particularly worthy of frequent Contemplation.

In the Morning, before your Devotions, banish all worldly Thoughts as much as possible; and endeavour to *meditate* on religious Subjects, such as the following, which are at all Times proper, but peculiarly so before Prayer *, reading the Scripture, or going to any Place of Worship.

Meditate

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* A State of *Thankfulness* is much to be desired and cultivated,—as such a State is the *most pleasing* to Almighty God, the *most ornamental* to our holy Religion, and the *most comfortable* to ourselves.—In order therefore to beget and support this *most amiable* and *delightful* Temper, I would advise you just to read over (either before or after your Devotions) the following HINTS—and contemplate on them, when your Time permits;---always remembring, that if you find your Heart in a *fit* Frame for religious Meditation, even *that* is just Mattter of cheering Reflection and grateful Praise.

1. MEDITATIONS ON MERCIES PAST.

Preservations from the Dangers of the Night, as Fire,—Tempests,---Robbery,---Murder,---pernicious Dreams, by which some have been terrified to Distraction, and in which others have even destroyed themselves.

Refresh-

Meditate on the unſpeakable Glory of the great GOD, and your own exceeding Sinfulneſs, that you may confeſs your Tranſgreſſions with deep Humiliation, and pray with Reverence and godly Fear.

Meditate on the Blood of CHRIST, which was ſhed to obtain all heavenly Bleſſings for you; and on his powerful Interceſſion at his FATHER's right Hand, (ſee *Heb.* iv. 14.) in Behalf of all thoſe who come unto GOD by him.

Call to Mind, and treaſure up in your Memory, ſome of thoſe exceeding precious * *Promiſes*, which GOD has made to encourage your Prayers and eſtabliſh your Faith. —Thus give GOD your firſt Thoughts, that he may poſſeſs the chief Part in your Heart; and this will eſtrange it from worldly Impediments, and fit you for every holy Duty.

For the reſt of the Day, it will be extremely proper to meditate, ſometimes upon the Nature of GOD, his Attributes, his Love to us in ſending his only begotten SON that we might live through him; the Love of

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Refreſhment of Sleep,---or comfortable Supports from God, during a *reſtleſs* Night.

How many have ſpent the Night in Priſons.---How many in *exceſſive* Pain of Body, or *inexpreſſible* Anguiſh of Mind, weary of their Beds, and their Lives.

2. MEDITATIONS ON MERCIES PRESENT.

Cheerfulneſs of the Sun; or Contrivance of *artificial* Lights to ſupply its Abſence.---All Manner of comfortable Conveniencies, at leaſt "Food and Raiment, and the *Neceſſaries* of Life, where-"with you ſhould learn of the Apoſtle to be content." 1 Tim. vi. 8.

3. MEDITATIONS ON MERCIES FUTURE.

The Proſpect of ſpending another Day uſefully; and in the deſirable Society of your Relations, or intimate Friends; and the Hope of more effectually ſecuring the Favour of God, through the Mediation of Chriſt, and a happy Immortality, for which you are a *Probationer*.---Whereas many were ſummoned laſt Night, from their Bodies, to appear before God.

* Some of theſe PROMISES you may meet with in the following Scriptures, *viz. Pſalm* l. 15.---*Matt.* xxi. 22.---*John* xvi. 23.---1 *Tim.* iv. 8.---2 *Pet.* i. 4.---*Heb.* vi. 7.---I have not inſerted them *at length*, as you will receive ſtill greater Benefit from reading them *carefully* in your Bible.

CHRIST, his Life, Death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, the infinite Value of his Sufferings, and the Benefits we receive from him, as our Mediator; the ſending of the HOLY GHOST, and his Work in ſanctifying the Hearts of Believers.—Often it will be proper to think of the Excellence of the Soul, the Turpitude or Baſeneſs of Sin, the Beauty of Holineſs, the Certainty of Death, the Terrors of Judgment, the Torments of Hell, and the Joys of Heaven.—Theſe, and the wonderful Proofs of GOD's Care and Regard for us, ought frequently to be the Subject of our Reflections.

If we turn our Thoughts from the *Word* to the *Works* of GOD, every Creature will furniſh us with a Theme; and we may frame an excellent Meditation on it, if we reflect on its Qualities, its Uſe, the Benefit we receive from it, and the particular inſtructive References made to many of them in the Book of GOD: But then you muſt be ſure not to dwell upon it only as a *Virtuoſo*, to gratify your rational Curioſity; but like a *Chriſtian*, call Religion to the Feaſt, and make a ſpiritual Improvement. No Man can want an Inſtructor, if he wants not a Heart: The very Sheep will teach him Patience, the Dog Faithfulneſs, the Serpent Wiſdom, and the Dove Innocence; the Ant and the Bee will reprove him for his Sluggiſhneſs, and the Ox and the Aſs correct him for his Ignorance.

While you are undreſſing, and by Degrees laying aſide every Garment, conſider of how little Importance it is, of what Materials thoſe Garments are made, ſo long as they anſwer the Uſes and Demands of Nature. —The ſame Nature alſo requires, at certain Seaſons, the moſt ſuperb Apparel of the Great to be put off, and leaves *their* Bodies little more to boaſt of than your own. —When you are doom'd to lie down in the Grave, all ſuch Triſles muſt be laid aſide; and when you are again called to riſe, other Cloathing and other Ornaments will be required, without which, both Body and Soul will continue naked and miſerable to all Eternity. In the Apoſtle's Phraſe, *to put on* CHRIST, and to be united to *him*, is your only Security: For he is the Way, and the

the Truth, and the Life, and no Man can come unto the FATHER but by him. He is the Door into the Sheepfold, by which alone you can enter, there being none other Name given among Men whereby you must be saved. How ought you then to be continually found in the Exercise of every Grace, which may make it to you CHRIST to live, and Gain to die. Such as,

1. Sincere Repentance for your past Sins.
2. Stedfast Faith in our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and a thankful Remembrance of his dying Love.
3. Love to Mankind of all Ranks, and of every Denomination.
4. Resignation to the divine Will, and universal Obedience to it.

These will be Ornaments indeed, clear Proofs that you have "put off the old Man with his Deeds;" and if you are fully satisfied of *this*, Sleep or Death will be equally elligible: So that you will be able to say with *David*, "into thy Hands I commend my Spirit; for "thou hast redeemed me, O LORD, thou GOD of "Truth." *Psalm* xxxi. 6.

If you awake in the Night, and cannot compose yourself again to Rest; or if the Severity of any Disorder should keep you from Sleeping, I hope you will endeavour to sooth your Anguish, and beguile the tedious, or rather, improve the important Hours, by following the Prescription which the divine Physician for all our spiritual Maladies, has sent us by the Hand of his Servant, namely, "If any be afflicted, let him pray—like *David*, remem- "bering your GOD in your Bed, and meditating upon "him in the Night-Watches." *Bible Psalms* lxiii. 6.

