

RICHARD BAXTER

A CHRISTIAN
DIRECTORY, PART 2:
CHRISTIAN ECONOMICS

Richard Baxter
A Christian Directory, Part
2: Christian Economics

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CHAPTER I.

DIRECTIONS ABOUT MARRIAGE; FOR CHOICE AND CONTRACT

As the persons of christians in their privatest capacities are holy, as being dedicated and separated unto God, so also must their families be: HOLINESS TO THE LORD must be as it were written on their doors, and on their relations, their possessions, and affairs. To which it is requisite, 1. That there be a holy constitution of their families. 2. And a holy government of them, and discharge of the several duties of the members of the family. To the right constituting of a family, belongeth, (1.) The right contracting of marriage, and, (2.) The right choice and contract betwixt masters and their servants. For the first,

Direct. I. Take heed that neither lust nor rashness do thrust you into a married condition, before you see such reasons to invite you to it, as may assure you of the call and approbation of God. For, 1. It is God that you must serve in your married state, and

therefore it is meet that you take his counsel before you rush upon it; for he knoweth best himself what belongeth to his service. 2. And it is God that you must still depend upon, for the blessing and comforts of your relation: and therefore there is very great reason that you take his advice and consent, as the chief things requisite to the match: if the consent of parents be necessary, much more is the consent of God.

Quest. But how shall a man know whether God call him to marriage, or consent unto it? Hath he not here left all men to their liberties, as in a thing indifferent?

Whether marriage be indifferent

Answ. God hath not made any universal law commanding or forbidding marriage; but in this regard hath left it indifferent to mankind: yet not allowing all to marry (for undoubtedly to some it is unlawful). But he hath by other general laws or rules directed men to know, in what cases it is lawful, and in what cases it is a sin. As every man is bound to choose that condition in which he may serve God with the best advantages, and which tendeth most to his spiritual welfare, and increase in holiness. Now there is nothing in marriage itself which maketh it commonly inconsistent with these benefits, and the fulfilling of these laws: and therefore it is said, that "he that marrieth doth well,"¹ that

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 7, 38.

is, he doth that which of itself is not unlawful, and which to some is the most eligible state of life. But there is something in a single life which maketh it, especially to preachers and persecuted christians, to be more usually the most advantageous state of life, to these ends of christianity; and therefore it is said, that "he that marrieth not, doth better." And yet to individual persons, it is hard to imagine how it can choose but be either a duty or a sin; at least except in some unusual cases. For it is a thing of so great moment as to the ordering of our hearts and lives, that it is hard to imagine that it should ever be indifferent as a means to our main end, but must either be a very great help or hinderance. But yet if there be any persons whose case may be so equally poised with accidents on both sides, that to the most judicious man it is not discernible, whether a single or married state of life is like to conduce more to their personal holiness or public usefulness, or the good of others, to such persons marriage in the individual circumstantiated act is a thing indifferent.

Who are called to marry

By these conditions following you may know, what persons have a call from God to marry, and who have not his call or approbation. 1. If there be the peremptory will or command of parents to children that are under their power and government, and no greater matter on the contrary to hinder it, the command of parents signifieth the command of God: but if parents do but

persuade and not command, though their desires must not be causelessly refused, yet a smaller impediment may preponderate than in case of a peremptory command. 2. They are called to marry who have not the gift of continence, and cannot by the use of lawful means attain it, and have no impediment which maketh it unlawful to them to marry. "But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn," 1 Cor. vii. 9. But here the divers degrees of the urgent and the hindering causes must be compared, and the weightiest must prevail. For some that have very strong lusts may yet have stronger impediments: and though they cannot keep that chastity in their thoughts as they desire, yet in such a case they must abstain. And there is no man but may keep his body in chastity if he will do his part: yea, and thoughts themselves, may be commonly, and for the most part, kept pure, and wanton imaginations quickly checked, if men be godly, and will do what they can. But on the other side, there are some that have a more tameable measure of concupiscence, and yet have no considerable hinderance, whose duty it may be to marry, as the most certain and successful means against that small degree, as long as there is nothing to forbid it. 3. Another cause that warranteth marriage is, when upon a wise casting up of all accounts, it is apparently most probable that in a married state, one may be most serviceable to God and the public good: that there will be in it greater helps and fewer hinderances to the great ends of our lives; the glorifying of God, and the saving of ourselves and others. And whereas it must be expected that every

condition should be more helpful to us in one respect, and hinder us more in another respect; and that in one we have most helps for a contemplative life, and in another we are better furnished for an active, serviceable life, the great skill therefore in the discerning of our duties, lieth in the prudent pondering and comparing of the commodities and discommodities, without the seduction of fantasy, lust, or passion, and in a true discerning which side it is that hath the greatest weight.²

Observations

Here it must be carefully observed, 1. That the two first reasons for marriage, (concupiscence and the will of parents,) or any such like, have their strength but in subordination to the third (the final cause, or interest of God and our salvation). And that this last reason (from the end) is of itself sufficient without any of the other, but none of the other are sufficient without this. If it be clear that in a married state you have better advantages for the service of God, and doing good to others, and saving your own souls, than you can have in a single state of life, then it is undoubtedly your duty to marry; for our obligation to seek our ultimate end is the most constant, indispensable obligation. Though parents command it not, though you have no corporal

² Unmarried men are the best friends, the best masters, the best servants; but not always the best subjects: for they are light to run away, and therefore venturous, &c. Lord Bacon, Essay 8.

necessity, yet it is a duty if it certainly make most for your ultimate end. 2. But yet observe also, that no pretence of your ultimate end itself will warrant you to marry, when any other accident hath first made it a thing unlawful, while that accident continueth. For we must not do evil that good may come by it. Our salvation is not furthered by sin; and though we saw a probability that we might do more good to others, if we did but commit such a sin to accomplish it, yet it is not to be done. For our lives and mercies being all in the hand of God, and the successes and acceptance of all our endeavours depending wholly upon him, it can never be a rational way to attain them, by wilful offending him by our sin! It is a likely means to public good for able and good men to be magistrates and ministers; and yet he that would lie, or be perjured, or commit any known sin that he may be a magistrate, or that he may preach the gospel, might better expect a curse on himself and his endeavours, than God's acceptance, or his blessing and success; so he that would sin to change his state for the better, would find that he changed it for the worse: or if it do good to others, he may expect no good but ruin to himself, if repentance prevent it not. 3. Observe also, that if the question be only which state of life it is (married or single) which best conduceth to this ultimate end, then any one of the subordinate reasons will prove that we have a call, if there be not greater reasons on the contrary side. As in case you have no corporal necessity, the will of parents alone may oblige you, if there be no greater thing against it: or if parents oblige you not,

yet corporal necessity alone may do it: or if neither of these invite you, yet a clear probability of the attaining of such an estate or opportunity, as may make you more fit to relieve many others, or be serviceable to the church, or the blessing of children who may be devoted to God, may warrant your marriage, if no greater reasons lie against it; for when the scales are equal, any one of these may turn them.

Who may not marry

By this also you may perceive who they be that have no call to marry, and to whom it is a sin. As, 1. No man hath a call to marry, who laying all the commodities and discommodities together, may clearly discern that a married state is like to be a greater hinderance of his salvation, or to his serving or honouring God in the world, and so to disadvantage him as to his ultimate end.

Quest. But what if parents do command it? or will set against me if I disobey?

Answ. Parents have no authority to command you any thing against God or your salvation, or your ultimate end. Therefore here you owe them no formal obedience: but yet the will of parents, with all the consequents, must be put into the scales with all other considerations, and if they make the discommodities of a single life to become the greater, as to your end, then they may bring you under a duty or obligation to marry; not *necessitate*

præcepti, as obedience to their command; but *necessitate medii*, as a means to your ultimate end, and in obedience to that general command of God, which requireth you to "seek first" your ultimate end, even "the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," Matt. vi. 33.

Quest. But what if I have a corporal necessity, and yet I can foresee that marriage will greatly disadvantage me as to the service of God and my salvation?

Answ. 1. You must understand that no corporal necessity is absolute: for there is no man so lustful but may possibly bridle his lust by other lawful means; by diet, labour, sober company, diverting business, solitude, watching the thoughts and senses, or at least by the physician's help; so that the necessity is but *secundum quid*, or an urgency rather than a simple necessity. And then, 2. This measure of necessity must be itself laid in the balance with the other accidents; and if this necessity will turn the scales by making a single life more disadvantageous to your ultimate end, your lust being a greater impediment to you than all the inconveniencies of marriage will be, then the case is resolved, "it is better to marry than to burn." But if the hinderances in a married state are like to be greater, than the hinderances of your concupiscence, then you must set yourself to the curbing and curing of that concupiscence; and in the use of God's means expect his blessing.

Of parents' wills

2. Children are not, ordinarily, called of God to marry, when their parents do absolutely and peremptorily forbid it. For though parents' commands cannot make it a duty, when we are sure it would hinder the interest of God our ultimate end; yet parents' prohibitions may make it a sin, when there is a clear probability that it would most conduce to our ultimate end, were it not prohibited. Because, (1.) Affirmatives bind not *semper et ad semper*, as negatives or prohibitions do. (2.) Because the sin of disobedience to parents will cross the tendency of it unto good, and do more against our ultimate end, than all the advantages of marriage can do for it. A duty is then to us no duty, when it cannot be performed without a chosen, wilful sin. In many cases we are bound to forbear what a governor forbiddeth, when we are not bound to do the contrary if he command it. It is easier to make a duty to be no duty, than to make a sin to be no sin. One bad ingredient may turn a duty into a sin, when one good ingredient will not turn a sin into a duty, or into no sin.

Quest. But may not a governor's prohibition be outweighed by some great degrees of incommmodity? It is better to marry than to burn. 1. What if parents forbid children to marry absolutely until death, and so deprive them of the lawful remedy against lust? 2. And if they do not so, yet if they forbid it them when it is to them most seasonable and necessary, it seemeth little better.

3. Or if they forbid them to marry where their affections are so engaged, as that they cannot be taken off without their mutual ruin? May not children marry in such cases of necessity as these, without and against the will of their parents?

Ans. I cannot deny but some cases may be imagined or fall out, in which it is lawful to do what a governor forbiddeth, and to marry against the will of parents: for they have their power to edification, and not unto destruction. As if a son be qualified with eminent gifts for the work of the ministry, in a time and place that needeth much help; if a malignant parent, in hatred of that sacred office, should never so peremptorily forbid him, yet may the son devote himself to the blessed work of saving souls: even as a son may not forbear to relieve the poor (with that which is his own) though his parents should forbid him; nor forbear to put himself into a capacity to relieve them for the future; nor forbear his own necessary food and raiment though he be forbidden: as Daniel would not forbear praying openly in his house, when he was forbidden by the king and law. When any inseparable accident doth make a thing, of itself indifferent, become a duty, a governor's prohibition will not discharge us from that duty, unless the accident be smaller than the accident of the ruler's prohibition, and then it may be outweighed by it; but to determine what accidents are greater or less is a difficult task.

And as to the particular questions, to the first I answer, If parents forbid their children to marry while they live, it is convenient and safe to obey them until death, if no greater

obligation to the contrary forbid it: but it is necessary to obey them during the time that the children live under the government of their parents, as in their houses, in their younger years (except in some few extraordinary cases). But when parents are dead, (though they leave commands in their wills,) or when age or former marriage hath removed children from under their government, a smaller matter will serve to justify their disobedience here, than when the children in minority are less fit to govern themselves. For though we owe parents a limited obedience still, yet at full age the child is more at his own disposal than he was before. Nature hath given us a hint of her intention in the instinct of brutes, who are all taught to protect, and lead, and provide for their young ones, while the young are insufficient for themselves; but when they are grown to self-sufficiency, they drive them away or neglect them. If a wise son that hath a wife and many children, and great affairs to manage in the world, should he bound to as absolute obedience to his aged parents, as he was in his childhood, it would ruin their affairs, and parents' government would pull down that in their old age, which they built up in their middle age.

And to the second question I answer, that, 1. Children that pretend to unconquerable lust or love, must do all they can to subdue such inordinate affections, and bring their lusts to stoop to reason and their parents' wills. And if they do their best, there are either none, or not one of many hundreds, but may maintain their chastity together with their obedience. 2. And if any say, I have

done my best, and yet am under a necessity of marriage; and am I not then bound to marry though my parents forbid me? I answer, it is not to be believed: either you have not done your best, or else you are not under a necessity. And your urgency being your own fault, (seeing you should subdue it,) God still obligeth you both to subdue your vice, and to obey your parents. 3. But if there should be any one that hath such an (incredible) necessity of marriage, he is to procure some others to solicit his parents for their consent, and if he cannot obtain it, some say, it is his duty to marry without it: I should rather say that it is *minus malum*, the lesser evil: and that having cast himself into some necessity of sinning, it is still his duty to avoid both, and to choose neither; but it is the smaller sin to choose to disobey his parents, rather than to live in the flames of lust and the filth of unchastity. And some divines say, that in such a case a son should appeal to the magistrate, as a superior authority above the father. But others think, 1. That this leaveth it as difficult to resolve what he shall do, if the magistrate also consent not: and, 2. That it doth but resolve one difficulty by a greater; it being very doubtful whether in domestic cases the authority of the parent or the magistrate be the greater.

3. The same answer serveth as to the third question, when parents forbid you to marry the persons that you are most fond of. For such fondness (whether you call it lust or love) as will not stoop to reason and your parents' wills, is inordinate and sinful. And therefore the thing that God bindeth you to, is by his

appointed means to subdue it, and to obey: but if you cannot, the accidents and probable consequents must tell you which is the lesser evil.

Quest. But what if the child have promised marriage, and the parents be against it? *Answ.* If the child was under the parents' government, and short of years of discretion also, the promise is void for want of capacity. And if the child was at age, yet the promise was a sinful promise, as to the promising act, and also as to the thing promised during the parents' dissent. If the *actus promittendi* only had been sinful, (the promise making,) the promise might nevertheless oblige (unless it were null as well as sinful). But the *materia promissa* being sinful, (the matter promised,) to marry while parents do dissent, such a child is bound to forbear the fulfilling of that promise till the parents do consent or die. And yet he is bound from marrying any other, (unless he be disobliged by the person that he hath made the promise to,) because he knoweth not but his parents may consent hereafter; and whenever they consent or die, the promise then is obligatory, and must be performed.

The third chapter of Numbers enableth parents to disoblige a daughter that is in their house, from a vow made to God, so be it they disallow it at the first hearing. Hence there are two doubts arise: 1. Whether this power extend not to the disobliging of a promise or contract of matrimony. 2. Whether it extend not to a son as well as a daughter. And most expositors are for the affirmative of both cases. But I have showed you before that it

is upon uncertain grounds: 1. It is uncertain whether God, who would thus give up his own right in case of vowing, will also give away the right of others, without their consent, in case of promises or contracts. And, 2. It is uncertain whether this be not an indulgence only of the weaker sex, seeing many words in the text seem plainly to intimate so much. And it is dangerous upon our own presumptions, to stretch God's laws to every thing we imagine there is the same reason for; seeing our imaginations may so easily be deceived; and God could have expressed such particulars if he would. And therefore (when there is not clear ground for our inferences in the text) it is but to say, Thus and thus should God have said, when we cannot say, Thus he hath said. We must not make laws under the pretence of expounding them: whatsoever God commandeth thee, take heed that thou do it: thou shalt add nothing thereto, nor take ought therefrom, Deut. xii. 32.

Quest. If the question therefore be not of the sinfulness, but the nullity of such promises of children, because of the dissent of parents, for my part I am not able to prove any such nullity. It is said, that they are not *sui juris*, their own, and therefore their promises are null: but if they have attained to years and use of discretion, they are naturally so far *sui juris* as to be capable of disposing even of their souls, and therefore of their fidelity. They can oblige themselves to God or man; though they are not so far *sui juris* as to be ungoverned: for so, no child, no subject, no man is *sui juris*; seeing all are under the government of God. And yet

if a man promise to do a thing sinful, it is not a nullity, but a sin; not no promise, but a sinful promise. A nullity is, when the *actus promittendi* is reputative *nullus vel non actus*. And when no promise is made, then none can be broken.

Quest. But if the question be only how far such promises must be kept, I answer by summing up what I have said: 1. If the child had not the use of reason, the want of natural capacity proveth the promise null: here *ignorantis non est consensus*. 2. If he was at age and use of reason, then, 1. If the promising act only was sinful, (as before I said of vows,) the promise must be both repented of and kept. It must be repented of because it was a sin; it must be kept because it was a real promise, and the matter lawful. 2. If the promising act was not only a sin but a nullity (by any other reason) then it is no obligation. 3. If not only the promising act be sin, but also the matter promised, (as is marrying without parents' consent,) then it must be repented of, and not performed till it become lawful; because an oath or promise cannot bind a man to violate the laws of God.

Quest. But what if the parties be actually married without the parents' consent? must they live together, or be separated? *Answ.* 1. If marriage be consummated *per carnalem concubitum*, by the carnal knowledge of each other, I see no reason to imagine that parents can dissolve it, or prohibit their cohabitation: for the marriage (for aught I ever saw) is not proved a nullity, but only a sin, and their *concubitus* is not fornication; and parents cannot forbid husband and wife to live together: and in marriage they do

(really though sinfully) forsake father and mother and cleave to each other, and so are now from under their government (though not disoblged from all obedience). 2. But if marriage be only by verbal conjunction, divines are disagreed what is to be done. Some think that it is no perfect marriage *ante concubitum*, and also that their conjunction hath but the nature of a promise (to be faithful to each other as husband and wife): and therefore the matter promised is unlawful till parents consent, and so not to be done. But I rather think (as most do) that it hath all that is essential to marriage *ante concubitum*; and that this marriage is more than a promise of fidelity *de futuro*, even an actual delivery of themselves to one another *de præsenti* also; and that the thing promised in marriage is lawful. For though it be a sin to marry without parents' consent, yet when that is past, it is lawful for married persons to come together though parents consent not; and therefore that such marriage is valid, and to be continued, though it was sinfully made.

Of vows of chastity

3. A third sort that are not called of God to marry, are they that have absolutely vowed not to marry. Such may not marry, unless Providence disoblige them, by making it become an indispensable duty. And I can remember but two ways by which this may be done. 1. In case there be any of so strong lust, as no other lawful means but marriage can suffice to maintain

their chastity. To such marriage is as great a duty, as to eat or drink, or cover one's nakedness, or to hinder another from uncleanness, or lying, or stealing, or the like. And if you should make a vow that you will never eat or drink, or that you will go naked, or that you will never hinder any one from uncleanness, lying, or stealing, it is unlawful to fulfil this vow. But all the doubt is, whether there be any such persons that cannot overcome or restrain their lust by any other lawful means. I suppose it is possible there may be such; but I believe it is not one of a hundred. If they will but practise the directions before given, part i. chap. viii. part v. tit. 1 and 2, I suppose their lust may be restrained: and if that prevail not, the help of a physician may: and if that prevail not, some think the help of a surgeon may be lawful, to keep a vow, in case it be not an apparent hazard of life. For Christ seemeth to allow of it, in mentioning it without reproof, Matt. xix. 12, if that text be to be understood of castration: but most expositors think it is meant only of a confirmed resolution of chastity: and ordinarily other means may make this needless: and if it be either needless or perilous, it is unlawful without doubt.

2. The second way by which God may dispense with a vow of chastity is, by making the marriage of a person become of apparent necessity to the public safety. And I am able to discern but one instance that will reach the case; and that is, if a king have vowed chastity, and in case he marry not, his next heir being a professed enemy of christianity, the religion, safety, and

happiness of the whole nation, is apparently in danger to be overthrown. I think the case of such a king is like the case of a father that had vowed never to provide food or raiment for his children: or as if Ahab had vowed that no well should be digged in the land; and when the drought cometh, it is become necessary to the saving of the people's lives: or as if the ship-master should vow that the ship shall not be pumped; which when it leaketh doth become necessary to save their lives. In these cases God disobligeth you from your vow by a mutation of the matter; and a pastor may dispense with it declaratively. But for the pope or any mortal man to pretend to more, is impiety and deceit.