These Verses likewise, which were purposely composed for the Use of the Sick, and are more immediately calculated for those, who are in such afflictive Circumstances than is usually to be found in printed Collections, may serve at any Time, if committed to Memory, as a profitable Amusement and Meditation; especially when they cannot rest, or happen to awake in the Night.

1. MY God, with grateful Heart I'll raise
A daily Altar to thy Praise;
Thy friendly Hand my Course directs,
Thy watchful Eye my Bed protects.

2. *When Dangers, Woes, or Death are nigh,*
Past Mercies teach me where to fly;
The same Almighty Arm can aid,
Now Sickness grieves, and Pains invade.

3. *To all the various Helps of Art,*
Kindly thy healing Power impart;
BETHESDA's BATH * *refus'd to save,*
Unless an Angel *bless'd the Wave.*

4. *All Med'cines act by thy Decree,*
Receive Commission all from thee;
And not a Plant which spreads the Plains,
But teems with Health when Heav'n ordains.

5. Clay *and* Siloam's Pool † *we find,*
At Heaven's Command restor'd the Blind;
Hence Jordan's ‡ *Waters once were seen,*
To wash a Syrian *Leper clean.*

6. *But grant me nobler Favours still,*
Grant me to know, and do thy Will;
Purge my foul Soul from every Stain,
And save me from eternal Pain.

7. *Can such a Wretch for Pardon sue!*
My Crimes, my Crimes, arise to View!
Arrest my trembling Tongue in Pray'r,
And pour the Horrors of Despair.

8. *But oh! regard my contrite Sighs,*
My tortur'd Breast, my streaming Eyes;
To me thy boundless Love extend,
My God, my Father, and my Friend.

9. These *lovely Names, I ne'er could plead,*
Had not thy Son vouchsaf'd to bleed;

* See John v. 4. † John ix. 7. ‡ 2 Kings v. 10.

His

His Blood *procures for* Adam's *Race,*
Admittance to the Throne of Grace.

10. *When Vice hath ſhot its poiſon'd Dart,*
And conſcious Guilt corrodes the Heart;
His Blood *is* all-ſufficient *found,*
To draw the Shaft, and heal the Wound.

11. *What Arrows pierce ſo deep as Sin?*
What Venom gives ſuch Pains within?
Thou great Phyſician of the Soul!
Rebuke my Pangs, and make me whole.

12. *Oh! if I truſt thy ſov'reign Skill,*
With due *Submiſſion to thy Will,*
Sickneſs, *and* Death, *ſhall both agree,*
To bring me, LORD, at laſt, *to* THEE.

Thus I have given you my Thoughts on the Duty of Meditation, and on ſome of the Subjects moſt proper for it. I have only further to add, when you are meditating, let your Thoughts be intent: Keep to one Subject till your Heart be affected with it. If you think of GOD, ceaſe not to think of him till you admire and adore: If you think of his Omniſcience and Omnipreſence, double your Watch over yourſelf; if of his Mercy, have a juſt Indignation againſt yourſelf for Abuſes of it; if of his Juſtice, tremble before him. If you meditate on CHRIST, make no End till Love has melted your Heart; if on his Death, apply the Virtue of it for your own Redemption. If you think of the Evil of Sin, ſtop not till your Heart abhors it; if of the Strictneſs and Rectitude of the divine Law, awe your Soul to Obedience. Without this practical Recollection, your Meditations will rather chill than warm your Devotion; but thus improved, they will add Life and Strength to your religious Exerciſes.

DIREC-

DIRECTION V.

Converse frequently on religious Subjects *, and, for that Purpose, be particularly careful in the Choice of your Company, and in keeping a strict Guard over your Tongue.

THAT your Conversation may be edifying to yourself and others, be watchful to prevent its turning on idle or improper Topics; and, in order to prevent

* The following Hints, will shew the Use of writing down suitable Materials for Conversation with the Afflicted. As for Instance we may observe, that Afflictions are appointed by the Wisdom and Goodness of God, which is an Argument for Resignation and Comfort---remark the Example of *Eli*, *Job*, and Christ---urge that Afflictions are designed as Blessings---that God is out of Kindness severe---If it be objected that Affliction *is peculiarly* calamitous; it may be answered, GOD, the unerring GOD, prescribed it, and *therefore* it is proper. If it be inquired what Benefits arise from it?---We may reply that it weans us from the World---and may bring us to Christ, after whom while on Earth, not the Rich and Gay, but the Poor and Afflicted, sought, and still seek---that Christ has Pardon of Sin, the Gift of the Holy Spirit, and eternal Life to bestow---that we should therefore be frequent in Prayer---recommend this by the Examples of *Daniel*, *David*, and *Hannah*---assert that Prayer will not tend to deject, but to elevate the Mind---advise Cheerfulness---observe that this Disposition under Misfortunes, or a Release from them, is not to be obtained by the Visits of worldly Company; but by Prayer and consulting the Scriptures, that Treasury of Comfort---that earthly Friends cannot give it---that God is both able and willing to bestow that Peace which the World, and worldly Things, cannot give;---a Peace which surpasses all Understanding, and without which the greatest Monarch on Earth is an Object, not of Envy, but of our Compassion.---After the same Manner we may make Memorandums of suitable Heads for conversing on other religious Subjects, as for Instance, with a presumptuous or desponding Sinner---or else with one of a curious Disposition, to Him we might discourse on the Wisdom of God, shewn by the Wonders discoverable by the Microscope in the minute Creation.

See the celebrated Dr. *Lucas*'s little Tract (Price Two-Pence) on the Influence and Regulation of Conversation---Lord, *teach us to pray* (Luke xi. 1.) was the Request of one of the Disciples.---Lord, teach us to *converse* judiciously and effectually, should be the *hourly* Petition of every Christian, as *Conversation* is so powerful an Instrument of Good or Evil.

it,

it, the beſt Guard will be an Introduction of ſome religious Subjects, where it can be done with Propriety, the Particulars of which, being as numerous as thoſe for heavenly Contemplation, I need not name.—The Things moſt worthy of your Meditation, are moſt worthy of your Diſcourſe, and of thoſe I have already taken Notice; only as I there gave you a Caution previous to your *Meditations*, I will here add ſome others with Regard to the Government of your Tongue in general, which I muſt beg of you carefully to obſerve; ſeeing, ſays St. *James*, "if any Man pretends to be religious, and bridles not his "Tongue, that Man's Religion is vain."

Firſt, Let the glorious Names of Almighty GOD never be mentioned, unleſs on weighty and juſt Occaſions; and even then, let your Heart always be affected with the moſt ſerious Conſideration of that eternal Being before whom you ſpeak. GOD is highly diſhonoured, when his Name is banded to and fro in ordinary Converſation, without due Reſpect of his incomprehenſible Greatneſs.