Quest. May the aged marry, that are frigid, impotent, and uncapable of procreation? *Answ.* Yes, God hath not forbidden them: and there are other lawful ends of marriage, as mutual help and comfort, &c. which may make it lawful.³

Direct. II. To restrain your inordinate forwardness to marriage, keep the ordinary inconveniencies of it in memory. Rush not into a state of life, the inconveniencies of which you never thought on. If you have a call to it, the knowledge of the difficulties and duties will be necessary to your preparation, and faithful undergoing them; if you have no call, this knowledge is necessary to keep you off. I shall first name the inconveniencies common to all, and then some that are proper to the ministers of the gospel, which have a greater reason to avoid a married life than other men have.

³ Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for the middle age, and old men's nurses. So that a man may have a quarrel to marry when he will. Lord Bacon, Essay.

1. Marriage ordinarily plungeth men into excess of worldly cares; it multiplieth their business, and usually their wants. There are many things to mind and do; there are many to provide for. And many persons you will have to do with, who have all of them a selfish disposition and interest, and will judge of you but according as you fit their ends. And among many persons and businesses, some things will frequently fall cross: you must look for many rubs and disappointments. And your natures are not so strong, content, and patient, as to bear all these without molestation.

2. Your wants in a married state are hardlier supplied, than in a single life. You will want so many things which before you never wanted, and have so many to provide for and content, that all will seem little enough, if you had never so much. Then you will be often at your wit's end, taking thought for the future, what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and wherewith shall you and yours be clothed.

3. Your wants in a married state are far hardlier borne than in a single state. It is far easier to bear personal wants ourselves, than to see the wants of wife and children: affection will make their sufferings pinch you. And ingenuity will make it a trouble to your mind, to need the help of servants, and to want that which is fit for servants to expect. But especially the discontent and impatience of your family will more discontent you than all their wants. You cannot help your wife, and children, and servants to contented minds. Oh what a heart-cutting trial is it to hear them

repining, murmuring, and complaining! to hear them call for that which you have not for them, and grieve at their condition, and exclaim of you, or of the providence of God, because they have it not! And think not that riches will free you from these discontents; for as the rich are but few, so they that have much have much to do with it. A great foot must have a great shoe. When poor men want some small supplies, rich men may want great sums, or larger provisions, which the poor can easily be without. And their condition lifting them up to greater pride, doth torment them with greater discontents. How few in all the world that have families, are content with their estates!

4. Hereupon a married life containeth far more temptations to worldliness or covetousness, than a single state doth. For when you think you need more, you will desire more: and when you find all too little to satisfy those that you provide for, you will measure your estate by their desires, and be apt to think that you have never enough. Birds and beasts that have young ones to provide for, are most hungry and rapacious. You have so many now to scrape for, that you will think you are still in want: it is not only till death that you must now lay up; but you must provide for children that survive you. And while you take them to be as yourselves, you have two generations now to make provisions for: and most men are as covetous for their posterity, as if it were for themselves.

5. And hereupon you are hindered from works of charity to others: wife and children are the devouring gulf that swalloweth

all. If you had but yourselves to provide for, a little would serve; and you could deny your own desires of unnecessary things; and so might have plentiful provision for good works. But by that time wife and children are provided for, and all their importunate desires satisfied, there is nothing considerable left for pious or charitable uses. Lamentable experience proclaimeth this.

6. And hereby it appeareth how much a married state doth ordinarily hinder men from honouring their profession. It is their vows of single life that hath occasioned the papists to do so many works of public charity, as is boasted of for the honour of their sect. For when they have no children to bequeath it to, and cannot keep it themselves, it is easy to them to leave it to such uses as will pacify their consciences most, and advance their names. And if it should prove as good a work and as acceptable to God, to educate your own children piously for his service, as to relieve the children of the poor, yet it is not so much regarded in the world, nor bringeth so much honour to religion. One hundred pounds given to the poor shall more advance the reputation of your liberality and virtue, than a thousand pounds given to your own children, though it be with as pious an end, to train them up for the service of the church. And though this is inconsiderable as your own honour is concerned in it, yet it is considerable as the honour of religion and the good of souls are concerned in it.

7. And it is no small patience which the natural imbecility of the female sex requireth you to prepare. Except it be very few that are patient and manlike, women are commonly of potent

fantasies, and tender, passionate, impatient spirits, easily cast into anger, or jealousy, or discontent; and of weak understandings, and therefore unable to reform themselves. They are betwixt a man and a child: some few have more of the man, and many have more of the child; but most are but in a middle state. Weakness naturally inclineth persons to be froward and hard to please; as we see in children, old people, and sick persons. They are like a sore, distempered body; you can scarce touch them but you hurt them. With too many you can scarce tell how to speak or look but you displease them. If you should be very well versed in the art of pleasing, and set yourselves to it with all your care, as if you made it your very business and had little else to do, yet it would put you hard to it, to please some weak, impatient persons, if not quite surpass your ability and skill. And the more you love them, the more grievous it will be, to see them still in discontents, weary of their condition, and to hear the clamorous expressions of their disquiet minds. Nay, the very multitude of words that very many are addicted to, doth make some men's lives a continual burden to them. Mark what the Scripture saith: Prov. xxi. 9, "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house." Ver. 19, "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman." So chap. xxv. 24, and xxvii. 15, "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike." Eccles. vii. 28, "One man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found."

8. And there is such a meeting of faults and imperfections on both sides, that maketh it much the harder to bear the infirmities of others aright. If one party only were froward and impatient, the stedfastness of the other might make it the more tolerable; but we are all sick, in some measure, of the same disease. And when weakness meeteth with weakness, and pride with pride, and passion with passion, it exasperateth the disease and doubleth the suffering. And our corruption is such, that though our intent be to help one another in our duties, yet we are apter far to stir up one another's distempers.

9. The business, care, and trouble of a married life, is a great temptation to call down our thoughts from God, and to divert them from the "one thing necessary," Luke x. 42; and to distract the mind, and make it undisposed to holy duty, and to serve God with a divided heart, as if we served him not. How hard is it to pray or meditate with any serious fervency, when you come out of a crowd of cares and business! Hear what Saint Paul saith, 1 Cor. vii. 7, 8, "For I would that all men were as I myself. – I say to the unmarried and the widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I." Ver. 26-28, "I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, that it is good for a man so to be: – such shall have trouble in the flesh." Ver. 32, 33, "But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife." Ver. 34, 35, "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the

Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." Ver. 37, 38, "He that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doth well. So then he that marrieth doth well, but he that marrieth not doth better." And mark Christ's own words, Matt. xix. 11, "His disciples say unto him, If the case of a man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given – He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

10. The business of a married state doth commonly devour almost all your time, so that little is left for holy contemplations, or serious thoughts of the life to come. All God's service is contracted and thrust into a corner, and done as it were on the by: the world will scarce allow you time to meditate, or pray, or read the Scripture; you think yourselves (as Martha) under a greater necessity of despatching your business, than of sitting at Christ's feet to hear his word. Oh that single persons knew (for the most part) the preciousness of their leisure, and how free they are to attend the service of God, and learn his word, in comparison of the married!

11. There is so great a diversity of temperaments and degrees of understanding, that there are scarce any two persons in the

world, but there is some unsuitableness between them. Like stones that have some unevenness, that maketh them lie crooked in the building; some crossness there will be of opinion, or disposition, or interest, or will, by nature, or by custom and education, which will stir up frequent discontents.

12. There is a great deal of duty which husband and wife do owe to one another; as to instruct, admonish, pray, watch over one another, and to be continual helpers to each other in order to their everlasting happiness; and patiently to bear with the infirmities of each other: and to the weak and backward heart of man, the addition of so much duty doth add to their weariness, how good soever the work be in itself: and men should feel their strength, before they undertake more work.

13. And the more they love each other, the more they participate in each other's griefs; and one or other will be frequently under some sort of suffering. If one be sick, or lame, or pained, or defamed, or wronged, or disquieted in mind, or by temptation fall into any wounding sin, the other beareth part of the distress. Therefore before you undertake to bear all the burdens of another, and suffer in all another's hurts, it concerneth you to observe your strength, how much more you have than your own burdens do require.

14. And if you should marry one that proveth ungodly, how exceeding great would the affliction be! If you loved them, your souls would be in continual danger by them; they would be the powerfulest instruments in the world to pervert your judgments,

to deaden your hearts, to take you off from a holy life, to kill your prayers, to corrupt your lives, and to damn your souls. And if you should have the grace to escape the snare, and save yourselves, it would be by so much the greater difficulty and suffering, as the temptation is the greater. And what a heart-breaking would it be to converse so nearly with a child of the devil, that is like to lie for ever in hell! The daily thoughts of it would be a daily death to you.

15. Women especially must expect so much suffering in a married life, that if God had not put into them a natural inclination to it, and so strong a love to their children, as maketh them patient under the most annoying troubles, the world would ere this have been at an end, through their refusal of so calamitous a life. Their sickness in breeding, their pain in bringing forth, with the danger of their lives, the tedious trouble night and day which they have with their children in their nursing in their childhood; besides their subjection to their husbands, and continual care of family affairs; being forced to consume their lives in a multitude of low and troublesome businesses: all this, and much more, would have utterly deterred that sex from marriage, if nature itself had not inclined them to it.

16. And oh what abundance of duty is incumbent upon both the parents towards every child for the saving of their souls!⁴ What uncessant labour is necessary in teaching them the doctrine

⁴ Art thou discontented with thy childless state? Remember that of all the Roman kings, not one of them left the crown to his son. Plutarch. de Tranq. Anim.

of salvation! which made God twice over charge them to teach his word diligently (or sharpen them) "unto their children, and to talk of them when they sit in their houses, and when they walk by the way, and when they lie down, and when they rise up," Deut. vi. 6, 7; xi. 19. What abundance of obstinate, rooted corruptions are in the hearts of children, which parents must by all possible diligence root up! Oh how great and hard a work is it, to speak to them of their sins and Saviour, of their God, their souls, and the life to come, with that reverence, gravity, seriousness, and unwearied constancy, as the weight of the matter doth require! and to suit all their actions and carriage to the same ends! Little do most that have children know, what abundance of care and labour God will require of them, for the sanctifying and saving of their children's souls. Consider your fitness for so great a work before you undertake it.

17. It is abundance of affliction that is ordinarily to be expected in the miscarriages of children, when you have done your best, much more if you neglect your duty, as even godly parents too often do. After all your pains, and care, and labour, you must look that the foolishness of some, and the obstinacy of others, and the unthankfulness of those that you have loved best, should even pierce your hearts. You must look that many vices should spring up and trouble you; and be the more grievous by how much your children are the more dear. And oh what a grief it is to breed up a child to be a servant of the devil, and an enemy of God and godliness, and a persecutor of the church of God!

and to think of his lying in hell for ever! And alas! how great is the number of such!

18. And it is not a little care and trouble that servants will put you to; so difficult is it to get those that are good, much more to make them good; so great is your duty, in teaching them, and minding them of the matters of their salvation; so frequent will be the displeasures about your work and worldly business, and every one of those displeasures will hinder them for receiving your instructions; that most families are houses of correction or affliction.

19. And these marriage crosses are not for a year, but during life; they deprive you of all hope of relief while you live together. There is no room for repentance, nor casting about for a way to escape them. Death only must be your relief. And therefore such a change of your condition should be seriously forethought on, and all the troubles be foreseen and pondered.

20. And if love make you dear to one another, your parting at death will be the more grievous. And when you first come together, you know that such a parting you must have; through all the course of your lives you may foresee it: one of you must see the body of your beloved turned into a cold and ghastly clod; you must follow it weeping to the grave, and leave it there in dust and darkness; there it must lie rotting as a loathsome lump, whose sight or smell you cannot endure; till you shortly follow it, and lie down yourself in the same condition. All these are the ordinary concomitants and consequents of marriage; easily and

quickly spoken, but long and hard to be endured! No fictions, but realities, and less than most have reason to expect. And should such a life be rashly ventured on in a pang of lust? or such a burden be undertaken without forethought?

Of ministers' marriage

But especially the ministers of the gospel should think what they do, and think again, before they enter upon a married life. Not that it is simply unlawful for them, or that they are to be tied from it by a law, as they are in the kingdom of Rome, for carnal ends and with odious effects. But so great a hinderance ordinarily is this troublesome state of life to the sacred ministration which they undertake, that a very clear call should be expected for their satisfaction. That I be not tedious, consider well but of these four things: 1. How well will a life of so much care and business agree to you, that have time little enough for the greater work which you have undertaken? Do you know what you have to do in public and private? in reading, meditating, praying, preaching, instructing personally, and from house to house? And do you know of how great importance it is? even for the saving of men's souls? And have you time to spare for so much worldly cares and business? Are you not charged, "Meditate on these things: give thyself wholly to them," 1 Tim. iv. 15. "No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him that hath chosen him to be a soldier," 2 Tim. ii. 4. Is not this

plain? Soldiers use not to look to farms and servants. If you are faithful ministers, I dare confidently say, you will find all your time so little for your proper work, that many a time you will groan and say, Oh how short and swift is time! and, Oh how great and slow is my work and duty! 2. Consider how well a life of so great diversions, avocations, and distractions, doth suit with a mind devoted to God, that should be always free and ready for his service. Your studies are on such great and mysterious subjects, that they require the whole mind, and all too little. To resolve the many difficulties that are before you, to prepare those suitable convincing words, which may pierce and persuade the hearers' hearts, to get within the bosom of a hypocrite, to follow on the word till it attain its effect, and to deal with poor souls according to their great necessity, and handle God's word according to its holiness and majesty, these are things that require a whole man, and are not employments for a divided or distracted mind. The talking of women, and the crying of children, and the cares and business of the world, are ill preparations or attendants on these studies.⁵ 3. Consider well whether a life of so great disturbance be agreeable to one whose affections should be taken up for God; and whose work must be all done, not formally and affectedly with the lips alone, but seriously with all the heart. If your heart and warm affections be at any time left behind, the life, and power, the beauty, and glory of your work are lost. How dead will your studies, and praying, and preaching, and

⁵ Non bene fit quod occupato animo fit. Hieron. Epist. 5. 3. ad Paulin.

conference be! And can you keep those affections warm and vigorous for God, and taken up with heaven and heavenly things, which are disturbed with the cares and the crosses of the world, and taken up with carnal matters? 4. And consider also how well that indigent life will agree to one that by charity and good works should second his doctrine, and win men's souls to the love of holiness.⁶ If you feed not the bodies of the poor, they will less relish the food of the soul. Nay, if you abound not above others in good works, the blind, malicious world will see nothing that is good in you; but will say, You have good words, but where are your good works? What abundance have I known hardened against the gospel and religion, by a common fame, that these preachers are as covetous, and worldly, and uncharitable as any others! and it must be something extraordinary that must confute such fame. And what abundance of success have I seen of the labours of those ministers, who give all they have in works of charity! And though a rich and resolved man may do some good in a married state, yet commonly it is next to nothing, as to the ends now mentioned; wife, and children, and family necessities devour all, if you have never so much. And some provision must

⁶ A single life doth well with churchmen: for charity will hardly water the ground, where it must fill a pool. Lord Bacon, Essay 8. The greatest works and foundations have been from childless men, who have sought to express the image of their minds that have none of their body: so the care of posterity hath been most in them that had no posterity. Lord Bacon, Essay 7. He that hath a wife and children hath given hostages to fortune. For they are impediments to great enterprises. – The best works, and of greatest merit, for the public, have proceeded from unmarried and childless men. Id. *ibid.* Essay 8.

be made for them, when you are dead: and the maintenance of the ministry is not so great as to suffice well for all this, much less for any eminent works of charity besides! Never reckon upon the doing of much good to the poor, if you have wives and children of your own! Such instances are rarities and wonders. All will be too little for yourselves. Whereas if all that were given to the poor which goeth to the maintenance of your families, you little know how much it would reconcile the minds of the ungodly, and further the success of your ministerial work.

Direct. III. If God call you to a married life, expect all these troubles, or most of them; and make particular preparation for each temptation, cross, and duty which you must expect. Think not that you are entering into a state of mere delight, lest it prove but a fool's paradise to you. See that you be furnished with marriage strength and patience, for the duties and sufferings of a married state, before you venture on it. Especially, 1. Be well provided against temptations to a worldly mind and life: for here you are like to be most violently and dangerously assaulted. 2. See that you be well provided with conjugal affections: for they are necessary both to the duties and sufferings of a married life. And you should not enter upon the state without the necessary preparations. 3. See that you be well provided with marriage prudence and understanding, that you may be able to instruct and edify your families, and may live with them as men of knowledge, 1 Pet. iii. 7, and may manage all your business with discretion, Psal. cxii. 15. 4. See that you be provided

with resolvedness and constancy, that you vex not yourself and relations by too late repentings; and come not off with, had I wist, or *non putaram*. Levity and mutability is no fit preparative for a state that only death can change. Let the love and resolutions which brought you into that state, continue with you to the last. 5. See that you be provided with a diligence answerable to the greatness of your undertaken duties. A slothful mind is unfit for one that entereth himself voluntarily upon so much business; as a cowardly mind is unfit for him that listeth himself a soldier for the wars. 6. See that you are well provided with marriage patience; to bear with the infirmities of others, and undergo the daily crosses of your life, which your business and necessities, and your own infirmities, will unavoidably infer. To marry without all this preparation, is as foolish as to go to sea without the necessary preparations for your voyage, or to go to war without armour or ammunition, or to go to work without tools or strength, or to go to buy meat in the market when you have no money.

Direct. IV. Take special care, that fancy and passion overrule not reason, and friends' advice, in the choice of your condition, or of the person. I know you must have love to those that you match with; but that love must be rational, and such as you can justify in the severest trial, by the evidences of worth and fitness in the person whom you love. To say you love, but you know not why, is more beseeming children or mad folks, than those that are soberly entering upon a change of life of so great importance

to them. A blind love which maketh you think a person excellent and amiable, who in the eyes of the wisest that are impartial, is nothing so, or maketh you overvalue the person whom you fancy, and be fond of one as some admirable creature, that in the eyes of others is next to contemptible, this is but the index and evidence of your folly. And though you please yourselves in it, and honour it with the name of love, there is none that is acquainted with it, that will give it any better name than lust or fancy. And the marriage that is made by lust or fancy will never tend to solid content or true felicity; but either it will feed till death on the fuel that kindled it, and then go out in everlasting shame; or else more ordinarily it proveth but a blaze, and turneth into loathing and weariness of each other. And because this passion of lust (called love) is such a besotting, blinding thing, (like the longing of a woman with child,) it is the duty of all that feel any touch of it to kindle upon their hearts, to call it presently to the trial, and to quench it effectually; and till that be done (if they have any relics of wit or reason) to suspect their own apprehensions, and much more to trust the judgment and advice of others.

How to cure lustful love

The means to quench this lust called love, I have largely opened before. I shall now only remember you of these few. 1. Keep asunder, and at a sufficient distance from the person that you dote upon. The nearness of the fire and fuel causeth the

combustion. Fancy and lust are inflamed by the senses. Keep out of sight, and in time the fever may abate. 2. Overvalue not vanity. Think not highly of a silken coat, or of the great names of ancestors, or of money, or lands, or of a painted or a spotted face, nor of that natural comeliness called beauty: judge not of things as children, but as men: play not the fools in magnifying trifles, and overlooking inward, real worth. Would you fall in love with a flower or picture at this rate? Bethink you what work the pox, or any other withering sickness, will make with that silly beauty which you so admire: think what a spectacle death will make it; and how many thousands once more beautiful, are turned now to common earth! and how many thousand souls are now in hell, that by a beautiful body were drowned in lust, and tempted to neglect themselves! and how few in the world you can name that were ever much the better for it! What a childish thing it is to dote on a book of tales and lies, because it hath a beautiful, gilded cover! and to undervalue the writings of the wise, because they have a plain and homely outside! 3. Rule your thoughts, and let them not run masterless as fancy shall command them. If reason cannot call off your thoughts from following a lustful desire and imagination, no wonder if one that rideth on such an unbridled colt be cast into the dirt. 4. Live not idly, but let the business of your callings take up your time, and employ your thoughts. An idle, fleshly mind is the carcass where the vermin of lust doth crawl, and the nest where the devil hatcheth both this and many other pernicious sins. 5. Lastly and chiefly, forget not

the concernments of your souls: remember how near you are to eternity, and what work you have to do for your salvation: forget not the presence of God, nor the approach of death. Look oft by faith into heaven and hell, and keep conscience tender; and then I warrant you, you will find something else to mind than lust, and greater matters than a silly carcass to take up your thoughts; and you will feel that heavenly love within you, which will extinguish earthly, carnal love.

Direct. V. Be not too hasty in your choice or resolution, but deliberate well, and thoroughly know the person on whom so much of the comfort or sorrow of your life will necessarily depend. Where repentance hath no place, there is the greater care to be used to prevent it. Reason requireth you to be well acquainted with those that you trust but with an important secret, much more with all your honour or estates; and most of all, with one whom you must trust with so much of the comfort of your lives, and your advantages for a better life. No care and caution can be too great in a matter of so great importance.

Direct. VI. Let no carnal motives persuade you to join yourself to an ungodly person; but let the holy fear of God be preferred in your choice before all worldly excellency whatsoever. Marry not a swine for a golden trough; nor an ugly soul for a comely body. Consider, 1. You will else give cause of great suspicion that you are yourselves ungodly: for they that know truly the misery of an unrenewed soul, and the excellency of the image of God, can never be indifferent whether they be joined to the godly or

the ungodly. To prefer things temporal before things spiritual habitually, and in the predominant acts of heart and life, is the certain character of a graceless soul! And he that in so near a case doth deliberately prefer riches or comeliness in another, before the image and fear of God, doth give a very dangerous sign of such a graceless heart and will. If you set more by beauty or riches than by godliness, you have the surest mark that you are ungodly. If you do not set more by them, how come you deliberately to prefer them? How could you do a thing that detecteth your ungodliness, and condemneth you more clearly? And do you not show that you either believe not the word of God, or else that you love him not, and regard not his interest? Otherwise you would take his friends as your friends, and his enemies as your enemies. Tell me, would you marry an enemy of your own, before any change and reconciliation? I am confident you would not. And can you so easily marry an enemy of God? If you know not that all the ungodly and unsanctified are his enemies, you know not, or believe not, the word of God; which telleth you that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be: so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God," Rom. viii. 7, 8. 2. If you fear God yourselves, your chief end in marriage will be to have one that will be a helper to your soul, and further you in the way to heaven: but if you marry with a person that is ungodly, either you have no such end, or else you may easily know you have no wiselier chosen the means, than if you had chosen water to kindle the fire, or a bed of snow to keep

you warm. Will an ignorant or ungodly person assist you in prayer and holy watchfulness, and stir you up to the love of God, and a heavenly mind? And can you so willingly lose all the spiritual benefit, which you should principally desire and intend? 3. Nay, instead of a helper, you will have a continual hinderer: when you should go to prayer, you will have one to pull you back, or to fill your minds with diversions or disquietments! When you should keep close to God in holy meditations, you will have one to cast in worldly thoughts, or trouble your minds with vanity or vexation. When you should discourse of God and heavenly things, you will have one to stifle such discourse, and fill your ears with idle, impertinent, or worldly talk. And one such a hinderance so near you, in your bosom, will be worse than a thousand further off. As an ungodly heart which is next of all to us, is our greatest hinderance, so an ungodly husband or wife, which is next to that, is worse to us than many ungodly neighbours. And if you think that you can well enough overcome such hinderances, and your heart is so good, that no such clogs can keep it down, you do but show that you have a proud, unhumbled heart, that is prepared for a fall. If you know yourselves, and the badness of your hearts, you will know that you have no need of hinderances in any holy work, and that all the helps in the world are little enough, and too little, to keep your souls in the love of God. 4. And such an ungodly companion will be to you a continual temptation to sin. Instead of stirring you up to good, you will have one to stir you up to evil, to passion, or discontent, or covetousness, or pride,

or revenge, or sensuality. And can you not sin enough without such a tempter? 5. And what a continual grief will it be to you, if you are believers, to have a child of the devil in your bosom! and to think how far you must be separated at death! and in what torments those must lie for ever, that are so dear unto you now! 6. Yea, such companions will be incapable of the principal part of your love. You may love them as husbands or wives, but you cannot love them as saints and members of Christ. And how great a want this will be in your love, those know that know what this holy love is.

Quest. But how can I tell who are godly, when there is so much hypocrisy in the world. *Answ.* At least you may know who is ungodly if it be palpably discovered. I take not a barren knowledge for ungodliness, nor a nimble tongue for godliness: judge of them by their love: such as a man's love is, such is the man. If they love the word, and servants, and worship of God, and love a holy life, and hate the contrary, you may close with such, though their knowledge be small, and their parts be weak; but if they have no love to these, but had rather live a common, careless, carnal life, you may well avoid them as ungodly.

Quest. But if ungodly persons may marry, why may not I marry with one that is ungodly? *Answ.* Though dogs and swine may join in generating, it followeth not men or women may join with them. Pardon the comparison, (while Christ calleth the wicked dogs and swine, Matt. vii. 6,) it doth but show the badness of your consequence. Unbelievers may marry, and yet we may

not marry with unbelievers. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God – Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing," &c. 2 Cor. vi. 14-16.

Quest. But I make no doubt but they may be converted: God can call them when he will: if there be but love, they will easily be won to be of the mind as those they love are? *Ans.* 1. Then it seems because you love an ungodly person, you will be easily turned to be ungodly. If so, you are not much better already. If love will not draw you to their mind to be ungodly, why should you think love will draw them to your mind to be godly? Are you stronger in grace than they are in sin? 2. If you know well what grace is, and what a sinful, unrenewed soul is, you would not think it so easy a matter to convert a soul. Why are there so few converted, if it be so easy a thing? You cannot make yourselves better by adding higher degrees to the grace you have: much less can you make another better, by giving them the grace which they have not. 3. It is true that God is able to convert them when he will; and it is true that for aught I know it may be done. But what of that? Will you in so weighty a case take up with a mere possibility? God can make a beggar rich, and for aught you know

to the contrary, he will do it; and yet you will not therefore marry a beggar: nor will you marry a leper, because God can heal him; why then should you marry an ungodly person, because God can convert him? See it done first, if you love your peace and safety.

Quest. But what if my parents command me to marry an ungodly person? *Answ.* God having forbidden it, no parent hath authority to command you to do so great a mischief to yourself, no more than to cut your own throats, or to dismember your bodies.

Quest. But what if I have a necessity of marrying, and can get none but an ungodly person? *Answ.* If that be really your case, that your necessity be real, and you can get no other, I think it is lawful.

Quest. But is it not better have a good-natured person that is ungodly, than an ill-natured person that is religious, as many such are? And may not a bad man be a good husband? *Answ.* 1. A bad man may be a good tailor, or shoemaker, or carpenter, or seaman, because there is no moral virtue necessary to the well-doing of their work. But a bad man cannot be simply a good magistrate, or minister, or husband, or parent, because there is much moral virtue necessary to their duties. 2. A bad nature unmortified and untamed is inconsistent with true godliness; such persons may talk and profess what they please; but "if any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain," James i. 26. 3. I did not say that godliness alone is all that you must look after; though

this be the first, yet more is necessary.

Direct. VII. Next to the fear of God, make choice of a nature or temperament that is not too much unsuitable to you. A crossness of dispositions will be a continual vexation; and you will have a domestic war instead of love. Especially make sure of these following qualities. 1. That there be a loving, and not a selfish nature, that hath no regard to another but for their own end. 2. That there be a nature competently quiet and patient, and not intolerably froward and unpleasable. 3. That there be a competency of wit; for no one can live lovingly and comfortably with a fool. 4. That there be a competent humility; for there is no quietness to be expected with the proud. 5. That there be a power to be silent, as well as to speak; for a babbling tongue is a continual vexation.

Direct. VIII. Next to grace and nature, have a due and moderate respect to person, education, and estate. 1. So far have respect to the person as that there be no unhealthfulness to make your condition over-burdensome; nor any such deformity as may hinder your affections. 2. And so far have respect to parentage and education, as that there be no great unsuitableness of mind, nor any prejudicate opinions in religion, which may make you too unequal. Differing opinions in religion are much more tolerable in persons more distant, than in so near relations. And those that are bred too high in idleness and luxury, must have a thorough work of grace to make them fit for a low condition, and cure the pride and sensuality which are taken for the honourable badges

of their gentility; and it is scarce considerable how rich such are; for their pride and luxury will make even with all, and be still in greater want, than honest, contented, temperate poverty.

Direct. IX. If God call you to marriage, take notice of the helps and comforts of that condition, as well as of the hinderances and troubles; that you may cheerfully serve God in it, in the expectation of his blessing. Though man's corruption have filled that and every state of life with snares and troubles, yet from the beginning it was not so; God appointed it for mutual help, and as such it may be used. As a married life hath its temptations and afflictions, so it hath its peculiar benefits, which you are thankfully to accept and acknowledge unto God. See Eccles. iv. 10-12. 1. It is a mercy in order to the propagating of a people on earth to love and honour their Creator, and to serve God in the world and enjoy him for ever. It is no small mercy to be the parents of a godly seed; and this is the end of the institution of marriage, Mal. ii. 15. And this parents may expect, if they be not wanting on their part; however sometimes their children prove ungodly. 2. It is a mercy to have a faithful friend, that loveth you entirely, and is as true to you as yourself, to whom you may open your mind and communicate your affairs, and who would be ready to strengthen you, and divide the cares of your affairs and family with you, and help you to bear your burdens, and comfort you in your sorrows, and be the daily companion of your lives, and partaker of your joys and sorrows. 3. And it is a mercy to have so near a friend to be a helper to your soul; to join with

you in prayer and other holy exercises; to watch over you and tell you of your sins and dangers, and to stir up in you the grace of God, and remember you of the life to come, and cheerfully accompany you in the ways of holiness. Prov. xix. 14, "A prudent wife is from the Lord." Thus it is said, Prov. xviii. 22, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord." See Prov. xxxi. 10-12, &c.

Direct. X. Let your marriage covenant be made understandingly, deliberately, heartily, in the fear of God, with a fixed resolution faithfully to perform it. Understand well all the duties of your relation before you enter into it; and run not upon it as boys to a play, but with the sense of your duty, as those that engage themselves to a great deal of work of great importance towards God and towards each other. Address yourselves therefore beforehand to God for counsel, and earnestly beg his guidance and his blessing, and run not without him, or before him. Reckon upon the worst, and foresee all temptations which would diminish your affections, or make you unfaithful to each other; and see that you be fortified against them all.

Direct. XI. Be sure that God be the ultimate end of your marriage, and that you principally choose that state of life, that in it you may be most serviceable to him; and that you heartily devote yourselves and your families unto God; that so it may be to you a sanctified condition. It is nothing but making God our guide and end that can sanctify our state of life. They that

unfeignedly follow God's counsel, and aim at his glory, and do it to please him, will find God owning and blessing their relation. But they that do it principally to please the flesh, to satisfy lust, and to increase their estates, and to have children surviving them to receive the fruits of their pride and covetousness, can expect to reap no better than they sow; and to have the flesh, the world, and the devil the masters of their family, according to their own desire and choice.

Direct. XII. At your first conjunction (and through the rest of your lives) remember the day of your separation. And think not that you are settling yourselves in a state of rest, or felicity, or continuance, but only assuming a companion in your travels. Whether you live in a married or an unmarried life, remember that you are hasting to the everlasting life, where there is neither "marrying nor giving in marriage," 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30. You are going as fast to another world in one state of life as in the other. You are but to help each other in your way, that your journey may be the easier to you, and that you may happily meet again in the heavenly Jerusalem. When worldlings marry, they take it for a settling themselves in the world; and as regenerate persons begin the world anew, by beginning to lay up a treasure in heaven, so worldlings call their marriage their beginning the world, because then, as engaged servants to the world, they set themselves to seek it with greater diligence than ever before. They do but in marriage begin (as seekers) that life of foolery, which when he had found what he sought, that rich man ended, Luke xii. 19,

20, with a "This I will do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods; and I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry: but God said unto him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" If you would not die such fools, do not marry and live such worldlings.

Tit. 2. Cases of Marriage

Quest. I. What should one follow as a certain rule, about the prohibited degrees of consanguinity or affinity? seeing, 1. The law of Moses is not in force to us. 2. And if it were, it is very dark, whether it may by parity of reason be extended to more degrees than are named in the text. 3. And seeing the law of nature is so hardly legible in this case.⁷

Answ. 1. It is certain that the prohibited degrees are not so statedly and universally unlawful, as that such marriage may not be made lawful by any necessity. For Adam's sons did lawfully marry their own sisters.

2. But now the world is peopled, such necessities as will warrant such marriages must needs be very rare, and such as we are never like to meet with.

3. The law of nature is it which prohibiteth the degrees that are

⁷ The case of polygamy is so fully and plainly resolved by Christ, that I take it not to be necessary to decide it, especially while the law of the land doth make it death.

now unlawful; and though this law be dark as to some degrees, it is not so as to others.

4. The law of God to the Jews, Lev. xviii. doth not prohibit those degrees there named, because of any reason proper to the Jews, but as an exposition of the law of nature, and so on reasons common to all.

5. Therefore, though the Jewish law cease (yea, never bound other nations) formally as that political national law; yet as it was God's exposition of his own law of nature, it is of use, and consequential obligation to all men, even to this day; for if God once had told but one man, This is the sense of the law of nature, it remaineth true, and all must believe it; and then the law of nature itself, so expounded, will still oblige.

6. The world is so wide for choice, and a necessity of doubtful marriage is so rare, and the trouble so great, that prudence telleth every one that it is their sin, without flat necessity, to marry in a doubtful degree; and therefore it is thus safest, to avoid all degrees that seem to be equal to those named Lev. xviii. and to have the same reason, though they be not named.

7. But because it is not certain that indeed the unnamed cases have the same reason, (while God doth not acquaint us with all the reasons of his law,) therefore when the thing is done, we must not censure others too deeply, nor trouble ourselves too much about those unnamed, doubtful cases. We must avoid them beforehand, because else we shall cast ourselves into doubts and troubles unnecessarily; but when it is past, the case must be

considered of as I shall after open.

Quest. II. What if the law of the land forbid more or fewer degrees than Lev. xviii. doth?

Answ. If it forbid fewer, the rest are nevertheless to be avoided as forbidden by God. If it forbid more, the forbidden ones must be avoided in obedience to our rulers.

Quest. III. Is the marriage of cousin-germans, that is, of brothers' children, or sisters' children, or brothers' and sisters' children, unlawful?

Answ. I think not; 1. Because not forbidden by God. 2. Because none of that same rank are forbidden; that is, none that on both sides are two degrees from the root. I refer the reader for my reasons to a Latin Treatise of Charles Butler on this subject, for in those I rest. As all the children of Noah's sons did marry their cousin-germans, (for they could not marry in any remoter degree,) so have others since without reproof, and none are forbidden. 3. But it is safest to do otherwise, because there is choice enough beside, and because many divines being of the contrary opinion, may make it matter of scruple and trouble afterwards, to those that venture upon it without need.

Quest. IV. What would you have those do that have married cousin-germans, and now doubt whether it be lawful so to do?

Answ. I would have them cast away such doubts, or at least conclude that it is now their duty to live peaceably in the state in which they are; and a great sin for them to be separated on such scruples. The reason is, because, if it be not certain that the

degree is lawful, at least no man can be sure that it is unlawful. And for husband and wife to break their covenants and part, without a necessary cause, is a great sin; and that which no man can prove to be a sin, is no necessary or lawful cause of a divorce. Marriage duties are certainly commanded to the married, but the marriage of cousin-germans is not certainly forbidden. Therefore if it were a sin to marry so, to them that doubted; or if they are since fallen into doubt whether it was not a sin; yet may they be sure that the continuance of it is a duty, and that all they have to do is to repent of doing a doubtful thing, but not to part, nor to forbear their covenanted duties. No, nor to indulge or suffer those troublesome scruples, which would hinder the cheerful discharge of their duties, and the comfortable serving of God in their relations.

Quest. V. What should those do that are married in those degrees which are not forbidden by name in Lev. xviii. and yet are at the same distance from the root with those that are named, and seem to have the same reason of unlawfulness?

Answ. If there be clearly a parity of degree, and also of the reason of the prohibition, then no doubt but they must part as incestuous, and not continue in a forbidden state. But because divines are disagreed whether there be in all instances a parity of the reason of the prohibition, where there is an equal distance as to degrees; and so in those cases some think it a duty to be separated, and others think it enough to repent of their conjunction and not to be separated, because the case is

doubtful, (as the controversy showeth,) I shall not venture to cast in my judgment in a case, where so many and such men are disagreed; but shall only advise all to prevent such troublesome doubts beforehand, and not by rashness to run themselves into perplexities, when there is no necessity; unless they will call their carnal ends or sinful passions a necessity.

Quest. VI. But if a man do marry in a degree expressly there forbidden, is it in all cases a sin to continue in that state? If necessity made such marriage a duty to Adam's children, why may not necessity make the continuance lawful to others? As suppose the king or parents command it? suppose the woman will die or be distracted with grief else? suppose one hath made a vow to marry no other, and yet cannot live single, &c.? Here I shall suppose, that if a lustful person marry a kinswoman that he may have change, as foreknowing that he must be divorced, punishment, and not continuance in the sin, must be his sentence; and if one that hath married a kinswoman be glad to be divorced, because he hateth her or loveth change, punishment must rebuke him, but he must not continue in incest.

Answ. 1. Natural necessity justified Adam's children, and such would now justify you. Yea, the benediction "Increase and multiply," did not only allow, but oblige them then to marry, to replenish the earth (when else mankind would soon have ceased); but so it doth not us now when the earth is replenished. Yet I deny not, but if a man and his sister were cast alone upon a foreign wilderness, where they justly despaired of any other company,

if God should bid them there "increase and multiply," it would warrant them to marry. But else there is no necessity of it, and therefore no lawfulness. For, 2. A vicious necessity justifieth not the sin. If the man or woman that should abstain will be mad or dead with passion, rather than obey God, and deny and mortify their lust, it is not one sin that will justify them in another. The thing that is necessary, is to conform their wills to the law of God; and if they will not, and then say, They cannot, they must bear what they get by it. 3. And it is no necessity that is imposed by that command of king or parents, which is against the law of God. 4. No, nor by a vow neither; for a vow to break God's law is not an obligation to be kept, but to be repented of; nor is the necessity remediless which such a one bringeth on himself, by vowing never to marry any other; seeing chastity may be kept.

Quest. VII. Is it lawful for one to marry, that hath vowed chastity during life, and not to marry, and afterward findeth a necessity of marrying, for the avoiding of lust and fornication?