Secondly, When you ſpeak of your Neighbour ſpeak all the *Good* you know of him truly and readily, whether he be Friend or Foe; yet always behind his Back, rather than before his Face.—If any Thing *evil*, or derogatory to his Character muſt be publiſhed, be ſure you ſpeak not by Hear-ſay, but according to your perſonal Knowledge; nor even then, without a lawful Calling, as when you are ſummoned before a Magiſtrate to bear Witneſs to the Truth, or when Hurt has ariſen, or may ariſe to others from the Evil; or when you know of any one who has Authority to redreſs it. In ſuch Caſes, and to ſuch Perſons, we ought to ſpeak of the Evil we know of our Neighbours, but not otherwiſe. To uncover the Nakedneſs of our Brethren, without a juſt Calling, is extremely unlawful, and exceedingly pernicious: It always begins in Self-Love, and ends in Contention.—An impertinent Meddling in the Concerns of others, is a direct Breach of that admirable Rule of the Apoſtle's, *ſtudy to be quiet, and mind your own Bu-*

Buſineſs, 1 Theſſ. iv. 11.—And it is well known what violent Animoſities, furious Reſentments, and implacable Hatreds ariſe from a Diſregard to it. — Indeed, where you have Authority, apprehend it may be well received, or are in any Degree perſonally concerned, it will be quite proper to tell your Neighbour himſelf of his Faults: Our LORD's Rule is,—*If thy Brother ſin againſt thee, reprove him; and if he repent, forgive him.*

Thirdly, When you ſpeak of yourſelf, let it be modeſtly, without Vanity or Boaſting. Never praiſe yourſelf without abſolute Neceſſity, as when you are unjuſtly traduced, or in Defence of your own Innocence: It would, however, be imprudent to ſpeak any Thing which tends to your own Diſadvantage, or blaze about your own Faults. Briefly, let your Speech be ſincere, honeſt, and edifying: Let it be fitted to the Time, the Place, the Occaſion, and him with whom you converſe; and let it tend to the Glory of GOD, the Diſparagement of Sin, and the Defence of good Men and good Things; and it will be an Argument to others of a gracious Heart, well ſtored with Wiſdom and repleniſhed with Virtue.

Flee every Temptation which is likely to draw you into Sin; and weigh well, and often, the Precept given by St. *John*, as a tender Father to his dear Child, under that beautiful and expreſſive Phraſe, "*Little Children*" (too apt to be pleaſed with every Trinket and Toy) "*Keep yourſelves from Idols*;" not only from *thoſe* of the *Heathens*, but from every Sort which might alienate your Regard from God. Every Allurement, by which the Devil intices you to Sin, ſuch as Riches, Honour, Pleaſures, Company, and Senſualities of any Kind, are the ſeveral *Idels* (Toys or Trinkets) which he preſents as the Objects of Admiration and Worſhip: It is juſt the ſame to him *which* you take. Whatever draws off your Affections from God, will *equally* anſwer his Ends. His Temptation of CHRIST is repreſented to us under the Device of ſhewing him all the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them, as we read in *Matt.* iv. 8, 9.—Be ever obſervant therefore of the Directions here

here given, and then none of these *Idols* can have Access to your Heart.

DIRECTION VI.

Be frequent in the Examination of yourself, especially before Prayer, that you may fully know your Offences, and be truly humbled for them.

SUCH as have Leisure, would do well to try themselves by the *longer* Form of Self-Examination, occasionally, or by its *Abridgement*, every Evening.—Such as are in a frequent Hurry, and subject to the Authority of others, using the same Method as often as they *conveniently* can. Conscience will answer all the Questions here stated *in a few Minutes*, and to these, such others may be added as any one's Station in Life, or particular Circumstances, may require.—Those who can write, I would advise to remark, on a Slip of Paper, the Sins of which they find themselves guilty. Such Sins should be reviewed by Way of Caution, penitently lamented, prayed, and striven against; and God should be thanked, with the utmost Gratitude, that he still permits a longer State of Trial or Probation. But particularly write down the *Reasons* which at *any* Time make you afraid to die; consider them well, and opposite to them write down the proper Methods to prevent such Fears *for the future*; and the best Arguments you can get to fortify yourself against them at the *present Time*.—Consult likewise, some experienced Christian, if you have such a Bosom Friend, in whom you can entirely confide.

Self Examination is a most important Duty, as it acquaints us with our own Hearts.—Never, therefore, examine yourself slightly, and only as a Thing of Course, but always *remember* that this Examination is made in the Presence of the all-seeing God; and that you may be instantly summoned, by sudden Death, before his Tribunal, there to have *your Sincerity* tried.

* Heads

* Heads of Self-Examination.

As to the Breaches of your Duty towards God, your Neighbour, and yourself.

I. Duties towards God.

ABRIDGEMENT.

1. HOW have I this Day offended God by committing Sin in Thought, Word, or Deed? — 2. Have I omitted, or carelesly performed my religious Duties?

1. DO I sincerely believe in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost?—Have I the *same Faith* in my Heart which I profes in my Lips?—Do I live in an *habitual* Sense of God's continual Presence with me; and am I careful to obey him to the utmost of my Power?—Do I acknowledge myself accountable to him for all my Thoughts, Words, and Actions; my Repentance, or Obstinacy; my Belief, or Disbelief; my Obedience, or Disobedience?

2. Do I hold myself obliged to worship God both *in publick* and *in private?*—Do I take *a Delight* in my Duty, and perform it *daily*, as often as I have Opportunity?—Do I *regularly* comply with his holy Ordinances; particularly that of receiving the blessed Sacrament?—Do I gratefully acknowledge the great Works of my

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* This longer Form of Self-Examination should be frequently and well considered, especially every *Sunday*; and the Abridgement is intended to be learned by Heart, as it may be serviceable to the Patients in an Infirmary, when they *cannot* make Use of this Book, or to others, when they have no Leisure to enter into a *longer*, and *more particular* Examination. A Method even shorter than *this*, may be used when much prest in point of Time; namely, by dividing the Day into four Parts, the Morning,---the Forenoon,---the Afternoon,---and the Evening---considering briefly, but very attentively, what the Behaviour has been in each of them.---This I would call a *mental Self-Examination*; and we shall be able, with great Expedition to recollect our Failings, under the same general Heads of Duty to God, Neighbour, and Self.---But we should not content ourselves with this *short mental* Examination, when there is Leisure and Opportunity for doing it more at large.

Creation, *Preſervation*, *Redemption*, and *Sanctification*?—Do I make the Will of God the *Rule* of my Actions; and do I contentedly ſubmit to *that* under all Circumſtances of Life?

3. Am I zealous for God's Honour; and do I ſhew a due Reverence to his holy Name?—Am I guilty of no Profaneneſs, Curſing, or Swearing, nor any Way encourage it in others; but, on the contrary, diſcountenance it as much as in my Power?—Do I prefer Things *temporal* to Things *eternal*, and ſeek, by the whole of my Conduct, to advance the Glory of God?—Have I no Anxiety, or Murmurings, with Regard to the Things of this Life, and do I reſt contented in that State wherein it has pleaſed God to place me?—Do I not preſume too much on God's Mercy through Chriſt (ſo as to go on in wilful Sins) nor upon any Occaſion diſtruſt his *Providence*, or fatherly Care of me?