Answ. I know that many great divines have easily absolved those, that under popery vowed chastity. The principal part of the solution of the question, you must fetch from my solution of the Case of Vows, part iii. chap. v. tit. 2. At the present this shall suffice to be added to it. 1. Such vows of chastity that are absolute, without any exceptions of after alterations or difficulties that may arise, are sinfully made, or are unlawful *quoad actum jurandi*.⁸

⁸ By this you may see how to resolve the cases about vows and covenants which are

2. If parents or others impose such oaths and vows on their children or subjects, or induce them to it, it is sinfully done of them, and the *actus imperantium* is also unlawful.

3. Yet as long as the *materia jurata*, the matter vowed, remaineth lawful, the vow doth bind, and it is perfidiousness to break it. For the sinfulness of the imposer's act proveth no more, but that such a command did not oblige you to vow. And a vow made arbitrarily without any command, doth nevertheless bind. And the sinfulness of the making of the vow, doth only call for repentance; (as if you made it causelessly, rashly, upon ill motives, and to ill ends, or in ill circumstances, &c.) But yet that vow which you repent that ever you made, must be nevertheless kept, if the thing vowed be a lawful thing, and the act of vowing be not made a nullity (though it was a sin). And when it is a nullity, I have showed in the forecited place.

4. A vow of celibate or chastity during life, which hath this condition or exception expressed or implied in the true intent of the votary, (unless any thing fall out which shall make it a sin to me not to marry,) may in some cases be a lawful vow; as to one that foreseeeth great inconveniences in marriage, and would by firm resolution fortify himself against temptations and mutability.

5. If there were no such excepting thought in the person vowing, yet when the thing becometh unlawful, the vow is not to be kept; though it oblige us under guilt for sinful making it,

yet God commandeth us not to keep it, because we vowed that which he forbad us not only to vow but to do.

6. Either the papists suppose such exceptions to be always implied by their votaries, or at least that they are contained in the law of God, or else sure they durst never pretend that the pope hath power to dispense with such vows (as they have oft done for princes, men and women, that they might be taken from a monastery to a crown). For if they suppose, that the persons before the dispensation are under the obligation of their vow, and bound by God to keep it, then it would be too gross and odious blasphemy for the pope to claim a power of disobliging them, and dissolving God's commands; and not only antichristianity, but antitheistical, or a setting himself above God Almighty, under pretence of his own commission. But if they only pretend to dissolve such vows judicially or decisively, by judging when the person is no longer obliged to keep them by God's law, then they suppose, that the obligation of God's law is ceased, before they judicially declare it to be ceased. And if that were all that the pope undertook, he had no power to do it out of his own parish, nor more than any lawful bishop hath in his proper charge.

7. The matter of a vow of celibate or chastity is then unlawful, when it cannot be kept without greater sin than that life of chastity escapeth, and which would be escaped if it were forsaken; or without the omission of greater duty, and omission of greater good, than that life of chastity containeth or attaineth. For the further opening of this, let it be noted, that,

8. It is not every degree of sin which marriage would cure, that will warrant the breach of a vow of chastity. As if I had some more lustful thoughts or instigations and irritations in a single life than I should have if I married. The reason is, because, 1. No man liveth without some sin, and it is supposed that there are greater sins of another kind, which by a life of chastity I avoid. And the breach of the vow itself is a greater matter than a lustful thought.

9. So it is not every degree of good which by marriage I may attain or do, that will warrant it against a vow of chastity. Because I may do and get a greater good by chastity, and because the evil of perjury is not to be done that good may be done by it; till I can prove, that it is not only good in itself, but a duty *hic et nunc* to me.

10. A man should rather break his vow of celibate, than once commit fornication, if there were a necessity that he must do the one. Because fornication is a sin which no vow will warrant any man to commit.

11. A man should rather break his vow of celibate, than live in such constant or ordinary lust, as unfitteth him for prayer, and a holy life, and keepeth him in ordinary danger of fornication, if there were a necessity that he must do the one. The reason is also because now the matter vowed is become unlawful, and no vow can warrant a man to live in so great sin (unless there were some greater sin on the other side which could not be avoided in a married life, which is hardly to be supposed, however popish priests think disobedience to the pope, and the incommodity and

disgrace of a married life, &c. to be a greater sin than fornication itself).

12. If a prince vow chastity, when it is like to endanger the kingdom for want of a safe and sure succession, he is bound to break that vow; because he may not lawfully give away the people's right, nor do that which is injurious to so many.

13. Whether the command of a parent or prince may dissolve the obligation of a vow of celibate, I have answered already. I now say but this, 1. When parents or princes may justly command it, we may justly obey them. But this is not one of those accidental evils, which may be lawfully done, though unlawfully commanded. 2. It is parents that God hath committed more of this care and power to, about children's marriage, than to princes. 3. Parents not princes may not lawfully command the breach of such a vow, (not nullified at first,) except in such cases as disoblige us, whether they do it or not; so that the resolving of the main case doth suffice for all.

14. He that by lawful means can overcome his lust, to the measure before mentioned, is under no necessity of violating his vow of single life.

15. I think that it is not one of twenty that have bodies so unavoidably prone to lust, but that by due means it might be so far (though not totally) overcome, without marriage, fornication, wilful self-pollution, or violent, vexatious, lustful thoughts. That is, 1. If they employ themselves constantly and diligently in a lawful calling, and be not guilty of such idleness, as leaveth room

in their minds and imaginations for vain and filthy thoughts. If they follow such a calling as shall lay a necessity upon them to keep their thoughts close employed about it. 2. If they use such abstinence and coarseness in their diet, as is meet to tame inordinate lusts, without destroying health: and not only avoid fulness and gulosity, and vain sports and pleasures, but also use convenient fasting, and tame the body by necessary austerities. 3. If they sufficiently avoid all tempting company and sights, and keep at a meet distance from them. 4. If they set such a restraint upon their thoughts as they may do. 5. If they use such a quality of diet and physic, as is aptest for the altering of those bodily distempers, which are the cause. 6. And lastly, If they are earnest in prayer to God, and live in mortifying meditations, especially in a constant familiarity with a crucified Christ, and with the grave, and with the heavenly society. He that breaketh his vow to save himself the labour and suffering of these ungrateful means, I take to be perfidious, though perhaps he sinfully made that vow. And no greater number are excusable for continence after such a vow, than these that have bodies so extraordinary lustful, as no such other means can tame, and those forementioned that have extraordinary accidents to make a single life unlawful.

16. It must not be forgotten here, that if men trust to marriage itself alone as the cure of their lust, without other means, such violent lusts as nothing else will cure, may possibly be much uncured afterwards. For adulterers are as violent in their lusts as the unmarried, and ofttimes find it as hard to restrain them. And

therefore the married, as well as others, have need to be careful to overcome their lust. And the rather because it is in them a double sin.

17. But yet when all other means do fail, marriage is God's appointed means, to quench those flames from which men's vows cannot, in cases of true necessity, disoblige them.

CHAPTER II. DIRECTIONS FOR THE RIGHT CHOICE OF SERVANTS AND MASTERS

PART I

Directions for the right Choice of Servants

Servants being integral parts of the family, who contribute much to the holiness or unholiness of it, and to the happiness or misery of it, it much concerneth masters to be careful in their choice. And the harder it is to find such as are indeed desirable, the more careful and diligent in it should you be.

Direct. I. To bid you choose such as are fittest for your service, is a direction which nature and interest will give you, without any persuasions of mine. And indeed it is not mere honesty or piety that will make a good servant, nor do your work. Three things are necessary to make a servant fit for you: 1. Strength. 2. Skill. 3. Willingness. And no two of these will serve without the third. Strength and skill without willingness, will do nothing: skill

and willingness without strength, can do nothing: strength and willingness without skill, will do as bad or worse than nothing. No less than all will make you a good servant. Therefore choose one, 1. That is healthful. 2. That hath been used to such work as you must employ him in: and, 3. One that is not of a flesh-pleasing, or lazy, sluggish disposition. For to exact labour from one that is sickly will seem cruelty; and to expect labour from one that is unskilful and unexercised will seem folly; and heavy, fleshly, slothful persons, will do all with so much unwillingness, and pain, and weariness, that they will think all too much, and their service will be a continual toil and displeasure to them, and they will think you wrong them, or deal hardly with them, if you will not allow them in their fleshliness and idleness. Yea, though they should have grace, a phlegmatic, sluggish, heavy body, will never be fit for diligent service, any more than a tired horse for travel.

Direct. II. If it be possible, choose such as have the fear of God, or at least such as are tractable and willing to be taught, and not such as are ungodly, sensual, and profane. For, 1. "God hateth all the workers of iniquity," Psal. v. 5. And it tendeth not to the blessing or safety of your family, to have in it such as are enemies to God, and hated by him. You cannot expect an equal blessing on their labours, as you may on the service of those that fear him. The wicked may bring a curse on the families where they are (if you wilfully entertain them); when a Joseph may be a blessing even to the house of an unbeliever. A wicked man will be

renewing those crimes, which will be the shame of your family, and a grief to your hearts, if you have any love to God yourselves; when a godly servant will pray for a blessing from God upon his labours, and is himself under a promise, that "whatever he doth shall prosper," Psal. i. 3. 2. Ungodly servants for the most part will be mere eye-servants; they will do little more than they find necessary to escape reproof and blame: some few of them, indeed, out of love to their masters, or out of a desire of praise, or to make their places the better to themselves, will be diligent and trusty: but ordinarily they are deceitful, and study more to seem good servants, than to be such, and to hide their faults, than to avoid them; for they make no great matter of conscience of it, nor do they regard the eye of God: whereas a truly godly servant will do all your service in obedience to God, as if God himself had bid him do it, and as one that is always in the presence of that Master, whose favour he preferreth before all the world. He is more careful to please God, who commandeth him to be faithful, than to please you by seeming better than he is: he is moved more to his duty by the reward which God hath promised him, than by the wages which he expecteth from you: he hath a tender, purified conscience, which will hold him to his duty, as well when you know it not, as when you stand by. 3. Ordinarily, ungodly servants will be false, if they have but opportunity to enrich themselves by deceiving you; especially those that are intrusted in laying out money, in buying and selling. As long as I name no particular persons, I think it no untrustiness, but my

duty, to warn masters whom they trust, by my experience from the confessions of those that have been guilty. Many servants whom God hath converted to his love and fear, have told me how constantly they deceived their masters in buying and selling before their conversion; even of so great sums of money, that some of them were not able to restore it (when I made them know it was their duty so far as they were able): and some of them had so much unquietness of conscience till it was restored, that I have been fain to give them money to restore, when I have convinced them of it: so that I know by such confessions, that such deceit and robbing of their masters is a very ordinary thing among ungodly servants that have, opportunity, that yet pass for very trusty servants, and are never discovered. 4. Also an ungodly servant will be a tempter to the rest, and will be drawing them to sin: especially to secret wantonness, and uncivil carriage, if not to actual fornication; and to revellings, and merriments, and fleshly courses: by swearing, and taking God's name in vain, and cursing, and lying, they will teach your children and other servants to do the like; and so be an infectious pestilence in your families. 5. And they will hinder any good which you would do on others. If there be any in your family under convictions, and in a hopeful way to a better condition, they will quench all, and discourage them, and hinder their conversion; partly by their contradicting cavils, and partly by their scorns, and partly by their diverting, idle talk, and partly by their ill examples, and alluring them to accompany them in their sin. Whereas, on the contrary, a godly

servant will be drawing the rest of your family to godliness, and hindering them from sin, and persuading them to be faithful in their duty both to God and you.

Direct. III. Yet measure not the godliness of a servant by his bare knowledge or words, but by his love and conscience. A great deal of self-conceited talkativeness about religion may stand with an unsanctified heart and life; and much weakness in knowledge and utterance, may stand with sincerity. But you may safely judge those to be truly godly, 1. Who love godliness, and love the word and servants of God, and hate all wickedness. 2. And those that make conscience to do their duty, and to avoid known sin both openly and in secret.

Direct. IV. If necessity constrain you to take those that are unfit and bad, remember that there is the greater duty incumbent on you, to carry yourself towards them in a diligent, convincing manner, so as tendeth most to make them better. Take them not as you buy a horse or an ox, with a purpose only to use them for your work; but remember they have immortal souls which you take charge of.

PART II

Directions for the right Choice of Masters

Seeing the happiness of a servant, the safety of his soul, and the comfort of his life, depend very much upon the family and place which he liveth in, it much concerneth every prudent servant to be very careful in what place or family he take up his abode, and to make the wisest choice he can.

Direct. I. Above all, be sure that you choose not for mere fleshly ease and sensuality, and take not that for the best place for you, where you may have most of your own carnal will and pleasure. I know that fleshly, graceless servants, will hear this direction with as ill a will, as a dog when he is forbidden his meat or carrion. I know I speak against their very nature, and therefore against their very hearts, and therefore they will think I speak against their interest and good; and therefore I may persuade them to this course a hundred times, before they will believe me, or obey my counsel. All ungodly, fleshly servants, do make these the only signs of a good place, or desirable service for them: 1. If they may do what work they will, and avoid that which they dislike; if they may do that which is easy, and not that which is hard; and that which is an honour to them, and

not that which seemeth inferior and base. 2. If they may work when they will, and give over when they will. 3. If they may rise when they will, and go to bed when they will. 4. If they may eat and drink what they will, and fare well to the pleasing of their appetites. 5. If they may speak when they will, and what they have a mind to speak. 6. If they may have leave when they will to sport, and play, and be wanton and vain, and waste their time, which they call being merry. 7. If they may wear the best apparel and go fine. 8. If their masters will be liberal to them, to maintain all this, and will give them what they would have. 9. If their masters and fellow-servants carry it respectfully to them, and praise them, and make somebody of them, and do not dishonour them, nor give them any displeasing words. 10. And if they are not troubled with the precepts of godliness, nor set to learn the Scripture, or catechized, nor called to account about the state of their souls, or the ground of their hopes for the life to come, nor troubled with much praying, or repeating sermons, or religious exercise or discourse, or any thing that tendeth to their salvation; nor be restrained from any sin, which they have a mind to, nor reproved for it when they have done it. These are an ungodly, carnal person's conditions, or signs of a good service. Which is, in a word, to have their own wills and fleshly desires, and not to be crossed by their masters' wills, or the will of God: which in effect is, to have the greatest helps to do the devil's will, and to be damned.

Direct. II. See that it be your first and principal care, to live

in such a place where you have the greatest helps and smallest hinderances to the pleasing of God, and the saving of your souls; and in such a place where you shall have no liberty to sin, nor have your fleshly will fulfilled, but shall be best instructed to know and do the will of God, and under him the will of your superiors. It is the mark of those whom God forsaketh, to be given up to their own wills, or "to their own hearts' lusts, to walk in their own counsels," Psal. lxxxi. 12. "To live after the flesh," is the certain way to endless misery, Rom. viii. 8, 13. To be most subject to the will of God, with the greatest mortification and denial of our own wills, is the mark of the most obedient, holy soul. Seeing then that holiness and self-denial, the loving of God, and the mortifying of the flesh, are the life of grace, and the health and rectitude of the soul, and the only way (under Christ) to our salvation; you have great reason to think that place the best for you, in which you have most helps for holiness and self-denial: and not only to bear patiently the strictness of your superiors, and the labour which they put you upon for your souls, but also to desire and seek after such helps, as the greatest mercies upon earth. "First seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness: labour not (first) for the food that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life," Matt. vi. 33; John vi. 27. Take care first that your souls be provided for, and take that for the best service which helpeth you most in the service of God, to your salvation.

Direct. III. If it be possible, live where there is a faithful, powerful, convincing minister, whose public teaching and private

counsel you may make use of for your souls. Live not, if you can avoid it, under an ignorant, dead, unprofitable teacher, that will never afford you any considerable help to lift up your hearts to a heavenly conversation. But seeing you must spend the six days in your labour, live where you have the best helps to spend the Lord's day, for the quickening and comfort of your souls; that in the strength of that holy food, you may cheerfully perform your sanctified labours on the week days following. Be not like those brutish persons, that live as if there were no life but this; and therefore take care to get a place, where their bodies may be well fed and clothed, and may have ease, and pleasure, and preferment for the world; but care not much what teacher there is, to be their guide to heaven; nor whether ever they be seriously foretold of the world to come, or not.

Direct. IV. Live, if you can obtain so great a mercy, with superiors that fear God, and will have a care of your souls, as well as of your bodies, and will require you to do God's service as well as their own: and not with worldly, ungodly masters, that will use you as they do their beasts, to do their work, and never take care to further your salvation. For, 1. The curse of God is in the families of the ungodly; and who would willingly live in a house that God hath cursed, any more than in a house that is haunted with evil spirits? But God himself doth dwell with the godly, and by many promises hath assured them of his love and blessing. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked; but he blesseth the habitation of the just," Prov.

iii. 33. "The wicked are overthrown, and are not; but the house of the righteous shall stand," Prov. xii. 7. "The house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish," Prov. xiv. 11; so Prov. xv. 25. "The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness," Prov. xxi. 12. Go not into a falling house. 2. A master that feareth God, will help to save you from sin and hell, and help your souls to life eternal: he may do more for you, than if he made you kings and rulers of the earth. He will hinder you from sin: he will teach you to know God, and to prepare for your salvation. Whereas ungodly masters will rather discourage you, and by mocks or threatenings seek to drive you from a holy life, and use their wit, and work, and authority, to hinder your salvation: or at best will take little care of your souls, but think if they provide you food and wages, they have done their parts. 3. A master that feareth God will do you no wrong, but will love you as a christian, and his fellow-servant of Christ, while he commandeth and employeth you as his own servant, which cannot be expected from ignorant, ungodly, worldly men.

Direct. V. Yet choose such a service as you are fit to undergo, with the least hinderance of the service of God, and of your souls. Neither a life of idleness, nor of excess of business, should be chosen, if you have your choice. For when the mind is overwhelmed with the cares of your service, and your bodies tired with excessive labour, you will have little time, or heart, or power, to mind the matters of your souls with any seriousness.

Yea, the Lord's day will be spent with little comfort, when the toil of the week days hath left the body fit for nothing but to sleep. A service which alloweth you no time at all to pray, or read the Scripture, or mind your everlasting state, is a life more fit for beasts than men.

Direct. VI. If you can attain it, live where your fellow-servants fear God, as well as the master of the family. For fellow-servants usually converse with one another more frequently and familiarly than their masters do with any of them. And therefore if a master give you the most heavenly instructions, the idle, frothy talk of fellow-servants may blot out all from your memories and hearts. And their derision of a holy life, or their bad examples, may do more hurt, than the precepts of the governors can do good. Whereas when a master's counsels are seconded by the good discourse and practice of fellow-servants, it is a great encouragement to good, and keepeth the heart in a continual warmth and resolution.

Direct. VII. If you want any one of these accommodations, be the more diligent in such an improvement of the rest, as may make up your want. If you have a good teacher and a bad master, improve the helps of your teacher the more diligently. If you have a bad master and good fellow-servants, or a good master and bad fellow-servants, thank God for that which you have, and make the best of it.

Direct. VIII. If you would be accommodated yourselves with the best masters and usage, labour to be the best servants; and

then it is two to one but you may have your choice. Good servants are so scarce, and so much valued, that the best places would strive for you, if you will strive to be such. Excel others in labour, and diligence, and trustiness, and obedience, and gentleness, and patience, and then you may have almost what places you desire. But if you will yourselves be idle, and slothful, and deceitful, and false, and disobedient, and unmannerly, and self-willed, and contentious, and impatient, and yet think that you must be respected, and used as good and faithful servants, it is but a foolish expectation. For what obligation is there upon others, in point of justice, to give you that which you deserve not? Indeed if any be bound to keep you in mere charity, then you may plead charity with them and not desert; but if they take you but as servants, they owe you nothing but what your work and virtues shall deserve.