II. Duties towards my Neighbour.

ABRIDGEMENT.

1. Have I not provoked my Neighbour by any proud, ſurly, contemptuous, and ill-natured Speeches, or Actions?—Have I not injured him by ſlandering, lying, deceiving, or defrauding him upon any Occaſion?—Have I endeavoured to take away his good Name, or leſſen his Character and Reputation.—2. Should I rejoice at any Evil which might befal him?—Do I *ſecretly* wiſh his Death, or any Harm or Loſs to happen to him?

1. Have I in any Reſpect injured my Neighbour in Body, Goods, or Character? and am I deſirous to make him full Satisfaction and Reparation? 2. Do I ſincerely forgive all Injuries received from him, as God in Chriſt Jeſus has forgiven me?

2. Have I endeavoured to tempt, or draw him into Sin, by any *indecent*, or *evil Example* which I have ſhewn?—Do I truly or ſincerely wiſh for his Welfare both ſpiritual and temporal, and, as Opportunity ſerves, attempt to promote it?—Do I give them proper Admo-

nitions, and *friendly Advice*, whenever I see them stand in Need of these, or judge that such might be useful, and can be given with Propriety, or do I receive the *like* Advice kindly from him?—Do I make Amends for any Injuries I have done him designedly, or by Accident; and have I *true* Compassion and Concern for him when under any Affliction or Want; and do I endeavour to help and relieve him to the utmost of my Power?

3. Do I heartily forgive all the Injuries I have ever received from him? and do I sincerely desire and endeavour to live at Peace and Friendship with *him?*—If he continues in Enmity* with me, do I pray to God for him, and find in myself a sincere Disposition to return Good for Evil?

III. Duties towards myself.

	ABRIDGEMENT.
1. Am I, in my Conversation, vain-glorious, subject to Passion, and easily provoked;	1. Do I strive to subdue, and pray earnestly against all irregular De-

* One of the most illustrious, but, at the same Time, one of the *most difficult* of the Christian Duties, is "To love our Enemies; "and to pray for the Welfare and Amendment of them who de- "spitefully use and persecute us."---As therefore Love and Charity towards all such, is so repeatedly and strongly injoined us by our Lord, we are under an *indispensible* Obligation to comply with it; and if we duly observe this Precept, we shall soon find the beneficial Effects of it.---But let none imagine that this Injunction is meant to produce Insensibility. Our Creator has endued the human Mind with a Sense of *Resentment*, as the necessary Means of Self-Preservation. This limits the *Use* of Anger;---any farther Extension is the *Abuse* of it.---"Be ye angry and sin not." *Violent Wrath*, with its usual Attendant *Malice*, is a most dangerous spiritual Malady; the peculiar Remedy for which, is fervent Prayer; and happily in the Power of every one. This is equally salutary with regard to him who gives, and him who receives, a Provocation. The Injurer of his Neighbour, and the Self-Avenger, should alike be considered as spiritually diseased; and both are, consequently, Objects of *Compassion*, rather than of *Hatred*.---Prayer for our Enemy is the Means to obtain the Grace of God for his Conversion; and, at the same Time to preserve our own Breast serene, and out of Danger from any Infection from our Intercourse with him. It is not only a necessary Act of Obedience to our Blessed Saviour's express Command, but it is the strongest Proof, that "we are not "overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good."

or

or do I preſerve a Decency, Modeſty, and Humility, without over-valuing myſelf, or deſpiſing others upon any Occaſion?

2. Am I diligent in my Buſineſs, or Calling; and do I employ my ſpare Time innocently, and, to the beſt of my Power, uſefully to myſelf and others?—Am I contented with my Condition, free from covetous Deſires, or envious Repinings at the Proſperity of others?—Do I not indulge myſelf in any blameable Exceſs; but am I careful to keep myſelf temperate and chaſte, not only in *Act*, but in *Word*, and even in *Thought*?—Do I not indulge myſelf in *unneceſſary* Sleep, and in *needleſs** Amuſements, ſires, and evil Affections; endeavouring to lead a ſober, righteous, and godly Life; and doing all the Good I can?—2. Am I more intent upon ſecuring my eternal Happineſs, than upon any of the Purſuits, or Advantages of this World? And 3. Am I now in that State I would chuſe to be found at the Approach of Death?

* As ſome in *higher* Ranks of Life than thoſe for whom theſe DIRECTIONS were *immediately* intended, may probably look into it, I think it not improper, for their Sakes, to add, that I am very ſenſible, not only of the *Innocence*, but *Expediency* of AMUSEMENTS, when well choſen and moderate, when uſed not merely "to paſs away TIME," but to unbend the Mind, or give Eaſe and Health to the Body; and thus render us more fit for *profitable* Employments:—Therefore I would, by no Means, have this Queſtion ſo underſtood as condemning Amuſements *in general*, or inſinuating, that CHRISTIANITY and CHEERFULNESS were inconſiſtent with each other.---My Deſign is only to guard againſt *exceſſive* Indulgencies of this Kind;---againſt turning them into the *principal Buſineſs* of Life, inſtead of admitting them by Way of *Recreation*.---And ſince it is not uncommon, even for ſuch as are in the main *ſerious*, to ſquander away too many of their *ineſtimable* Moments in very Vanity, this Caution cannot be deemed *needleſs*.---May none of my Readers forget that Time is a Talent, for which we muſt give Account! That our great Maſter has expreſsly commanded us by his Apoſtle, "TO REDEEM IT:" That it is the Ground-work of *all* religious Improvement, and religious Service:—That to trifle it away, hurts the *Power* of Chriſtianity in our Hearts; as a Worm, at the Root of a Plant, obſtructs its Growth, imperceptibly indeed, but effectually, perhaps deſtructively.

Recreations, or Diverſions of any Kind?—Am I not ſubject to Pride, Oſtentation, or Extravagance in my Expences or Apparel?

3. Am I more concerned about, or intent upon the Care of my Body, Eſtate, or other Affairs of this World, than about the Intereſts of my Soul and the Security of my eternal Salvation?—What Progreſs have I lately made in ſubduing my conſtitutional Sins?—How have I this Day behaved under any *ſudden* Vexation, or Temptation to thoſe Sins which moſt eaſily beſet me?—Have I well conſidered that the *World of Spirits* muſt ſoon open upon me, perhaps this very Night?—Do I ſincerely deſire and labour to fit and prepare myſelf for Death, by repenting of, and forſaking my Sins; and by uſing all thoſe Means the holy Scriptures teach me, to obtain a Pardon, and to ſecure the Favour of my great Redeemer?—Do I ſtartle at the Thoughts of a *Separation* of Soul and Body; or can I compoſe myſelf in a reſigned * Diſpoſition, either to ſleep or die?