CHAPTER III.
A DISPUTATION, OR ARGUMENTS
TO PROVE THE NECESSITY
OF FAMILY WORSHIP AND
HOLINESS, OR DIRECTIONS
AGAINST THE CAVILS OF
THE PROFANE, AND SOME
SECTARIES, WHO DENY IT TO
BE A THING REQUIRED BY GOD

**Whether the solemn Worship of God, in and by
Families as such, be of Divine Appointment? Aff**

That excellent speech of Mirandula is oft in mind, *Veritatem philosophia quærit, theologia invenit, religio possidet*. I do therefore with greater alacrity and delight dispute these points that are directly religious, that is, immediately practical, than those that are only remotely such: and though I am loth we should see among us any wider division *inter philosophum theologum et*

religiosum, than between the fantasy, the intellect, and the will, which never are found disjunct in any act; or rather, than between the habits of practical natural knowledge, and the habits of practical supernatural knowledge, and the practical resolutions, affections, and endeavours, into which both the former are devolved; yet may we safely and profitably distinguish, where it would be mortal to divide. If disputing in our present case, do but tend to, and end in, a religious performance, we shall then be able to say, we disputed not in vain; when by experience of the delight and profit of God's work, we perceive that we do not worship him in vain: otherwise to evince by a dispute, that God should be worshipped, and not to worship him when we have done, is but to draw forth our learning, and sharpen our wits, to plead for our condemnation; as if the accuser wanted our help, or the Judge of all the world did want evidence or arguments against us, unless he had it from our own mouth. Concerning the sense of the terms, I shall say somewhat, both as to the subject, and the predicate, that we contend not in the dark; and yet but little, lest I trouble myself and you with needless labours.

1. By the worship of God we mean not only, nor principally, obedience as such, or service in common things, called Δουλεία: but we mean a religious performance of some sacred actions, with an intention of honouring God as God; and that more directly than in common works of obedience. This being commonly called Λατρεία, is by Austin, and since him by all the orthodox, appropriated to God alone; and indeed to give it to any

other is contradictory to its definition.

This worship is of two sorts, whereof the first is by an excellency called worship, viz. When the honouring of God is so directly the end and whole business of the work, that our own advantage falls in but impliedly, and in evident subordination. such are the blessed works of praise and thanksgiving, which we here begin and shall in heaven perpetuate. Yet see a more admirable mystery of true religion; we indeed receive more largely from God, and enjoy more fully our own felicity in him, in these acts of worship, that give all to God, than in the other, wherein we more directly seek for somewhat from him. And those are the second sort of worship actions, viz. When the substance or matter of the work is a seeking or receiving somewhat from God, or delivering something religiously in his name, and so is more directly for ourselves; though yet it is God that should be our ultimate end in this too. You may perceive I make this of three sorts. Whereof the first consisteth in our religious addresses to God for something that we want; and is called prayer. The second consisteth in our religious addresses to God to receive somewhat from him; viz. 1. Instructions, precepts, promises, threatenings, from his mouth, messengers, &c. 2. The sacramental signs of his grace in baptism and the Lord's supper. The third is, when the officers of Christ do in his name solemnly deliver either his laws or sacraments. His laws either in general by ordinary preaching, or by a more particular application in acts of discipline.

2. The word solemn signifies sometimes any thing usual, and so some derive it, *Solenne est quod fieri solet*. Sometimes that which is done but on one set day in the year; and so some make *solenne* to be *quasi solum semel in anno*. But vulgarly it is taken, and so we take it here, for both *celebre et usitatum*, that is, a thing that is not accidentally and seldom, but statedly and ordinarily to be done, and that with such gravity and honourable seriousness as befits a business of such weight.

3. By family we mean, not a tribe or stock of kindred, dwelling in many houses, as the word is taken oft in Scripture, but I mean a household.

Domus et familia, a household and family, are indeed in economics somewhat different notions, but one thing. *Domus* is to *familia* as *civitas* to *respublica*, the former is made the subject of the latter, the latter the *finis internus* of the former. And so *Domus est societas naturæ consentanea, e personis domesticis, vitæ in dies omnes commode sustentandæ causa, collecta. Familia est ordo domus per regimen patris-familias in personas sibi subjectas*.

Where note, that to a complete family must go four integral parts, *Pater-familias, mater-familias, filius, servus*, A father, mother, son, and servant. But to the essence of a family it sufficeth if there be but the *pars imperans, et pars subdita*, one head or governor, either father, mother, master, or mistress; and one or more governed under this head.

Note therefore, that the governor is an essential part of the

family, and so are some of the governed, (viz. that such there be,) but not each member. If therefore twenty children or servants shall worship God without the father, or master of the family, either present himself, or in some representative, it is not a family worship in strict sense. But if the head of the family in himself (or delegate or representative) be present, with any of his children or servants, though all the rest be absent, it is yet a family duty; though the family be incomplete and maimed (and so is the duty therefore, if culpably so performed).

4. When I say in and by a family, I mean not that each must do the same parts of the work, but that one (either the head, or some one deputed by him, and representing him) be the mouth, and the rest performing their parts by receiving instructions, or mentally concurring in the prayers and praise by him put up. Lastly, By divine appointment I mean any signification of God's will, that it is men's duty to perform this; whether a signification by natural means or supernatural, directly or by consequence, so we may be sure it is God's will. The sum of the question then is, whether any sacred actions religiously and ordinarily to be performed to God's honour by the head of the family, with the rest, be by God's appointment made our duty? My thoughts of this question I shall reduce to these heads, and propound in this order. 1. I shall speak of family worship in general. 2. Of the sorts of that worship in special. 3. Of the time.

I. Concerning the first, I lay down my thoughts in these propositions following, for limitation and caution, and then prove

the main conclusion.

Prop. 1. It is not all sorts of God's worship which he hath appointed to be performed by families as such; there being some proper to more public assemblies.

2. More particularly the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, are proper to the ministerial or organized churches, and not common to families: for as they are both of them committed only to ministers of the gospel, and have been only used by them for many hundred years in the church; (except that some permitted others to baptize in case of necessity); so the Lord's supper was appointed for a symbol and means of a more public communion than that of families. And though some conjecture the contrary, from its first institution, and think that as there is a family prayer and church prayer, family teaching and church teaching, so there should be family sacraments and church sacraments, yet it is a mistake. For though Christ administered it to his family, yet it was not as a family, but as a church. For that which is but one family may possibly be a church also. This exposition we have from the doctrine and practice of the apostles, and constant custom of all the churches, which have never thought the Lord's supper to be a family duty, but proper to larger assemblies, and administrable only by ordained ministers. Nor will the reasons drawn from circumcision and the passover prove the contrary: both because particular churches were not then instituted as now, and therefore families had the more to do; and because there were some duties

proper to families in the very institution of those sacraments; and because God gave them a power in those, which he hath not given to masters of families now in our sacraments.

3. Many thousands do by their own viciousness and negligence disable themselves, so that they cannot perform what God hath made their duty; yet it remains their duty still: some disability may excuse them in part, but not in whole.

I shall now prove, that the solemn worship of God in and by families as such, is of divine appointment.

Argument I. If families are societies of God's institution, furnished with special advantages and opportunities for God's solemn worship, having no prohibition so to use them; then the solemn worship of God in and by families as such, is of divine appointment. But the antecedent is true; therefore so is the consequent.

For the parts of the antecedent; 1. That families are societies of God's institution, needeth no proof.

2. That they are furnished with special advantages and opportunities may appear by an enumeration of particulars. (1.) There is the advantage of authority in the ruler of the family, whereby he may command all that are under him in God's worship, yea, and may inflict penalties on children and servants that refuse; yea, may cast some out of the family if they be obstinate. (2.) He hath the advantage of a singular interest in wife and children, by which he may bring them to it willingly, that so they may perform a right evangelical worship. (3.) He

hath the advantage of a singular dependence of all upon him for daily provisions; and of his children for their portions for livelihood in the world, whereby he may yet further prevail with them for obedience; he having a power to reward, as well as to punish and command. (4.) They have the opportunity of cohabitation, and so are still at hand, and more together, and so in readiness for such employments. (5.) Being nearest in relation, they are stronglier obliged to further each other's salvation, and help each other in serving God. (6.) They have hereby an advantage against all prejudices and jealousies, which strangeness and mistakes may raise and cherish among those that live at a greater distance, and so may close more heartily in God's worship. And their nearness of relation and natural affections do singularly advantage them for a more affectionate conjunction, and so for a more forcible and acceptable worship of God, when they are in it as of one heart and soul. (7.) If any misunderstanding or other impediment arise, they being still at hand, have opportunity to remove them, and to satisfy each other; and if any distempers of understanding, heart, or life, be in the family, the ruler, by familiarity and daily converse, is enabled more particularly to fit his reproofs and exhortations, confessions and petitions, accordingly, which even ministers in the congregations cannot so well do. So that I have made it evident in this enumeration, that families have advantages, yea, special and most excellent advantages and opportunities for the solemn worship of God.

3. The last part of the antecedent was, that they have no prohibition to use these advantages and opportunities to God's solemn worship. I add this, lest any should say, though they have such advantages, yet God may restrain them for the avoiding some greater inconveniencies another way; as he hath restrained women from speaking in the assemblies. But, (1.) God hath neither restrained them in the law of nature, nor in the written law; therefore not at all. He that can show it in either, let him do it. (2.) I never yet read or heard any knowing christian once affirm that God hath forbidden families solemnly to worship him, and therefore I think it needless to prove a negative, when no man is known to hold the affirmative. Indeed for some kinds of worship, as preaching and expounding Scripture, some have prohibited them; but not reading, catechizing, all instructing, praying, praises, singing psalms, much less all solemn worship wholly. So much for the antecedent.

I now come to prove the consequence. The foresaid advantages and opportunities are talents given by God, which they that receive, are obliged faithfully to improve for God; therefore families having such advantages and opportunities for God's solemn worship, are bound to improve them faithfully for God, in the solemn worshipping of him. For the antecedent, 1. It is unquestionable that these are talents, that is, improvable mercies given by God. For as none dare deny them to be mercies, so none dare (I hope) say that God is not the giver of them. And then, 2. That such talents must be improved faithfully for

God, from whom they are received, is plain, from Matt. xxv. throughout, especially ver. 14-31. And Luke xx. 10, he requireth the fruits of his vineyard; and Matt. x. 42, if he intrust us with a cup of cold water, he expecteth it for a prophet when he calleth for it. And if he intrust us with outward riches, he expecteth that "we give to him that asketh," Matt. v. 42; Luke vi. 30, 38; xi. 41; xii. 33. His stewards must give an account of their stewardships, Luke xvi. 2. Christ telleth us of all our talents in general, Luke xii. 48, that "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." And of our words in particular Christ tells us, Matt. xii. 36, that "of every idle word men shall give an account at the day of judgment." Much more for denying to use both our tongues and hearts in God's worship, when he gives us such opportunities. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," 1 Cor. iv. 2. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," &c. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. Many more of the like scriptures prove the antecedent of the enthymeme, and the consequent needs no proof.

Arg. II. The solemn worship of God in and by families as such, is required by the very law of nature, therefore it is of divine institution. The consequence can be denied by no man that renounceth not reason and nature itself; denying the law of nature to be God's law, which is indeed partly presupposed in the

law supernatural, and partly rehearsed in it, but never subverted by it. Positives are more mutable than naturals are.

The antecedent is thus manifested. 1. Natural reason (or the law of nature) requireth that all men do faithfully improve all the talents that God hath intrusted them with, to his honour; therefore natural reason (or the law of nature) doth require, that God be solemnly worshipped in families, he having given them such advantages as aforesaid thereunto. 2. The law of nature requireth, that all societies that have God for their founder or institutor, should, to their utmost capacities, be devoted to him that founded and instituted them: but that God is the founder and institutor of families, is known by the light of nature itself; therefore the law of nature requireth, that families be to the utmost of their capacities devoted to God; and consequently, that they solemnly worship him, they being capable of so doing. I need not prove the major, because I speak only to men that are possessed of the law of nature mentioned in it; and therefore they know it themselves to be true. Yet let me so far stay on the illustration, as to tell you the grounds of it. And, 1. God is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the principal efficient and ultimate end of all; and therefore of families. And therefore they should be for him, as well as they are from him: for "of him, and through him, and to him are all things." This argument I draw from nature, which can have no beginning but God, nor any end but God. The 2. I draw from the divine intention, in the fabrication and ordination of all things. God made all things

for himself, and can have no ultimate end below himself. The 3. I draw from his *jus dominii*, his right of propriety which he hath over all things, and so over families as such; they are all absolutely his own alone. And that which is solely or absolutely a man's own, should be for his use, and employed to his honour and ends: much more that which is God's, seeing man is not capable of such a plenary propriety of any thing in the world, as God hath in all things. 4. I argue *a jure imperii*, from God's right of government. If he have a full right of government of families, as families, then families as families must honour and worship him according to their utmost capacities. But he hath a full right of absolute government over families as families; therefore – The consequence of the major is grounded on these two things: 1. That God himself is the end of his own government: this is proper to his regimen. All human government is said by politicians to be terminated ultimately in the public good of the society. But God's pleasure and glory is the end of his government, and is, as it were, the public or universal good. 2. In that nature teacheth us, that supreme honour is due to all that are supreme governors; therefore they are to have the most honourable titles, of majesty, highness, excellency, &c. and actions answerable to those titles: Mal. i. 6, "If I be a father, where is mine honour? if I be a master, where is my fear?" Fear is oft put for all God's worship. If then there be no family whereof God is not the Father or Founder, and the Master, or Owner and Governor, then there is none but should honour and fear him, or worship him, and that not only

as single men, but as families; because he is not only the Father and Master, the Lord and Ruler of them as men, but also as families. Honour is as due to the rector, as protection to the subjects, and in our case much more. God is not a mere titular but real Governor. All powers on earth are derived from him, and are indeed his power. All lawful governors are his officers, and hold their places under him, and act by him. As God therefore is the proper Sovereign of every commonwealth, and the Head of the church, so is he the Head of every family. Therefore as every commonwealth should perform such worship or honour to their earthly sovereign, as is due to man; so each society should, according to their capacities, perform divine worship and honour to God. And if any object, That by this rule commonwealths, as such, must meet together to worship God, which is impossible; I answer, They must worship him according to their natural capacities; and so must families according to theirs. The same general precept obligeth to a diverse manner of duty according to the divers capacities of the subject. Commonwealths must, in their representatives at least, engage themselves to God as commonwealths, and worship him in the most convenient way that they are capable of. Families may meet together for prayer, though a nation cannot. As an association of churches, called a provincial or national church, is obliged to worship God, as well as particular congregations, yet not in one place; because it is impossible: nature limiteth and maketh the difference.

And that the obligation of families to honour and worship

God, may yet appear more evidently, consider that God's right of propriety and rule is twofold, yet each title plenary alone. 1. He is our Owner and Ruler upon his title of creation. 2. So he is by his right of redemption. By both these he is not only Lord and Ruler of persons, but families; all societies being his; and the regimen of persons being chiefly exercised over them in societies. "All power in heaven and earth is given unto Christ," Matt. xviii. 18; "and all judgment committed unto him," John v. 22; "and all things delivered into his hands," John xiii. 3; "and therefore to him shall every knee bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;" (either with a bowing of worship, or of forced acknowledgment;) and "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father," Phil. ii. 10. Bowing to and confessing Christ voluntarily to God's glory, is true worship; all must do this according to their several capacities; and therefore families according to theirs.

A third consideration, which I thought to have added but for illustration, may well stand as an argument itself; and it is this:

Arg. III. If besides all the forementioned opportunities and obligations, families do live in the presence of God, and ought by faith to apprehend that presence, then is it God's will that families as such should solemnly worship him. But the former is true, therefore the latter.

The consequence of the major, which alone requires proof, I prove by an argument *a fortiori*, from the honour due to all earthly governors. Though when a king, a father, a master

are absent, such actual honour, to be presented to them, is not due, because they are not capable of receiving it (further than *mediante aliqua persona, vel re*, which beareth some representation of the superior, or relation to him); yet when they stand by, it is a contemptuous subject, a disobedient child, that will not perform actual honour or human worship to them. Now God is ever present, not only with each person as such, but also with every family as such. As he is said to walk among the golden candlesticks in his churches, so doth he in the families of all by his common presence, and of his servants by his gracious presence. This they easily find by his directing them, and blessing the affairs of their families. If any say, We see not God, else we would daily worship him in our families. *Answ.* Faith seeth him who to sense is invisible. If one of you had a son that were blind and could not see his own father, would you think him therefore excusable, if he would not honour his father, when he knew him to be present? We know God to be present, though flesh be blind and cannot see him.

Arg. IV. If christian families (besides all the forementioned advantages and obligations) are also societies sanctified to God, then is it God's will that families, as such, should solemnly worship him; but christian families are societies sanctified to God; therefore, &c.

The reason of the consequence is, because things sanctified must in the most eminent sort, that they are capable, be used for God. To sanctify a person or thing, is to set it apart, and separate

it from a common or unclean use, and to devote it to God, to be employed in his service. To alienate this from God, or not to use it for God, when it is dedicated to him, or sanctified by his own election and separation of it from common use, is sacrilege. God hath a double right (of creation and redemption) to all persons. But a treble right to the sanctified. Ananias his fearful judgment was a sad example of God's wrath, on those that withhold from him what was devoted to him. If christian families as such be sanctified to God, they must as such worship him in their best capacity.

That christian families are sanctified to God I prove thus: 1. A society of holy persons must needs be a holy society. But a family of christians is a society of holy persons; therefore, 2. We find in Scripture not only single persons, but the societies of such, sanctified to God. Deut. vii. 6, "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; he hath chosen thee to be a special people to himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth." So Deut. xiv. 20, 21. So the body of that commonwealth did all jointly enter into covenant with God, and God to them, Deut. xxix.; xxx.; and xxvi. 17-19, "Thou hast vouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways; and the Lord hath vouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, that thou mayst be an holy people to the Lord." So chap. xxviii. 9; Dan. viii. 24; xii. 7. Joshua, chap. xxiv. devoteth himself and his house to the Lord; "I and my house will serve the Lord." And Abraham by circumcision (the covenant, or seal of the covenant

of God) consecrated his whole household to God; and so were all families after him to do (as to the males, in whom the whole was consecrated). And whether besides the typifying intent, there were not somewhat more in the sanctifying of all the first-born to God, who if they lived, were to be the heads of the families, may be questioned.

The passover was a family duty, by which they were yet further sanctified to God. Yea, it is especially to be observed how in the New Testament, the Holy Ghost doth imitate the language of the Old, and speak of God's people as of holy societies, as the Jews were. As in many prophecies it was foretold that nations and kingdoms should serve him (of which I have spoken more in my book of Baptism); and among those who should "mourn over him whom they have pierced" in gospel times, when the spirit of grace and supplication is poured forth, are "the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; every family, even all the families that remained, apart, and their wives apart," Zech. xi. 12-14. So Christ sendeth his disciples to "baptize nations," having discipled them; and "the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord, and his Christ." And as, Exod. xix. 5, 6, God saith of the Jews, "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation;" so doth Peter say of all christians, 1 Pet. ii. 5-7, 9, "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer

up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Mark how fully this text doth prove all that we are about. It speaks of christians collectively, as in societies, and in societies of all the most eminent sorts: "a generation;" which seems especially to refer to tribes and families: "a priesthood, nation, people;" which comprehendeth all the orders in the nation ofttimes. And in all these respects they are holy, and peculiar, and chosen, to show, that God's people are sanctified in these relations and societies. And then mark the end of this sanctification; ver. 5, "to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;" ver. 9, "to show forth the praises of him that hath called you," &c.