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* This is the Temper which the Believers of old *always* enjoyed, (ſee 2 *Cor.* v. 1, 2.) and which we ſhould *pray* to obtain; -- remembring that DEATH hath no Power to *hurt* that Soul, which is *united* by FAITH (ſee *John* xvii. 21.) to the great Redeemer, who is ſupreme Lord of the unſeen World; or, (as the Scripture expreſſes it) "*has the Keys of* HELL *and of* DEATH." *Rev.* i. 18.--- I cannot eaſily expreſs *this* Temper, which I would be ſo glad to cultivate and promote, better than in the Words of *Cowley*.

"*Be* ſatisfy'd *and* pleas'd *with what Thou art*;
"*Act* cheerfully *and* well *th' allotted Part.*
"*Improve the* preſent *Hour: Be thankful for the* paſt;
"*And neither* fear, *nor* wiſh *th' Approaches of the* laſt."

What a cheerful and reſigned Spirit is here!---The Attainment of which will be the greateſt Happineſs to ourſelves; is one of the chief *Ends* of the Chriſtian Religion; the moſt *amiable*, and, conſequently, the moſt *effectual* Method of recommending it to others.

The Archangel MICHAEL, is repreſented by *Milton*, as giving the ſame Kind of Advice to our Progenitor ADAM, alarmed at the painful Paſſages to Death.

"*Nor* love *thy Life, nor hate*; *but what thou liv'ſt,*
"*Live well*; *how* long, *or* ſhort *permit to Heaven*:
"*And patiently attend thy Diſſolution.*"

How

How have I discharged, or wherein have I neglected, the Duties required of me, either as a Parent or Child, a Brother or Sister, a Husband or Wife, a Servant or Master?

DIRECTION VII.

Remember * to keep holy the Sabbath Day conscientiously; to join in the publick Worship of GOD; and particularly to receive the holy Sacrament.

THE Temper of Mind, with which you ought to perform Acts of Devotion, has been already sufficiently expressed in the second Direction; and as in publick Worship, you are diligently to attend to your Minister, and devoutly to accompany him, I need say no more on that Particular: I shall only subjoin Forms suitable to the Occasion.

An *introductory* Prayer to be used before publick Worship.

GIve me, O LORD, for CHRIST's Sake, a deep Reverence of thy Presence; and grant me the Aid of thy holy Spirit to help my Infirmities, that in every Attendance on thy Worship, I may aim at thy Glory, and obtain thy Blessing. *Amen.*

A *concluding* Prayer to be used after publick Worship.

PArdon, O LORD, for CHRIST's Sake, the Coldness of my Devotion, and the Wanderings of my Thoughts. Graciously accept my imperfect Services, and enable me to grow wiser and better by every Attendance on thy Worship. *Amen.*

* God has injoined us to take *particular* Notice of the *fourth* Commandment, by putting the Word REMEMBER before it, since, on the due Observation of *this*, our Disposition and Ability to observe all the other must, in a good Measure, depend.

When you are at the Sacrament, from which I hope you will never abſent yourſelf, you will have a proper Opportunity for uſing the following Forms without interfering with the Communion Service, if you take this little Treatiſe with you, and are not poſſeſſed of Biſhop *Wilſon* on the Lord's Supper, or ſome other judicious Book on the Subject.

Forms to be uſed immediately *before* receiving the Sacrament.

General Petition. Vouchſafe, O LORD, to admit me a Sharer in the heavenly Entertainments of thy Children; and may I efficaciouſly partake of the Bread and Water of Life, of which, whoſoever ſpiritually eats and drinks, lives for ever.

Love. GOD ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten SON, that in him we might have everlaſting Life.—May I love him who has thus loved me!—And may I love all his faithful Servants for his Sake, and thus prove myſelf one of the Children of GOD, and a true Diſciple of CHRIST.

Thankfulneſs. I thank thee, O LORD, and bleſs thy holy Name, that, after all my Offences againſt thee, thou art yet pleaſed to grant me another Opportunity of Communion at thy Table, and to give me, on my ſincere Repentance, a freſh Aſſurance of my Pardon, by the precious Blood of that SON, in whom thou art always well pleaſed.

Repentance. I acknowledge myſelf to be deplorably polluted; but thy precious Blood, O bleſſed Saviour, can cleanſe me from all my Sins and Defilement; for which I am unfeignedly penitent. Deal graciouſly with me, I beſeech thee, and forgive, heal, and help me. Make me fit to receive theſe thy Creatures of Bread and Wine, in Remembrance of thee, to my Profit and Comfort, and my Soul ſhall bleſs thy Name for ever.

Faith. LORD, I believe, help my Unbelief!—I caſt myſelf upon thee alone for Salvation: I rely on thy all-ſufficient Merits for the Atonement of my

my Sins. Thou haſt redeemed me that I might be holy! Lord grant that I may experience the Power of thy Death for Sin, and work in me a Death unto Sin.

Forms to be uſed immediately *after* receiving the Sacrament.

Thankſgiving. Glory be to Thee, O LORD, who haſt made ſuch gracious Proviſion for loſt and undone Mankind; who haſt ſent thy SON to die for our Sins, and to ſave us when we had utterly ruined ourſelves. Glory be to Thee, O CHRIST, who haſt loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in thy own Blood.

Reſolutions. Grant me, O LORD, the Aid of thy Holy Spirit, that I may walk (as I now reſolve) like one who has been at thy Table. After I have taſted of the Pleaſures of thy Houſe, and eaten this Bread of Life, I reſolve no more to liſt up my Heel againſt thee.

Prayer. May I grow in Knowledge and in Grace, that my Heart may be weaned from Sin and the World, and that I may make it my Meat and Drink to do the Will of my Father, who is in Heaven. *Amen.*

DIRECTION VIII.

Never think you have made a ſufficient Progreſs in Religion, but labour with perſevering Diligence to attain, as far as in you lies, the higheſt Degree of Holineſs, in your appointed Station.

TO make Men *holy* is the *principal* Deſign * of Chriſtianity, "the one Thing needful," not only to ſave them from the Puniſhment of Sin in Hell, but from the Dominion

* See a beautiful and correct Edition (being the fourth) of the good Biſhop *Fowler's Deſign of Chriſtianity*, lately printed in Duodecimo, and ſold (Price Three Shillings) by Mr. *John Rivington*, in

Dominion of it, even while here on Earth, 1 *John* iii. 8. Let it therefore be *your principal* Care to be in a progreſſive State of Holineſs; being fully ſenſible, at the ſame Time, that the complete Obedience and Sacrifice, made for us by that divine Redeemer, "*who although he was* "*found in Faſhion as a Man, yet thought it not Robbery to* "*be equal with God*, becauſe *in him dwelleth the Fulneſs* "*of God bodily*," is our only Hope, that any Obedience or Perfection of ours can meet with Acceptance.—GOD has ſet *Perfection* in the full View of his Servants:—Not as what they ſhall immediately attain *, but as what they ought ardently to purſue, by walking in the Light, as He is in the Light, and purifying themſelves, as He is pure. While we are *here*, we never arrive to full Maturity: Nor are we all of one Growth; but there are little Children, young Men, and Fathers in Chriſtianity. Hence it is that our Lord compares his Kingdom to a Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, which gradually expands itſelf into a great Tree.

There are *little Children*, ſpiritually ſpeaking, juſt born, hanging, as it were, on the Breaſt.—Theſe know their heavenly Parent, though they know little elſe, and call

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in St. *Paul's Church-yard*. The Biſhop, in this well-known Treatiſe, has given, as he himſelf expreſſes it, "a plain Demonſtra-"tion, that the induing Men with *inward, real* Righteouſneſs (or "true Holineſs) was the *ultimate* End of our Saviour's coming in-"to the World, and is the great † Intention of his bleſſed Goſpel."—"What I write (ſays he in his Preface) is intended to ſtrike at "the grand CAUSE of thoſe religious Controverſies with which we "are continually diſturbed, and the pernicious Effects of them, "as they are to be imputed to nothing ſo much, as to the IGNO-"RANCE *of*, or NON ATTENDANCE *to*, the *Deſign* of Chriſtianity."

* That you may make the better Progreſs in Religion, I would, above all Things, if you have Leiſure and Capacity, recommend to you the keeping a DIARY, or daily Account how you employ your Time. This would be of great Uſe, both with regard to your *ſpiritual* and *temporal* Concerns.

But if you cannot keep a Diary in ſo full a Manner as you could wiſh, yet you may occaſionally commit to writing, a few Obſervations on the State of your Mind, and your Progreſs or Decline in Religion, which the oftener they are repeated, the greater Advantage you will receive.

† See Titus ii. 14. and 1 John iii. 5.

after

after God, though imperfectly, and with a stammering Tongue. They desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow; and yet much gross Ignorance, Folly and Weakness remains in them.—Such Christians are liable to two great Errors. The one is, when they *find* the Comforts of Religion; the other, when they find them *not*. While their Comforts *continue*, they are so much affected, that they are ready to neglect their lawful Callings, as a great Hindrance to their spiritual Exercises; and from this mistaken Zeal, they are apt to be remiss and unprofitable, and to censure others.—When Comfort is *wanting*, they are greatly dejected, so as to give their Christian Associates real Concern, and much Perplexity, how to encourage and support them rationally.—Like unskilful Swimmers out of their Depth, they are continually sinking, and it is difficult to keep their Heads above Water.

Young Men are a Kind of middle Christians; not so well versed in their Christian Warfare as the *Fathers*, nor yet so weak and unexperienced as the *Children*. These may be considered as in the Midst of the Combat against their spiritual Adversaries, as resisting and subduing those unruly Desires and Passions, by which they are, notwithstanding, sometimes overcome.—*Now* the Heart is at Peace; *anon* disturbed by *inward* Suggestions and *outward* Attacks. St. *John* warns them of this, and animates them to the Combat, by assuring them of Victory: "I have written unto you *young Men*, says he, because "ye are strong, and the Word of God abides in you, "and ye have overcome the Wicked One."

Fathers are such Christians as have long been accustomed to distinguish, and been exercised in discerning Good from Evil.—Such as have long been acquainted with the Duties of Holiness, have obtained Grace of God to walk more comfortably and constantly in the Paths of the Gospel than young Men, or little Children. These being habituated to an heavenly Course, are brought to delight in the Law of the Lord, as the fullest Liberty; so that *they*, compared with other weak Christians, may be called *perfect*, though they are not arrived to a complete Growth.

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Their Thoughts and Desires are not always such as they would, but are frequently rebellious, and such as they would not;—and by this Means their best Actions are mixed with Corruption, and their Thoughts savour of the Flesh, that abides in them.

Upon the whole then it is evident, that these several Degrees of Christians have great Need to strive earnestly for higher Perfection. The Apostle St. *Paul*, who was one of the first Rate, expressly says, "that He did not "account himself already perfect, but that He pressed "towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling "of God in Christ Jesus." We may therefore conclude, that sinless Perfection cannot be obtained on this Side of the Grave.—Yet while Sin remains, it must be pursued to its Destruction, and Perfection sought after with persevering Diligence.—Every Christian is a Soldier by Profession, and can never be discharged till the Enemy is totally subdued. A Progress in Holiness there must be; and when this is not continued, it is too sad a Sign of Insincerity. Where no Growth is, there is the greatest Reason to suspect that no Life is. The Water which Christ gives his Followers, is a Well of Water, that never ceases bubbling up, till it extends to everlasting Life.

Should you enquire how you must labour to attain Perfection? The Answer is ready—Observe these *eight* spiritual Directions. You'll remember, in these are the *Means* of Grace.—Labour by these *Means* to perfect every Christian Grace, and to subdue every sinful Habit; for in this consists that Perfection which I am intreating you so earnestly to acquire.—If no Qualifications are necessary to become meet Partakers with the Saints in Light, to what Purpose can you suppose that the Example of Jesus Christ, and the Perfection of your heavenly Father, are proposed for Imitation? Can you believe that God is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, and yet can you expect to be received into his Presence in your Sins and Pollutions? Ah! no.—Deceive not yourselves. —None who are impure can enter those happy Mansions;

nor,

nor, if they ſhould, are they capable * of reliſhing the Bliſs that is there enjoyed, as I have already fully obſerved under my *firſt Direction*.—No! Heaven muſt ceaſe to be Heaven, were ſuch its Inhabitants.—Theſe are ſelf-evident Truths.

Conſider in what Manner you become capable of enjoying the good Things of this Life. The wiſe and royal Preacher *Solomon* tells you, and Experience teaches you, that "*the Light is ſweet, and a pleaſant Thing it* "*is to behold the Sun.*" Yet for this Pleaſure you are wholly indebted to that aſtoniſhing Piece of heavenly Workmanſhip, the EYE, and the ſeveral Organs peculiarly fitted to receive the Light. Let *the* EYE be *diſtempered*, and all Objects, which *in themſelves* remain the ſame, with Regard to *you*, loſe their Beauty and Luſtre. Let *the* EYE be totally loſt, then the Senſe, which depends upon it, is loſt alſo, and "*the whole* "*Body is full of Darkneſs.*"—The moſt exquiſitely delicate *Food* affords no Reliſh to a *vitiated Palate*, nor can it ſit eaſy on the *pall'd Stomach*.—The moſt enchanting Muſick cannot charm either "*the deaf Adder, who* "*ſtoppeth her Ears*," or that unhappy Man who has no longer the Uſe of them.