Yea, it seems that there was a special dedication of families to God. And therefore we read so frequently of households converted and baptized: though none at age were baptized, but such as seemed believers; yet when they professed faith, they were all together initiated as a household. And it seems, the master's interest and duty were taken to be so great for the conversion of the rest, that as he was not content himself with his own conversion, but to labour presently, even before his baptism, that his household should join with him, that so the whole family at once might be devoted to God; so God did bless this his own order and ordinance to that end: and where he imposed duty on masters, he usually gave success, so that commonly the whole

family was converted and baptized with the ruler of the family. So Acts xviii. 8, "Crispus believed on the Lord with all his house, and they were baptized;" and Acts xvi. 32, Paul promiseth the jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house; and he and all his were baptized straightway, for he believed in God with all his house," ver. 33, 34. And Lydia is described a "worshipper of God," Acts xvi. 14; and ver. 15, "she was baptized and her household." And the angel told Cornelius, that Peter should tell him "words whereby he and all his household should be saved," who were baptized accordingly, Acts xi. 14. And 1 Cor. i. 16, Paul baptized the household of Stephanas. And Christ told Zaccheus, salvation was come that day unto his house, "and he and all his household believed." So that nobleman, John iv. 53. Therefore when Christ sent forth his disciples, he saith, "If the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you." So that as it is apparently the duty of every christian sovereign, to do what he is able to make all his people God's people; and so to dedicate them to God as a holy nation, in a national covenant, as the Israelites were: so is it the unquestionable duty of every christian ruler of a family, to improve his interest, power, and parts to the uttermost, to bring all his family to be people of Christ in the baptismal covenant, and so to dedicate all his family to Christ. Yet further I prove this, in that believers themselves being all sanctified to God, it must needs follow, that all their lawful relations, and especially all commanded states of relation,

are also sanctified to God; for when themselves are dedicated to God, it is absolutely without reserve, to serve him with all that they have, and in every relation and capacity that he shall set them. It were a madness to think, that a christian totally devoted unto God when he is a private man, if he were after made a soldier, a minister, a magistrate, a king, were not bound by his dedication now to serve God as a soldier, a minister, a magistrate, a king. So he that is devoted to God in a single state, is bound to serve him as a husband, a father, a master, when he comes into that state: we do devote all that we have to God, when we devote ourselves to him.

Moreover the Scripture tells us, that to "the pure all things are pure," Tit. i. 15, 16. And "all things are sanctified to them by the word and prayer," 1 Tim. iv. 5; which is in that they are made the goods and enjoyments, actions and relations of a sanctified people, who are themselves devoted or sanctified to God: so that all sanctification referreth ultimately and principally to God; *Quod sanctum Deo sanctum est*; though it may be said subordinately to be sanctified to us. Seeing then it is past all doubt that every christian is a man sanctified and devoted to God, and that whenever any man is so devoted to God, he is devoted to serve him to the utmost capacity in every state, relation, or condition that he is in, and with all the faculties he possesseth, it followeth that those relations are sanctified to God, and in them he ought to worship him and honour him.

Yet further we find in Scripture, that the particular family

relations are expressly sanctified. The family complete consisteth of three pairs of relations; husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants. Husbands must love their wives with a holy love in the Lord, even as "the Lord loved the church, who gave himself for it, to sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church," Eph. v. 25-27. "Wives must submit themselves to their husbands as unto the Lord; and be subject to them, as the church is to Christ," Eph. v. 22-24. "Children must obey their parents in the Lord," Eph. vi. 1. "Parents must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Eph. vi. 4. "Servants must be obedient unto their masters as unto Christ, and as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from their hearts with good will, doing service as to the Lord, and not to man; knowing that what good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free: and masters must do the same to them, knowing that their Master is in heaven," Eph. vi. 5-9. So that it is evident that every distinct family relation is dedicated or holy to God and to be used to the utmost for God. I shall have occasion to make further use anon of these texts for the particular sorts of worship, though I now make use of them as for worship in general.

Arg. V. The several sorts of solemn worship in and by christian families, are found, appointed, used, and commanded in the Scripture, therefore it may well be concluded of worship in the general; seeing the genus is in each species. But this argument

brings me to the second part of my undertaking; viz. to prove the point as to some special kinds of worship; which I the more hasten to, because in so doing I prove the general also.

II. Concerning God's worship in special, I shall speak but to two or three of the chief parts of it, which belong to families.

And, 1. of teaching, under which I comprise,

1. Teaching the letter of the Scripture, (1.) By reading it. (2.) By teaching others to read it. (3.) Causing them to learn it by memory, which is a kind of catechising.

2. Teaching the sense of it.

3. Applying what is so taught by familiar reproofs, admonitions, and exhortations.

Prop. II. It is the will of God that the rulers of families should teach those that are under them the doctrine of salvation, i.e. the doctrine of God concerning salvation, and the terms on which it is to be had, and the means to be used for attaining it, and all the duties requisite on our parts in order thereunto.

Before I come to the proof, take these cautions: 1. Where I say men must thus teach, I imply they must be able to teach, and not teach before they are able; and if they be not able it is their own sin, God having vouchsafed them means for enablement. 2. Men must measure their teaching according to their abilities, and not pretend to more than they have, nor attempt that which they cannot perform, thereby incurring the guilt of proud self-conceitedness, profanation, or other abuse of holy things. For example, men that are not able judiciously to

do it, must not presume to interpret the original, or to give the sense of dark prophecies, and other obscure texts of Scripture, nor to determine controversies beyond their reach. 3. Yet may such conveniently study what more learned, able men say to such cases; and tell their families, this is the judgment of fathers, or councils, or such and such learned divines. 4. But ordinarily it is the safest, humblest, wisest, and most orderly way for the master of the family to let controversies and obscure Scriptures alone, and to teach the plain, few necessary doctrines commonly contained in catechisms, and to direct in matters of necessary practice. 5. Family teaching must stand in a subordination to ministerial teaching, as families are subordinate to churches; and therefore, (1.) Family teaching must give place to ministerial teaching, and never be set against it; you must not be hearing the master of a family, when you should be in a church hearing the pastor; and if the pastor send for servants or children to be catechised in any fit place or at any fit time, the master is not then to be doing it himself, or to hinder them, but they must go first to the pastor to be taught; also if a pastor come into a family, the master is to give place, and the family to hear him first. (2.) And therefore when any hard text or controversies fall in, the master should consult with the pastor for their exposition, unless it fall out that the master of the family be better learned in the Scripture than the pastor is, which is rare, and rarer should be, seeing unworthy ministers should be removed, and private men that are worthy should be made ministers. And the pastors should be the

ablest men in the congregation. Now to the proof (remembering still that whatsoever proves it the ruler's duty to teach, must needs prove it the family's duty to learn, and to hearken to his teaching that they may learn).

Arg. I. From Deut. xi. 18-21, "Therefore shall you lay up these my words in your hearts, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes; and you shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; and thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon your gates; that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children." The like words are in Deut. vi. 6-8, where it is said, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." So Deut. iv. 9, "Teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

Here there is one part of family duty, viz. teaching children the laws of God, as plainly commanded as words can express it.

Arg. II. From these texts which commend this. Gen. xviii. 18, 19, "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him, for I know him that he will command his children and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord;" and it was not only a command at his death what they should do when he was dead; for, 1. It cannot be imagined that so holy a man should neglect a duty all his lifetime, and perform it but at death, and be commended for that. 2. He might then have great cause to question the efficacy. 3. As God commandeth a diligent

inculcating precepts on children, so no doubt it is a practice answerable to such precepts that is here commended; and it is not bare teaching, but commanding, that is here mentioned, to show that it must be an improvement of authority, as well as of knowledge and elocution.

So 2 Tim. iii. 15. From a child Timothy knew the Scripture by the teaching of his parents, as appeareth, 2 Tim. i. 5.

Arg. III. Eph. vi. 4, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" παιδεία, translated nurture, signifieth both instruction and correction, showing that parents must use both doctrine and authority, or force, with their children for the matters of the Lord; and νοουθεσία, translated admonition, signifieth such instruction as putteth doctrine into the mind, and chargeth it on them, and fully storeth their minds therewith; and it also signifieth chiding, and sometimes correction. And it is to be noted, that children must be brought up in this; the word ἐκτρέφετε, signifying carefully to nourish, importeth that as you feed them with milk and bodily food, so you must as carefully and constantly feed and nourish them with the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is called the nurture and admonition of the Lord, because the Lord commandeth it, and because it is the doctrine concerning the Lord, and the doctrine of his teaching, and the doctrine that leadeth to him.

Arg. IV. Prov. xxii. 6, "Train up a child in the way where he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Arg. V. From all those places that charge children to hearken

to the instructions of their parents, Prov. i. 8, "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother." Prov. vi. 20 is the like; and iii. 22, with many the like. Yea, the son that is stubborn and rebellious against the instruction and correction of a father or mother in gluttony, drunkenness, &c. was to be brought forth to the magistrate, and stoned to death, Deut. xxi. 18-20. Now all the scriptures that require children to hear their parents, do imply that the parents must teach their children; for there is no hearing and learning without teaching.

But lest you say that parents and children are not the whole family, (though they may be, and in Abraham's ease before mentioned, the whole household is mentioned,) the next shall speak to other relations.

Arg. VI. 1 Pet. iii. 7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them (your wives) according to knowledge;" and Eph. v. 25, 26, "Love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it." And this plainly implies that this knowledge must be used for the instruction and sanctification of the wife. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35, women must "keep silence in the church, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are to be under obedience, as also saith the law. If they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home." Which shows that at home their husbands must teach them.

Arg. VII. Col. iii. 22-25; Eph. vi. 5-8, "Servants must be obedient unto their masters as unto Christ, and serve them as serving the Lord Christ," and therefore ministers must command

in Christ.

Arg. VIII. A *fortiori*, fellow-christians must "exhort one another daily while it is called to-day, lest any be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin;" much more must the rulers of families do so to wives, children, and servants. 1 Pet. iv. 11, "If any speak, it must be as the oracles of God;" much more to our own families. Col. iii. 16, "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another;" and much more must a man do this to wife, children, and servants, than to those more remote.

Arg. IX. Those that are to be chosen deacons or bishops, must be such as rule their own children and their own household well, 1 Tim. iii. 4, 12. Now mark, 1. That this is one of those christian virtues which they were to have before they were made officers, therefore other christians must have and perform it as well as they. 2. It is a religious, holy governing, such as a minister is to exercise over his flock, that is here mentioned, which is in the things of God and salvation, or else the comparison or argument would not suit; ver. 5, "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he rule the church of God?" But of this more before. I would say more on this point, but I think it so clear in Scripture as to make it needless: I pass therefore to the next.

Prop. III. Family discipline is part of God's solemn worship or service appointed in his word. This is not called worship in so near a sense as some of the rest, but more remotely; yet so it may well be called, in that, 1. It is an authoritative act done

by commission from God; 2. Upon such as disobey him, and as such; 3. And to his glory; yea, and it should be done with as great solemnity and reverence, as other parts of worship.

The acts of this discipline are, 1. Denying the ungodly entrance into the family. 2. Correcting; 3. Or casting out those that are in. I shall be but brief on these.

1. The first you have 2 John 10, "If there come any to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

2. The duty of correcting, either by corporal, sensible punishment, or by withdrawing some benefit, is so commonly required in Scripture, especially towards children, that I will not stand on it, lest I speak in vain what you all know already; and how Eli suffered for neglecting it, you know.

3. The discipline of casting the wicked out of the family (servants I mean, who are separable members) you may find Psal. ci. 2, 3, 7, 8, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart, I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight."

Prop. IV. Solemn prayer and praises of God in and by christian families is of divine appointment.

1. For proof of this, I must desire you to look back to all the arguments which proved the dueness of worship in general, for they will yet more especially prove this sort of worship, seeing

prayer and praise are most immediately and eminently called God's worship of any; (under praises I comprehend psalms of praise, and under prayer, psalms of prayer;) yet let us add some more.

Arg. I. It is God's will that christians who have fit occasions and opportunities for prayer and praises should improve them, but christian families have fit occasions and opportunities for prayer and praise, therefore it is God's will they should improve them.

The major is evident in many Scripture precepts. 1 Tim. ii. 8, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Thess. v. 17, 18, "Pray without ceasing; in every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God concerning you." Col. iv. 2, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Col. iii. 16, 17, "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord: and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks unto God and the Father by him." Rom. xii. 12, "Continuing instant in prayer." "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me that utterance may be given me," Eph. vi. 18. Many the like texts might be named, every one of which afford an argument for family praises most effectual.

1. If men must pray every where, (that is convenient,) then

sure in their families. But, &c. *Erg.* 2. If men must pray without ceasing, then sure in their families. 3. If men must in every thing give thanks, then sure in family mercies, and then, according to the nature of them, together. 4. If men must continue in prayer and watch in it, (for fit advantages and against impediments,) and in thanksgiving, then doubtless they must not omit the singular advantages which are administered in families. 5. If we must continue instant in prayer and supplication, &c. then doubtless in family prayer, in our families, unless that be no place and no prayer. *Object.* But this binds us no more to prayer in our families than any where else. *Answ.* Yes, it binds us to take all fit opportunities; and we have more fit opportunities in our own families than in other men's, or than in occasional meetings, or than in any ordinary societies, except the church.

And here let me tell you, that it is ignorance to call for particular express Scripture, to require praying in families, as if we thought the general commands did not comprehend this particular, and were not sufficient. God doth in much wisdom leave out of his written law the express determination of some of those circumstantial, or the application of general precepts to some of those subjects, to which common reason and the light of nature sufficeth to determine and apply them. The Scripture giveth us the general, "Pray always with all manner of prayer in all places," that is, omit no fit advantages and opportunities for prayer. What if God had said no more than this about prayer in Scripture? It seems some men would have said, God hath

not required us to pray at all, (when he requireth us to pray always,) because he tells us not when and where, and how oft, and with whom, and in what words, &c. And so they would have concluded God no where bids us pray in secret, nor pray in families, nor pray in assemblies, nor pray with the godly, nor with the wicked, nor pray every day, nor once a week; nor with a book, nor without a book, and therefore not at all. As if the general "Pray on all fit occasions" were nothing.

But these men must know that nature also and reason are God's light, and Providence oft determineth of such subjects and adjuncts: and the general law, and these together, do put all out of doubt. What if God telleth you, He that provideth not for his own, especially those of his household, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel, and do not tell you either who are your families, and who not, nor what provision you shall make for them, what food, what clothes, or how oft they must feed, &c.; will you say God hath not bid you feed or clothe this child, or that servant? It is enough that God chargeth you to provide for your families, in the Scripture; and that in nature he tell you which are your families, and what provision to make for them, and how oft, and in what quantity, &c. And so if God bid you pray in all places, and at all times, on all occasions, (that are fit for prayer,) and experience and common reason tell you that families afford most fit times, place, and occasions for prayer, is not this enough, that there are such seasons, and opportunities, and occasions for family prayer? I refer you to the particular

discoveries of them in the beginning, where I proved the dueness of worship in general to be there performed. And I refer you also to common reason itself, not fearing the contradiction of any man whose impiety hath not made him unreasonable, and prevailed against the common light of nature. This first general argument were enough, if men were not so averse to their duty that they cannot know because they will not: but let us therefore add some more.

Arg. II. If there be many blessings which the family needeth, and which they do actually receive from God, then it is the will of God that the family pray for these blessings when they need them, and give thanks for them when they have received them: but there are many blessings which the family (as conjunct) needeth and receiveth of God. Therefore the family conjunct, and not only particular members secretly, should pray for them and give thanks for them.

The antecedent is past question; 1. The continuance of the family as such in being. 2. In well being. 3. And so the preservation and direction of the essential members. 4. And the prospering of all family affairs are evident instances: and to descend to mere particulars would be needless tediousness. The consequence is proved from many scriptures, which require those that want mercies to ask them, and those that have received them to be thankful for them. *Object.* So they may do singly. *Ans.* It is not only as single persons, but as a society, that they receive the mercy; therefore not only as single persons, but as a

society, should they pray and give thanks: therefore should they do it in that manner, as may be most fit for a society to do it in, and that is, together conjunctly, that it may be indeed a family sacrifice, and that each part may see that the rest join with them. And especially that the ruler may be satisfied in this, to whom the oversight of the rest is committed: to see that they all join in prayer, which in secret he cannot see, it being not fit that secret prayer should have spectators or witness, that is, should not be secret. But this I intended to make another argument by itself; which because we are fallen on it, I will add next.

Arg. III. If God hath given charge to the ruler of the family to see that the rest do worship him in that family, then ought the ruler to cause them solemnly or openly to join in that worship. But God hath given charge to the ruler of the family, to see that the rest do worship him in that family; therefore, &c.

The reason of the consequence is, because otherwise he can with no convenience see that they do it. For, 1. It is not fit that he should stand by while they pray secretly. 2. Nor are they able vocally to do it, in most families, but have need of a leader; it being not a thing to be expected of every woman, and child, and servant, (that had wanted good education,) that they should be able to pray without a guide, so as is fit for others to hear. 3. It would take almost all the time of the ruler of many families, to go to them one after another, and stand by them while they pray, till all have done: what man in his wits can think this to be so fit a course, as for the family to join together, the ruler being the

mouth?

The antecedent I prove thus: 1. The fourth commandment requireth the ruler of the family not only to see that himself sanctify the sabbath day, but also that his son and daughter, and man-servant, and maid-servant, his cattle, (that is, so far as they are capable,) yea, and the stranger that is within his gates, should do it. 2. It was committed to Abraham's charge to see that all in his family were circumcised: so was it afterwards to every ruler of a family; insomuch as the angel threatened Moses, when his son was uncircumcised. 3. The ruler of the family was to see that the "passover" was kept by every one in his family, Exod. xii. 2, 3, &c.; and so the "feast of weeks," Deut. xxvi. 11, 12. All that is said before tendeth to prove this, and much more might be said, if I thought it would be denied.

Arg. IV. If God prefer, and would have us prefer, the prayers and praises of many conjunct, before the prayers and praises of those persons dividedly, then is it his will that the particular persons of christian families should prefer conjunct prayer and praises before disjunct: but the antecedent is true, therefore so is the consequent. Or thus, take it for the same argument or another. If it be the duty of neighbours, when they have occasion and opportunity, rather to join together in praises of common concernment, than to do it dividedly, then much more is this the duty of families: but it is the duty of neighbours; therefore, &c.

In the former argument the reason of the consequence is, because that way is to be taken that God is best pleased with.

The reason of the consequence in the latter is, because family members are more nearly related than neighbours, and have much more advantage and opportunity for conjunction, and more ordinary reasons to urge them to it, from the conjunction of their interest and affairs.

There is nothing needs proof but the antecedent, which I shall put past all doubt by these arguments. 1. Col. iii. 16, "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord." Here is one duty of praise required to be done together, and not apart only. I shall yet make further use of this text anon. 2. Acts xii. 12, "Many were gathered together praying in Mary's house, when Peter came to the door." This was not an assembly of the whole church, but a small part: they judged it better to pray together than alone. 3. Acts xx. 36, Paul prayed together with all the elders of the church of Ephesus, when he had them with him; and did not choose rather to let them pray each man alone. 4. James v. 15, 16, James commands the sick to "send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, and the prayer of the faithful shall save the sick," &c. He doth not bid send to them to pray for you; but he would have them join together in doing it. 5. Church prayers are preferred before private on this ground, and we commanded not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, Heb. x. 25. 6. Striving together in prayer is desired, Rom. xv. 30. 7. Matt. xviii. 20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of

them." 8. Therefore Christ came among the disciples when they were gathered together, after his resurrection: and sent down the Holy Ghost when they were gathered together, Acts ii. "And they continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," Acts i. 14, 24; ii. 42. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they had assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," &c. Acts iv. 31. 9. Is not this implied, in Christ's directing his disciples to pray in the plural number, "Our Father," &c. "Give us this day," &c. 10. The very necessity of the persons proves it, in that few societies are such but that most are unable to express their own wants so largely as to affect their hearts, so much as when others do it that are better stored with affection and expression. And this is one of God's ways for communion and communication of grace; that those that have much may help to warm and kindle those that have less. Experience telleth us the benefit of this. As all the body is not an eye or hand, so not a tongue, and therefore the tongue of the church and of the family must speak for the whole body: not but that each one ought to pray in secret too: but, (1.) There the heart without the tongue may better serve turn. (2.) They still ought to prefer conjunct prayer. And, (3.) The communion of saints is an article of our creed, which binds us to acknowledge it fit to do as much of God's work as we can in communion with the saints, not going beyond our callings, nor into confusion.