So it is with the *Soul* unſanctified.—All Traces of the divine Image are defaced, by a Courſe of Sin.—Such a one ſees no Comelineſs in the Saviour. He has neither the *Inclination* to deſire, the *Means* to obtain, or a *Ca-*

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* Alas! what Delight would it be to a *Swine* to be wrapt in fine Linen, and laid in Odours? His Senſes are not gratified by any ſuch Delicacies, nor would he feel any Thing beſides the Torment of being with-held from the Mire.---Thoſe *Eyes* which have continually beheld *Vanity*, would be dazzled, not delighted with the *beatific Viſion*; neither could that *Tongue*, which has accuſtomed itſelf only to *Oaths*, find Harmony in an Hallelujah. It is the *peculiar* Privilege of "the pure in Heart to ſee God." *Matt.* v. 8. ---This is a Quotation from an excellent Book, well deſerving the *moſt ſerious* Conſideration, and Recommendation of every true Friend to Religion; written by the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*; and intitled, *The* CAUSES *of the* DECAY *of Chriſtian Piety*; or, *An impartial* SURVEY *of the Ruins of the Chriſtian Religion, undermined by unchriſtian Practice.*

pacity

pacity to enjoy any of those Blessings (beautiful and heavenly as they are) which God has prepared for those who love Him.

If you therefore are thus sinful, and continue thus, you will be fit only for the Society of those apostate Spirits, to whose Temptations you have yielded, under whose rebellious Banners you have inlisted, and whose Qualities you have imitated; and as you was fit only for their Society, so you must be their Companions in those Regions of Despair and Woe, "*Where the Worm* "*dies not, and the Fire is not quenched.*"—Oh! consider *this*, ye who forget God, and treasure up Wrath unto the Day of Wrath.—As for you, ye blessed Children of your heavenly Father, who love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity, and earnestly pray to be made more and more like him, proceed with Courage; and make *daily* Advances in the blessed Path, which you have wisely chosen: "*Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding* "*in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your* "*Labour is not in vain in the Lord.*"

POSTSCRIPT.

1. AS Points of Controversy and Speculation have so frequently been destructive of true Piety, and preventive of that regular Course of Devotion which I have here described; I hope my Readers will pay little if any Regard to them.—I apprehend such Points to be included in the Number of those Questions, which the Apostle has warned us to avoid, *because they engender Strife.*—Such of them as relate to the Counsels, Decrees, or supernatural Operations of the Almighty, which HE has not thought fit to reveal, or explain in his written Word, I look upon as the Offspring of a vain and fruitless Curiosity (if not suggested by the Tempter and Enemy of Mankind)

Mankind) and all peremptory Decisions of them as a Compound of human Weakness and Arrogance.—However important such Points may seem to *some*, I am fully satisfied, they are of very little Importance towards the GREAT END of our blessed Saviour's Coming into the World; namely, THE SALVATION OF MAN.—This Persuasion of Mind is *to me* a Preservative against *all religious Doubts*; the great Comfort of which, and the Hope that others may reap the same invaluable Benefit, make it necessary for me to be more explicit on this Subject.

2. I must likewise beg Leave to recommend in the strongest Manner, what is indeed in a great Measure the Consequence of my laying no great Stress on controversial Points: I mean, very favourable Thoughts *of*, and *Expressions towards*, those pious and sincere Christians, who differ in their Sentiments concerning the ceremonial Part of Religion, or any Matter not expressly commanded, or clearly revealed in Scripture. This, if not the very Essence of Christian Charity, ought, I am sure, to be inseparably connected with it. However, so far as the *two* Particulars I have here mentioned may be distinguished from each other, I shall submit a few Remarks on each, to the Consideration of my Readers.

1. *First*, As to *controverted* Points, I freely own that my daily Use of the Scriptures, and my steady Attention to them, has greatly abated my Regard to what is not *there* clearly revealed, or *from thence* manifestly deduced; since many Opinions fiercely contended for on one Side, and opposed with the greatest Earnestness and Zeal on the other, seem to *me* (after what has, I hope, been a careful and impartial Examination) rather different *in Appearance*, than in *Substance*, and upon the whole to be, as I have already observed, of very little Signification, or Use in our Way to Heaven. For these Reasons I have studiously avoided whatever might lead to any of those *Controversies*, which have so unhappily divided Christians of different Denominations. The Church of Christ would more illustriously display the Spirit, and conform to the Rules of its blessed Founder, were *these* less studied,

or regarded.—I have too often seen the Understanding so darkened by Prejudice in Favour of precarious Systems, that the clearest, the most important, and invariable Truths of holy Writ, have been made to depend on such particular and doubtful Interpretations, as might best conduce to the Support of those Notions.—A melancholy Proof that the Champions of Controversy labour not so much to form their Plan from Scripture, as to wrest Scripture for the Support of their Plan.

Our divine Master himself has given us an infallible Rule for the Direction of our Judgment, in declaring, that "*the Tree is known by its Fruits*;" and he has taught us by his Apostle, that "*Faith worketh by Love.*"—A due Attention to *this* might certainly prevent a great Number of presumptuous Inquiries, and unnecessary, if not unmeaning, Distinctions. *Faith* may (alas! it will) afford Matter of Controversy: *Hope* will be differently founded; but *Charity* (declared the greatest and most important of the *three*) can admit of no Debate or Doubt; yet whilst Men enter into curious Researches *after*, and endless Disputes *about*, the *two former*, how often do they disregard, and entirely lose Sight of *the last!*—Thus perplexing their Minds, and souring their Tempers "*with* "*vain Janglings*," to the manifest Detriment of that *vital Holiness*, on which our Peace depends; which it is the *grand End* of the Gospel to promote; and which is the *only Proof* that Men actually *are* what they would *be thought*.

Ye different Sects, who all *declare*,
Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there!
If real Proofs *ye mean to give*,
Shew me as Christians how ye live.

It is far from my Design to recommend the particular Tenets of this or that Sett of Men, and I have therefore to the utmost of my Power avoided all *Singularities of Expression*; yet as scarcely any Thing can be advanced, which *some* have not questioned, or made Matter of Dispute, I have referred to such Texts of Scripture, as appear to me evidently to speak the same Sentiments, that

I might, as far as poſſible, be ſheltered under their *ſacred Authority* from that cenſorious and cavilling Diſpoſition, by which ſome rather ſeek to diſtinguiſh *themſelves*, than to ſerve the common Cauſe of Religion.