Arg. V. It is a duty to receive all the mercies that God offereth us: but for a family to have access to God in joint prayers and

praises, is a mercy that God offereth them; therefore it is their duty to accept it. The major is clear in nature and Scripture, Because I have offered and ye refused, is God's great aggravation of the sin of the rebellious. "How oft would I have gathered you together, and ye would not! All the day long have I stretched out my hand," &c. To refuse an offered kindness, is contempt and ingratitude. The minor is undeniable by any christian, that ever knew what family prayers and praises were. Who dare say that it is no mercy to have such a joint access to God? Who feels not conjunction somewhat help his own affections, who makes conscience of watching his heart?

Arg. VI. Part of the duties of families are such that they apparently lose their chiefest life and excellency if they be not performed jointly; therefore they are so to be performed.

I mean, singing of psalms, which I before proved an ordinary duty of conjunct christians, therefore of families. The melody and harmony are lost by our separation, and consequently the alacrity and quickening which our affections should get by it. And if part of God's praises must be performed together, it is easy to see that the rest must be so too. (Not to speak of teaching, which cannot be done alone.)

Arg. VII. Family prayer and praises are a duty owned by the teaching and sanctifying work of the Spirit; therefore they are of God.

I would not argue backwards from the Spirit's teaching to the word's commanding, but on these two suppositions; 1. That

the experiment is very general, and undeniable. 2. That many texts of Scripture are brought already for family prayer; and that this argument is but to second them and prove them truly interpreted. The Spirit and the word do always agree: if therefore I can prove that the Spirit of God doth commonly work men's hearts to a love and savour of these duties, doubtless they are of God. Sanctification is a transcript of the precepts of the word on the heart, written out by the Spirit of God. So much for the consequence.

The antecedent consisteth of two parts; 1. That the sanctified have in them inclinations to these duties. 2. That these inclinations are from the Spirit of God. The first needs no proof, being a matter of experience. I appeal to the heart of every sound and stable christian, whether he feel not a conviction of this duty and an inclination to the performance of it. I never met with one such to my knowledge that was otherwise minded. *Object.* Many in our times are quite against family prayer, who are good christians. *Ans.* I know none of them. I confess I once thought some very good christians that now are against them, but now they appear otherwise, not only by this but by other things. I know none that cast off these duties, but they took up vile sins in their stead, and cast off other duties as well as these: let others observe and judge as they find. 2. The power of delusion may for a time make a christian forbear as unlawful, that which his very new nature is inclined to. As some think it unlawful to pray in our assemblies, and some to join in sacraments: and yet they

have a spirit within them that inclineth their hearts to it still, and therefore they love it, and wish it were lawful, even when they forbear it upon a conceit that it is unlawful. And so it is possible for a time some may do by family duties: but as I expect that these ere long recover, so for my part I take all the rest to be graceless: prejudice and error as a temptation may prohibit the exercise of a duty, when yet the Spirit of God doth work in the heart an inclination to that duty in sanctifying it. 2. And that these inclinations are indeed from the Spirit is evident, 1. In that they come in with all other grace. 2. And by the same means. 3. And are preserved by the same means, standing or falling, increasing or decreasing, with the rest. 4. And are to the same end. 5. And are so generally in all the saints. 6. And so resisted by flesh and blood. 7. And so agreeable to the word, that a christian sins against his new nature, when he neglects family duties. And God doth by his Spirit create a desire after them, and an estimation of them in every gracious soul.

Arg. VIII. Family prayer and praises are a duty ordinarily crowned with admirable, divine, and special blessings: therefore it is of God; the consequence is evident. For though common, outward prosperity may be given to the wicked, who have their portion in this life, yet so is not prosperity of soul.

For the antecedent I willingly appeal to the experience of all the holy families in the world. Who ever used these duties seriously, and found not the benefits? What families be they, in which grace and heavenly-mindedness prosper, but those that

use these duties? Compare in all your towns, cities, and villages, the families that read Scriptures, pray, and praise God, with those that do not, and see the difference: which of them abound more with impiety, with oaths, and cursings, and railings, and drunkenness, and whoredoms, and worldliness, &c.; and which abound most with faith, and patience, and temperance, and charity, and repentance, and hope, &c. The controversy is not hard to decide. Look to the nobility and gentry of England; see you no difference between those that have been bred in praying families and the rest? I mean, taking them (as we say) one with another proportionably. Look to the ministers of England; is it praying families or prayerless families that have done most to the well furnishing of the universities.

Arg. IX. All churches ought solemnly to pray to God and praise him: a christian family is a church; therefore, &c.

The major is past doubt; the minor I prove from the nature of a church in general, which is a society of christians combined for the better worshipping and serving of God. I say not that a family, formally as a family, is a church; but every family of christians ought moreover, by such a combination, to be a church: yea, as christians they are so combined, seeing christianity tieth them to serve God conjunctly together in their relations. 2. Scripture expresseth it; 1 Cor. xvi. 19, "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house." He saith not, which meeteth in their house, but, which is in it. So Philemon 2, "And to the church in thy house." Rom. xvi. 5, "Likewise greet

the church that is in their house." Col. iv. 15, "Salute the brethren that are at Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house." Though some learned men take these to be meant of part of the churches assembling in these houses, yet Beza, Grotius, and many others, acknowledge it to be meant of a family or domestic church, according to that of Tertullian, *ubi tres licet laici ibi ecclesia*, yet I say not that such a family church is of the same species with a particular organized church of many families. But it could not (so much as analogically) be called a church if they might not and must not pray together, and praise God together: for these therefore it fully concludeth.

Arg. X. If rulers must teach their families the word of God, then must they pray with them: but they must teach them; therefore, &c. The antecedent is fully proved by express Scripture already; see also Psal. lxxviii. 4-6. Ministers must teach from house to house; therefore rulers themselves must do it, Acts v. 42; xx. 20.

The consequence is proved good: 1. The apostles prayed when they preached or instructed christians in private assemblies, Acts xx. 36, and other places. 2. We have special need of God's assistance in reading the Scriptures, to know his mind in them, and to make them profitable to us; therefore we must seek it. 3. The reverence due to so holy a business requireth it. 4. We are commanded "in all things to make our requests known to God with prayers, supplications, and thanksgiving, and that with all manner of prayer, in all places, without ceasing;" therefore

especially on such occasions as the reading of Scriptures and instructing others: and I think that few men that are convinced of the duty of reading Scripture and solemn instructing their families, will question the duty of praying for God's blessing on it, when they set upon the work. Yea, a christian's own conscience will provoke him reverently to begin all with God in the imploring of his acceptance, and aid, and blessing.

Arg. XI. If rulers of families are bound to teach their families to pray, then are they bound to pray with them: but they are bound to teach them to pray; therefore, &c.

In the foregoing argument I speak of teaching in general: here I speak of teaching to pray in special. The antecedent of the major I prove thus: 1. They are bound to bring "them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Eph. vi. 44; therefore to teach them to pray and praise God; for "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" containeth that. 2. They are bound to "teach them the fear of the Lord," and "train them up in the way that they should go," and that is doubtless in the way of prayer and praising God.

The consequence appeareth here to be sound, in that men cannot be well and effectually taught to pray, without praying with them, or in their hearing; therefore they that must teach them to pray, must pray with them. It is like music, which you cannot well teach any man, without playing or singing to him; seeing teaching must be by practising: and in most practical doctrines it is so in some degree.

If any question this, I appeal to experience. I never knew any man that was well taught by man to pray, without practising it before them. They that ever knew any such, may have the more colour to object; but I did not: or if they did, yet so rare a thing is not to be made the ordinary way of our endeavours, any more than we should forbear teaching men the most curious artifices by ocular demonstration, because some wits have learned them by few words, or of their own invention: they are cruel to children and servants that teach them not to pray by practice and example.

Arg. XII. From 1 Tim. iv. 3-5, "Meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving – for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Here mark, 1. That all our meat is to be received with thanksgiving; not only with a disposition of thankfulness. 2. That this is twice repeated here together expressly, yea, thrice in sense. 3. That God created them so to be received. 4. That it is made a condition of the goodness, that is, the blessing of the creature to our use. 5. That the creature is said to be sanctified by God's word and prayer; and so to be unsanctified to us before. 6. That the same thing which is called thanksgiving in the two former verses, is called prayer in the last; else the consequence of the apostle could not hold, when he thus argues, It is good if it be received with thanksgiving, because it is sanctified by prayer.

Hence I will draw these two arguments: 1. If families must with thanksgiving receive their meat as from God, then is the thanksgiving of families a duty of God's appointment: but the

former is true, therefore so is the latter. The antecedent is plain: all must receive their meat with thanksgiving; therefore families must. They eat together; therefore they must give thanks together: and that prayer is included in thanksgiving in this text, I manifested before.

2. It is the duty of families to use means that all God's creatures may be sanctified to them: prayer is the means to be used that all God's creatures may be sanctified to them; therefore it is the duty of families to use prayer.

Arg. XIII. From 1 Pet. iii. 7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour to the wife as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." That prayer which is especially hindered by ignorant and unkind converse it is, that is especially meant here in this text: but it is conjunct prayer that is especially so hindered; therefore, &c. I know that secret, personal prayer is also hindered by the same causes; but not so directly and notably as conjunct prayer is. With what hearts can husband and wife join together as one soul in prayer to God, when they abuse and exasperate each other, and come hot from chidings and dissensions? This seemeth the true meaning of the text. And so, the conjunct prayer of husband and wife being proved a duty, (who sometimes constitute a family,) the same reasons will include the rest of the family also.

Arg. XIV. From Col. iii. 16, 17, to iv. 4, "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one

another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord: and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves," &c. Chap. iv. 2, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

Hence I may fetch many arguments for family prayers. 1. It appeareth to be family prayers principally that the apostle here speaketh of; for it is families that he speaks to: for in ver. 16, 17, he speaketh of prayer and thanksgiving; and in the next words he speaketh to each family relation, wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, masters; and in the next words, continuing his speech to the same persons, he bids them "continue in prayer, and watch in the same," &c. If neighbours are bound to speak together in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, with grace in their hearts to the Lord, and to continue in prayer and thanksgiving; then families much more, who are nearlier related, and have more necessities and opportunities, as is said before. 3. If whatever we do in word or deed, we must do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks; then families must needs join in giving thanks. For they have much daily business in word and deed to be done together and asunder.

Arg. XV. From Dan. vi. 10, "When Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his window being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found

Daniel praying and making supplication before his God." Here note, 1. The nature of the duty. 2. The necessity of it. 1. If it had not been open, family prayer which Daniel here performed, how could they have known what he said? It is not probable that he would speak so loud in secret; nor is it like they would have found him at it. So great a prince would have had some servants in his outward rooms, to have stayed them before they had come so near. 2. And the necessity of this prayer is such, that Daniel would not omit it for a few days to save his life.

Arg. XVI. From Josh. xxiv. 15, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Here note, 1. That it is a household that is here engaged: for if any would prove that it extendeth further, to all Joshua's tribe, or inferior kindred, yet his household would be most eminently included. 2. That it is the same thing which Joshua promiseth for his house, which he would have all Israel do for theirs: for he maketh himself an example to move them to it.

If households must serve the Lord, then households must pray to him and praise him: but households must serve him; therefore, &c. The consequence is proved, in that prayer and praise are so necessary parts of God's service, that no family or person can be said in general to be devoted to serve God, that are not devoted to them. Calling upon God is oft put in Scripture for all God's worship, as being a most eminent part; and atheists are described to be such as "call not upon the Lord," Psal. xiv. &c.

Arg. XVII. The story of Cornelius, Acts x. proveth that he performed family worship: for observe, 1. That, ver. 2, he is said

to be "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always: " and ver. 30, he saith, "At the ninth hour I prayed in my house: " and ver. 24, "he called together his kindred and near friends: " so ver. 11, 14, "Thou and all thy house shall he saved: " so that in ver. 2, fearing God comprehendeth prayer, and is usually put for all God's worship; therefore when he is said to fear God with all his house, it is included that he worshipped God with all his house: and that he used to do it conjunctly with them is implied, in his gathering together his kindred and friends when Peter came, not mentioning the calling together his household, as being usual and supposed. And when it is said that he prayed ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ, in his house, it may signify his household, as in Scripture the word is often taken. However, the circumstances show that he did it.

Arg. XVIII. From 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5, 12, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection, with all gravity: for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God: let the deacons be the husbands of one wife; ruling their children and their own houses well." Here mark, that it is such a ruling of their houses, as is of the same nature as the ruling of the church, *mutatis mutandis*, and that is, a training them up in the worship of God, and guiding them therein; for the apostle maketh the defect of the one, to be a sure discovery of their unfitness for the other. Now to rule the church, is to teach and guide them as their mouth in prayer and praises unto God, as well as to oversee their lives; therefore it is

such a ruling of their houses as is prerequisite to prove them fit.

They that must so rule well over their own houses, as may partly prove them not unfit to rule the church, must rule them by holy instructions, and guiding them as their mouth in the worship of God. But those mentioned 1 Tim. iii. must so rule their houses, therefore, &c.

The pastors' ruling of the church doth most consist in going before them, and guiding them in God's worship; therefore so doth the ruling of their own houses, which is made a trying qualification of their fitness hereunto. Though yet it reach not so high, nor to so many things, and the conclusion be not affirmative, He that ruleth his own house well is fit to rule the church of God; but negative, He that ruleth not his own house well, is not fit to rule the church of God; but that is because, 1. This is a lower degree of ruling, which will not prove him fit for a higher. 2. And it is but one qualification of many that are requisite. Yet it is apparent that some degree of aptitude is proved hence, and that from a similitude of the things. When Paul compareth ruling the house to ruling the church, he cannot be thought to take them to be wholly heterogeneous: he would never have said, He that cannot rule an army, or regiment, or a city, how shall he rule the church of God? I conclude therefore that this text doth show that it is the duty of masters of families, to rule well their own families in the right worshipping of God, *mutatis mutandis*, as ministers must rule the church.

Arg. XIX. If families have special necessity of family prayer

conjunctly, which cannot be supplied otherwise; then it is God's will that family prayer should be in use: but families have such necessities; therefore, &c. The consequent needs no proof; the antecedent is proved by instance. Families have family necessities, which are larger than to be confined to a closet, and yet more private than to be brought still into the assemblies of the church. 1. There are many worldly occasions about their callings and relations, which it is fit for them to mention among themselves, but unfit to mention before all the congregation. 2. There are many distempers in the hearts and lives of the members of the families, and many miscarriages, and disagreements, which must be taken up at home, and which prayer must do much to cure, and yet are not fit to be brought to the ears of the church assemblies. 3. And if it were fit to mention them all in public, yet the number of such cases would be so great, as would overwhelm the minister, and confound the public worship; nay, one half of them in most churches could not be mentioned. 4. And such cases are of ordinary occurrence, and therefore would ordinarily have all these inconveniencies.

And yet there are many such cases that are not fit to be confined to our secret prayers each one by himself; because, 1. They often so sin together, as maketh it fit that they confess and lament it together. 2. And some mercies which they receive together, it is fit they seek and give thanks for together. 3. And many works which they do together, it is fit they seek a blessing on together. 4. And the presence of one another in confession,

petition, and thanksgiving, doth tend to the increase of their fervour, and warming of their hearts, and engaging them the more to duty, and against sin; and is needful on the grounds laid down before. Nay, it is a kind of family schism, in such cases, to separate from one another, and to pray in secret only; as it is church schism to separate from the church assemblies, and to pray in families only. Nature and grace delight in unity, and abhor division. And the light of nature and grace engageth us to do as much of the work of God in unity, and concord, and communion as we can.

Arg. XX. If before the giving of the law to Moses, God was worshipped in families by his own appointment, and this appointment be not yet reversed, then God is to be worshipped in families still. But the antecedent is certain; therefore so is the consequent.

I think no man denieth the first part of the antecedent; that before the flood in the families of the righteous, and after till the establishment of a priesthood, God was worshipped in families or households: it is a greater doubt whether then he had any other public worship. When there were few or no church assemblies that were larger than families, no doubt God was ordinarily worshipped in families. Every ruler of a family then was as a priest to his own family. Cain and Abel offered their own sacrifices; so did Noah, Abraham, and Jacob.

If it be objected, that all this ceased, when the office of the priest was instituted, and so deny the latter part of my antecedent,

I reply, 1. Though some make a doubt of it, whether the office of the priesthood was instituted before Aaron's time, I think there is no great doubt to be made of it; seeing we find a priesthood then among other nations, who had it either by the light of nature, or by tradition from the church; and Melchizedec's priesthood (who was a type of Christ) is expressly mentioned. So that though family worship was then the most usual, yet some more public worship there was. 2. After the institution of Aaron's priesthood family-worship continued, as I have proved before; yea, the two sacraments of circumcision and the passover, were celebrated in families by the master of the house; therefore prayer was certainly continued in families. 3. If that part of worship that was afterward performed in synagogues and public assemblies was appropriated to them, that no whit proveth, that the part which agreed to families as such, was transferred to those assemblies. Nay, it is a certain proof that part was left to families still, because we find that the public assemblies never undertook it. We find among them no prayer but church prayer; and not that which was fitted to families as such at all. Nor is there a word of Scripture that speaketh of God's reversing of his command or order for family prayer, or other proper family worship. Therefore it is proved to continue obligatory still.

Had I not been too long already, I should have urged to this end the example of Job, in sacrificing daily for his sons; and of Esther's keeping a fast with her maids, Esth. iv. 16. And Jer. x. 25, "Pour out thy fury on the heathen that know thee not, and on

the families that call not on thy name." It is true that by "families" here is meant tribes of people, and by "calling on his name," is meant their worshipping the true God. But yet this is spoken of all tribes without exception, great and small: and tribes in the beginning (as Abraham's, Isaac's, Jacob's, &c.) were confined to families. And the argument holdeth from parity of reason to a proper family: and that calling on God's name is put for his worship, doth more confirm us, because it proveth it to be the most eminent part of worship, or else the whole would not be signified by it; at least no reason can imagine it excluded. So much for the proof of the fourth proposition.

Objections answered

Object. I. Had it been a duty under the gospel to pray in families, we should certainly have found it more expressly required in the Scripture.

Answ. 1. I have already showed you, that it is plainly required in the Scripture: but men must not teach God how to speak, nor oblige him to make all plain to blind, perverted minds. 2. Those things which were plainly revealed in the Old Testament, and the church then held without any contradiction, even from the persecutors of Christ themselves, might well be passed over in the gospel, and taken as supposed, acknowledged things. 3. The general precepts (to "pray always, – with all prayer, – in all places," &c.) being expressed in the gospel, and the light

of nature making particular application of them to families, what need there any more? 4. This reason is apparent why Scripture speaketh of it no more expressly. Before Christ's time the worship of God was less spiritual, and more ceremonial, than afterward it was; and therefore you find after mention of circumcision and sacrificing, than of prayer; and yet prayer was still supposed to concur. And after Christ's time on earth, most christian families were disturbed by persecution, and christians sold up all and lived in community: and also the Scripture history was to describe to us the state of the churches, rather than of particular families.

Object. II. Christ himself did not use to pray with his family; as appeareth by the disciples asking him to teach them to pray, and by the silence of the Scripture in this point: therefore it is no duty to us.