Now ſhould any one imagine that the Diſregard I have expreſſed to the diſtinguiſhing Tenets of particular Sects, or Bodies of Men, tends to introduce what are called *Latitudinarian Principles*, and that an Indifference towards *any* of thoſe implies a Diſtruſt or Contempt of *all*; I would anſwer, that an Attention *to thoſe Fundamentals*, which the holy Scriptures clearly and neceſſarily require, and which "*the wayfaring Man may find*," joined with a due Submiſſion to ſuch Rules as the eccleſiaſtical or legal Governors of *any* Society ſhall preſcribe with a View *to Decency and Order only*, will be ſo far from cauſing Unſteadineſs or Doubt, that it is the ſtrongeſt Preſervative againſt unſettled Notions in Religion.—Whoſoever firmly believes that every Thing neceſſary to Salvation is ſo clearly taught in the holy Scriptures, that "*He who* "*runs may read*;" and that whatever remains obſcure (ſee *Ecclus* iii. 21.) after a diligent and attentive Search, is rather *Matter of Curioſity* than of Uſe, (deeming *as ſuch*, all diſputable Points, wherein Chriſt and his Apoſtles have neither made any Deciſion, nor in expreſs Words, and in the cleareſt Senſe of thoſe Words, required an Aſſent to thoſe Points) *ſuch a one*, I ſay, will follow St. *Paul*'s Advice in avoiding all curious, and unprofitable Queſtions, and maintain his Peace in the Midſt of a wrangling and contentious World.—*This* will be to *Him* the very Ground of Certainty, Satisfaction, and Security: It is indeed building upon a Rock in ſuch a Manner as may defy the Storms of every loud, but impotent Controverſy.

2. *Secondly*, As to the favourable Thoughts which I ſincerely entertain, and openly profeſs towards thoſe, whoſe Opinions are different from each other, or from my own, either relating to Ceremonies, or other Matters not expreſly commanded, or clearly revealed in Scripture (by which I more particularly mean thoſe [redacted] who in *England conform* to our eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment, and

those who *dissent* from it) I will only, in few Words, say, that as such a candid Disposition in this State of *Imperfection*, appears *to me* a necessary and distinguishing Characteristic * of Christianity, I hope, I shall *always* retain, and study to cultivate it.

I am known to be a Member of the Church of *England*, and think I have sufficient Reasons for my Adherence to it.—I look not for Perfection in any Thing of mere human Institution: I am not taught by *Her* to expect it in *her own* Institutions or Decisions.—No!—Permit me to mention it to her Honour, that in her Articles "*She acknowledges the holy Scriptures to be the* only *Rule of Faith*;

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* See these *charitable* Tenets recommended and enforced by Bishop *Taylor*, on THE LIBERTY OF PROPHESYING; (wherein he shews the *Unreasonableness* of prescribing to another Man's Faith;) and by Dr. *Watts* in his ORTHODOXY, and CHARITY UNITED.—It is much to be wished that the *first* was abridged, and the *latter* more generally read.—I have likewise the Satisfaction of finding *the same candid* Sentiments inculcated by that eminently good Man, Bishop *Fowler*, in his Defence of the Principles and Practices of certain *moderate* Divines of the Church of *England*—The Bishop concludes this Work with the most earnest Wishes, and fervent Prayers to Heaven, "*That it may please God to guide all* "*our Feet into the Way of Peace; that he would give us* "*teachable Tempers, modest and meek Spirits; and that the Dif-* "*ferences in our Sentiments may not have so ill an Influence upon* "*our Minds, as to create* UNCHARITABLE *Heats, and* UNCHRISTIAN "*Animosities.—That we may place our Religion in* DOING, *rather than* "*in* TALKING *and* DISPUTING.—*That we may hate a selfish, private* "*Spirit, as unworthy of the Benignity, and Generosity of the Christian* "*Religion;—and that we may contend with each other about nothing* "*more, than who shall express in the Midst of our different Persuasions,* "*most Charity and most Candour.*" And in another Part of his Writings, he makes a Reply, worthy of a Christian Bishop, to a warm Antagonist, who had attacked him unjustly and scurrilously. "*I will do nothing like imitating him in Revilings and Defamations; I* "*have not, I thank God,* so *learned Christ. St.* Paul *tells us that* "Charity *shall cover a Multitude of Sins; but* what *shall cover* Un-"charitableness *with all its bitter Fruits? Not* Orthodoxy, *be it* "*ever so infallible; nor yet* Zeal against Heresy, *be it ever so* "*flaming.*"

Can there be a *Christian* who would refuse to join with the Bishop, in such Sentiments, Wishes, and Prayers? Or can there be Words, which better express the *very Essence* of Christianity.

"—*does*

" —*does not arrogate to herſelf* Infallibility;—*nor pronounce* " *as* hopeleſs, reprobate, *and* damned, *thoſe who are not* " *within her Pale.*" On *theſe* Principles is founded my *invariable* Attachment to the eſtabliſhed Church; which whilſt I profeſs *in this public Manner*, I ſcruple not at the ſame Time to declare, that in Good-will, Love, and Charity, I account myſelf, and deſire to be eſteemed the Fellow-Member, and Brother of every *real Chriſtian*; by which I would be underſtood to mean the candidly religious and truly good of all Denominations. Let us not forget the Reprimand given by St. *Paul* to the Cenſurer, in theſe divine Words, " *For who art thou* " *that judgeſt another Man's Servant? One Man eſteemeth* " *one Day above another—another eſteemeth every Day alike* " *—Let every Man be fully perſuaded in his own Mind. He* " *that regardeth the Day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he* " *that regardeth not the Day, to the Lord he doth not regard* " *it. And we ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat of* " *Chriſt.*" Rom. xiv. 4.

But are we obliged to comply with *all* Tempers or Peculiarities contrary to Order, and to our own matureſt Judgment? I anſwer—By no means.—I highly honour Piety and Virtue, and I moſt ſincerely pity Enthuſiaſm, Error, and Prejudice, whereſoever they appear: Yet when I apprehend that THESE *concur*, as they too often do, in the *ſame* Perſon, I would no more communicate for a Conſtancy with *ſuch* in their Public Worſhip, or be incorporated with them, than I would make them the Subject of Scoffs and Ridicule: And whilſt what I look upon as *an Error in Judgment*, is the Object of my *Compaſſion*, not of my *Reſentment*, it ſhall, by the Grace of God, be my conſtant Endeavour, as it is clearly my Duty, " *if it be poſſible, and as much as lieth in me, to* " *live peaceably with all Men.*" See Rom. xii. 18.

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☞ These *eight* SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS I would advise you, *to get by Heart*, and reflect daily upon what has been further advanced to explain and enforce them. THESE may seem as Burthens and Penances to those whose Hearts are averse to Religion; but if you once attain a Relish for it, they will become, in a Manner, natural to you. Indeed you will scarcely, without Pain to yourself, omit doing what they injoin, so much Delight will you find in their Observance, and so strongly will your Conscience reproach you on the Neglect; for you will *then* clearly see that I have recommended no more to you, than what your Necessities, your Duty and Gratitude require.—My Design is purely to habituate your Mind to Religion and Goodness; to introduce, urge, and cultivate that Repentance, Faith, and Obedience, which the Gospel of Jesus Christ has declared necessary to Salvation.—If therefore you walk according to THESE DIRECTIONS, you will live in constant Communion with God—and Communion with Him here (and that alone) can fit you for eternal Happiness with Him hereafter; for without such Gospel Holiness, improved as God gives Time and Opportunity, we must expect to be for ever banished from his Presence.

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