Answ. 1. Scripture silence is no proof that Christ did not use it. All things are not written which he did. 2. His teaching them the Lord's prayer, and their desire of a common rule of prayer, might consist with his usual praying with them: at least with his using to pray with them after that, though at first he did not use it. 3. But it is the consequence that I principally deny. (1.) Because Christ did afterwards call his servants to many duties, which he put them not on at first, as sacraments, discipline, preaching, frequenter praying, &c. especially after the coming down of the Holy Ghost. As they understood not many articles of the faith till then, so no wonder if they understood not many duties till then; for Christ

would have them thus suddenly instructed and fullier sanctified by a miracle, that their ministry might be more credible, their mission being evidently divine, and they being past the suspicion of forgery and deceit. (2.) And though it is evident that Christ did use to bless the meat, and sing hymns to God with his disciples, Luke xxii. 17, 18; Mark xiv. 22, 23, 26; Matt. xxvi. 27, 28, 30, and therefore it is very probable, prayed with them often, as John xvii.; yet it could not be expected, that he should ordinarily be their mouth in such prayers as they daily needed. His case and ours are exceedingly different. His disciples must daily confess their sins, and be humbled for them, and ask forgiveness; but Christ had none of this to do. They must pray for mortifying grace, and help against sin; but he had no sin to mortify or pray against. They must pray for the Spirit, and the increase of their imperfect graces; but Christ had fulness and perfection. They must pray for many means to these ends, and for help in using them, and a blessing on them, which he had no use for. They must give thanks for pardon and conversion, &c. which Christ had no occasion to give thanks for. So that having a High Priest so much separate from sinners, they had one that prayed for them; but not one fit to join with them as their mouth to God, in ordinary family prayers, such as they needed; as masters must do with their families.

Object. III. God doth not require either vain or abominable prayers; but family prayers are ordinarily vain and abominable; therefore, &c. The minor is proved thus: – The prayers of

the wicked are abominable: most families are wicked, or have wicked persons; therefore, &c.

Ans. 1. This is confessedly nothing against the prayers of godly families. 2. The prayers of a godly master are not abominable nor vain, because of the presence of others that are ungodly. Else Christ's prayers and blessings before mentioned should have been vain or abominable, because Judas was there, who was a thief and hypocrite. And the apostles' and all ministers' prayers should be so in all such churches as those of Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus are described to have been. 3. I refer you to my "Method for Peace of Conscience," how far the prayers of the wicked are, or are not abominable. The prayers of the wicked as wicked are abominable; but not as they express their return to God, and repenting of their wickedness. It is not the abominable prayer that God commandeth, but the faithful, penitent prayer. You mistake it, as if the wicked man were not the person commanded to pray; whereas you should rather say, It is not the abominable prayer that is commanded him. He is commanded to pray such prayers as are not abominable; even as Simon Magus, Acts viii. to "repent" and "pray;" and "to seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near, and to forsake his way," &c. Isa. lv. 6, 7. Let the wicked pray thus, and his prayer will not be abominable. The command of praying implieth the command of repenting and departing from his wickedness: for what is it to pray for grace, but to express to God their desires of grace? (It is not to tell God a lie, by saying

they desire that which they hate.) Therefore when we exhort them to pray we exhort them to such desires.

Object. IV. Many masters of families cannot pray in their families without a book, and that is unlawful.

Ans. I. If their disability be natural, as an idiot's, they are not fit to rule families; if it be moral and culpable, they are bound to use the means to overcome it; and in the mean time to use a book or form, rather than not to pray in their families at all.

Of the Frequency and Seasons of Family worship

The last part of my work is to speak of the fit time of family worship. 1. Whether it should be every day? 2. Whether twice a day? 3. Whether morning and evening? *Ans.* 1. Ordinarily it should be every day and twice a day; and the morning and evening are ordinarily the fittest seasons. 2. But extraordinarily some greater duty may intervene, which may for that time disoblige us. And the occasions of some families may make that hour fit to one, which is unfit to another. For brevity I will join all together in the proof.

Arg. I. We are bound to take all fit occasions and opportunities to worship God. Families have daily (morning and evening) such occasions and opportunities; therefore they are bound to take them.

Both major and minor are proved before. Experience proveth that family sins are daily committed, and family mercies daily

received, and family necessities daily do occur. And reason tells us, 1. That it is seasonable every morning to give God thanks for the rest of the night past. 2. And to beg direction, protection, and provisions, and blessing for the following day. 3. And that then our minds are freest from weariness and worldly care. And so reason telleth us that the evening is a fit season to give God thanks for the mercies of the day, and to confess the sins of the day, and ask forgiveness, and to pray for rest and protection in the night. As nature and reason tell us how oft a man should eat and drink, and how long he should sleep, and what clothing he should wear; and Scripture need not tell you the particulars: so if Scripture command your prayer in general, God may by providence tell you when and how oft you must pray.

Arg. II. The Lord's prayer directeth us daily to put up such prayers as belong to families; therefore, &c. "Give us this day our daily bread." It runs all in the plural number. And the reason of it will oblige families as well as individual persons.

Arg. III. From 1 Thess. v. 17, "Pray without ceasing; in all things give thanks." Col. iv. 1, 2, "Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Col. iii. 17, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Phil. iv. 6, "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." It is easy for a man that is

willing to see that less than twice a day doth not answer the command of praying "without ceasing, – continually, – in every thing – whatsoever ye do," &c.; the phrases seeming to go much higher.

Arg. IV. Daniel prayed in his house thrice a day; therefore less than twice under the gospel is to us unreasonable.

Arg. V. 1 Tim. iv. 5, "She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayer night and day." Night and day can be no less than morning and evening. And if you say, this is not family prayer, I answer, 1. It is all kind of prayer belonging to her. 2. And if it commend the less, much more the greater.

Arg. VI. From Luke vi. 14; ii. 37; xviii. 17; Acts xxvi. 7; 1 Thess. iii. 10; 2 Tim. i. 3; Rev. vii. 15; Neh. i. 6; Psal. lxxxviii. 1; Josh. i. 8; Psal. i. 2; which show that night and day Christ himself prayed, and his servants prayed, and meditated, and read the Scripture.

Arg. VII. Deut. vi. 7; xi. 19, it is expressly commanded that parents teach their children the word of God, when they "lie down, and when they rise up;" and the parity of reason, and conjunction of the word and prayer, will prove, that they should also pray with them lying down and rising up.

Arg. VIII. For brevity sake I offer you together, Psal. cxix. 164, David praised God seven times a day; and cxlv. 2, "Every day will I bless thee." Psal. v. 3, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer to thee,

and will look up: " lix. 16, "I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: " lxxxviii. 13, "In the morning shall my prayer prevent thee: " xcii. 12, "It is good to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises to thy name, O Most High: to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night: " cxix. 147, 148, "I prevented the dawning of the morning and cried, I hoped in thy word: mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate on thy word: " cxxx. 6, "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning, I say more than they that watch for the morning." The priests were to offer "sacrifices" and "thanks to God every morning," 1 Chron. xxiii. 30; Exod. xxx. 7; xxxvi. 3; Lev. vi. 12; 2 Chron. xiii. 11; Ezek. xlv. 13-15; Amos iv. 4. And christians are a "holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices to God, acceptable through Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. Expressly saith David, Psal. lv. 17, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice." So morning and evening were sacrifices and burnt offerings offered to the Lord; and there is at least equal reason that gospel worship should be as frequent: 1 Chron. xvi. 40; 2 Chron. ii. 4; xiii. 11; xxxi. 3; Ezra iii. 3; 2 Kings xvi. 15; 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36; Ezra ix. 5. And no doubt but they prayed with the sacrifices. Which David intimateth in comparing them, Psal. cxli. 2, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." And God calleth for prayer and praise as better than sacrifice, Psal. l. 14, 15, 23.

All these I heap together for despatch, which fully show how

frequently God's servants have been wont to worship him, and how often God expecteth it. And you will all confess that it is reason that in gospel times of greater light and holiness, we should not come behind them in the times of the law; especially when Christ himself doth pray all night, that had so little need in comparison of us. And you may observe that these scriptures speak of prayer in general, and limit it not to secrecy; and therefore they extend to all prayer, according to opportunity. No reason can limit all these examples to the most secret and least noble sort of prayer. If but two or three are gathered together in his name, Christ is especially among them.

If you say, that by this rule we must as frequently pray in the church assemblies; I answer, the church cannot ordinarily so oft assemble; but when it can be without a great inconvenience, I doubt not but it would be a good work, for many to meet the minister daily for prayer, as in some rich and populous cities they may do.

I have been more tedious on this subject than a holy, hungry christian possibly may think necessary, who needeth not so many arguments to persuade him to feast his soul with God, and to delight himself in the frequent exercises of faith and love; and if I have said less than the other sort of readers shall think necessary, let them know that if they will open their eyes, and recover their appetites, and feel their sins, and observe their daily wants and dangers, and get but a heart that loveth God, these reasons then will seem sufficient to convince them of so sweet,

and profitable, and necessary a work; and if they observe the difference between praying and prayerless families, and care for their souls and communion with God, much fewer words than these may serve their turn. It is a dead, and graceless, carnal heart, that must be cured before these men will be well satisfied, a better appetite would help their reason. If God should say in general to all men, You shall eat as oft as will do you good; the sick stomach would say, Once a day, and that but a little, is enough, and as much as God requireth; when another would say, Thrice a day is little enough. A good and healthful heart is a great help, in the expounding of God's word, especially of his general commandments. That which men love not, but are weary of, they will not easily believe to be their duty. The new nature, and holy love, and desires, and experience of a sound believer, do so far make all these reasonings needless to him, that I must confess I have written them principally to convince the carnal hypocrite, and stop the mouths of wrangling enemies.

CHAPTER IV. GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE HOLY GOVERNMENT OF FAMILIES

The principal thing requisite to the right governing of families, is the fitness of the governors and the governed thereto, which is spoken of before in the directions for the constitution. But if persons unfit for their relations, have joined themselves together in a family, their first duty is to repent of their former sin and rashness, and presently to turn to God, and seek after that fitness which is necessary to the right discharge of the duties of their several places: and in the governors of families, these three things are of greatest necessity hereunto: I. Authority. II. Skill. III. Holiness and readiness of will.

How to keep up authority

I. *Gen. Direct.* Let governors maintain their authority in their families. For if once that be lost, and you are despised by those that you should rule, your word will be of no effect with them; you do but ride without a bridle; your power of governing is gone, when your authority is lost. And here you must first understand

the nature, use, and extent of your authority; for as your relations are different, to your wife, your children, and your servants, so also is your authority. Your authority over your wife, is but such as is necessary to the order of your family, the safe and prudent management of your affairs, and your comfortable cohabitation. The power of love and complicated interest must do more than magisterial commands. Your authority over your children is much greater; but yet only such as, conjunct with love, is needful to their good education and felicity. Your authority over your servants is to be measured by your contract with them (in these countries where there are no slaves) in order to your service, and the honour of God. In other matters, or to other ends, you have no authority over them. For the maintaining of this your authority observe these following sub-directions.

Direct. I. Let your family understand that your authority is of God, who is the God of order, and that in obedience to him they are obliged to obey you. There is no power but of God; and there is none that the intelligent creature can so much reverence as that which is of God. All bonds are easily broken and cast away (by the soul at least, if not by the body) which are not perceived to be divine. An enlightened conscience will say to ambitious usurpers, God I know, and his Son Jesus I know, but who are ye?

Direct. II. The more of God appeareth upon you, in your knowledge, and holiness, and unblamableness of life, the greater will your authority be in the eyes of all your inferiors that fear God. Sin will make you contemptible and vile; and holiness,

being the image of God, will make you honourable. In the eyes of the faithful a "vile person is contemned; but they honour them that fear the Lord," Psal. xv. 4. "Righteousness exalteth a nation," (and a person,) "but sin is a reproach to any people," Prov. xiv. 34. "Those that honour God he will honour, and those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed," 1 Sam. ii. 30. They that give up themselves to "vile affections" and conversations, Rom. i. 26, will seem vile when they have made themselves so. "Eli's sons made themselves vile by their sin," 1 Sam. iii. 13. I know men should discern and honour a person placed in authority by God, though they are morally and naturally vile: but this is so hard that it is seldom well done. And God is so severe against proud offenders, that he usually punisheth them by making them vile in the eyes of others; at least when they are dead, and men dare freely speak of them, their names will rot, Prov. x. 7. The instances of the greatest emperors in the world, both Persian, Roman, and Turkish, do tell us, that if (by whoredom, drunkenness, gluttony, pride, and especially persecution) they will make themselves vile, God will permit them, by uncovering their nakedness, to become the shame and scorn of men; and shall a wicked master of a family think to maintain his authority over others, while he rebelleth against the authority of God?

Direct. III. Show not your natural weakness by passions, or imprudent words or deeds. For if they think contemptuously of your persons, a little thing will draw them further, to despise your

words. There is naturally in man so high an esteem of reason, that men are hardly persuaded that they should rebel against reason to be governed (for order's sake) by folly. They are very apt to think that rightest reason should bear rule. And therefore any silly, weak expressions, or any inordinate passions, or any imprudent actions, are very apt to make you contemptible in your inferiors' eyes.

Direct. IV. Lose not your authority by a neglect of using it. If you suffer children and servants but a little while to have the head, and to have, and say, and do what they will, your government will be but a name or image. A moderate course between a lordly rigour, and a soft subjection, or neglect of exercising the power of your place, will best preserve you from your inferiors' contempt.

Direct. V. Lose not your authority by too much familiarity. If you make your children and servants your play-fellows, or equals, and talk to them, and suffer them to talk to you, as your companions, they will quickly grow upon you, and hold their custom; and though another may govern them, they will scarce ever endure to be governed by you, but will scorn to be subject where they have once been as equal.

Of skill in governing

II. *Gen. Direct.* Labour for prudence and skilfulness in governing. He that undertaketh to be a master of a family, undertaketh to be their governor; and it is no small sin or folly to

undertake such a place, as you are utterly unfit for, when it is a matter of so great importance. You could discern this in a case that is not your own; as if a man undertake to be a schoolmaster that cannot read or write; or to be a physician, who knoweth neither diseases nor their remedies; or to be a pilot, that cannot tell how to do a pilot's work; and why cannot you much more discern it in your own case?

Direct. I. To get the skill of holy governing, it is needful that you be well studied in the word of God; therefore God commandeth kings themselves that "they read in the law all the days of their lives," Deut. xvii. 18, 19; and that "it depart not out of their mouths, but that they meditate in it day and night," Josh. i. 8. And all parents must be able to "teach it their children, and talk of it both at home and abroad, lying down and rising up," Deut. vi. 6, 7; xi. 18, 19. All government of men is but subservient to the government of God, to promote obedience to his laws. And it is necessary that we understand the laws which all laws and precepts must give place to and subserve.

Direct. II. Understand well the different tempers of your inferiors, and deal with them as they are, and as they can bear; and not with all alike. Some are more intelligent and some more dull; some are of tender, and some of hardened, impudent dispositions; some will be best wrought upon by love and gentleness; and some have need of sharpness and severity: prudence must fit your dealings to their dispositions.

Direct. III. You must put much difference between their

different faults, and accordingly suit your reprehensions. Those must be most severely rebuked that have most wilfulness, and those that are faulty in matters of greatest weight. Some faults are so much through mere disability and unavoidable frailty of the flesh, that there is but little of the will appearing in them. These must be more gently handled, as deserving more compassion than reproof. Some are habituate vices, and the whole nature is more desperately depraved than in others. These must have more than a particular correction. They must be held to such a course of life, as may be most effectual to destroy and change those habits. And some there are upright at the heart, and in the main and most momentous things, are guilty but of some actual faults; and of these, some more seldom, and some more frequent; and if you do not prudently diversify your rebukes according to their faults, you will but harden them, and miss of your ends; for there is a family justice that must not be overthrown, unless you will overthrow your families; as there is a more public justice necessary to the public good.

Direct. IV. Be a good husband to your wife, and a good father to your children, and a good master to your servants, and let love have dominion in all your government, that your inferiors may easily find, that it is their interest to obey you. For interest and self-love are the natural rulers of the world. And it is the most effectual way to procure obedience or any good, to make men perceive that it is for their own good, and to engage self-love for you; that they may see that the benefit is like to be their

own. If you do them no good, but are sour, and uncourteous, and closehanded to them, few will be ruled by you.

Direct. V. If you would be skilful in governing others, learn first exactly to command yourselves. Can you ever expect to have others more at your will and government than yourselves? Is he fit to rule his family in the fear of God and a holy life, who is unholy and feareth not God himself? Or is he fit to keep them from passion, or drunkenness, or gluttony, or lust, or any way of sensuality, that cannot keep himself from it? Will not inferiors despise such reproofs which are by yourselves contradicted in your lives? You know this true of wicked preachers; and is it not as true of other governors?

III. *Gen. Direct.* You must be holy persons, if you would be holy governors of your families. Men's actions follow the bent of their dispositions. They will do as they are. An enemy of God will not govern a family for God; nor an enemy of holiness (nor a stranger to it) set up a holy order in his house, and in a holy manner manage his affairs. I know it is cheaper and easier to the flesh to call others to mortification and holiness of life, than to bring ourselves to it; but yet when it is not a bare command or wish that is necessary, but a course of holy and industrious government, unholy persons (though some of them may go far) have not the ends and principles which such a work requireth.

Direct. I. To this end, be sure that your own souls be entirely subjected unto God, and that you more accurately obey his laws, than you expect any inferior should obey your commands. If you

dare disobey God, why should they fear disobeying you? Can you more severely revenge disobedience, or more bountifully reward obedience, than God can do? Are you greater and better than God himself is?

Direct. II. Be sure that you lay up your treasure in heaven, and make the enjoyment of God in glory to be the ultimate commanding end, both of the affairs and government of your family, and all things else with which you are intrusted. Devote yourselves and all to God, and do all for him: do all as passengers to another world, whose business on earth is but to provide for heaven, and promote their everlasting interest. If thus you are separated unto God, you are sanctified; and then you will separate all that you have to his use and service, and this, with his acceptance, will sanctify all.

Direct. III. Maintain God's authority in your family more carefully than your own. Your own is but for his. More sharply rebuke or correct them that wrong and dishonour God, than those that wrong and dishonour yourselves. Remember Eli's sad example; make not a small matter of any of the sins, especially the great sins, of your children or servants. It is an odious thing to slight God's cause, and put up all with, It is not well done, when you are fiercely passionate for the loss of some small commodity of your own. God's honour must be greatest in your family; and his service must have the pre-eminence of yours; and sin against him, must be the most intolerable offence.

Direct. IV. Let spiritual love to your family be predominant,

and let your care be greatest for the saving of their souls, and your compassion greatest in their spiritual miseries. Be first careful to provide them a portion in heaven, and to save them from whatsoever would deprive them of it; and never prefer the transitory pelf of earth, before their everlasting riches. Never be so cumbered about many things, as to forget that one thing is necessary; but choose for yourselves and them the better part, Luke x. 42.

Direct. V. Let your family neither be kept in idleness and flesh-pleasing, nor yet overwhelmed with such a multitude of business, as shall take up and distract their minds, diverting and unfitting them for holy things. Where God layeth on you a necessity of excessive labours, it must patiently and cheerfully be undergone; but when you draw them unnecessarily on yourselves for the love of riches, you do but become the tempters and tormentors of yourselves and others; forgetting the terrible examples of them, that have this way fallen off from Christ, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows, 1 Tim. vi. 10.

Direct. VI. As much as is possible, settle a constant order of all your businesses, that every ordinary work may know its time, and confusion may not shut out godliness. It is a great assistance in every calling to do all in a set and constant order; it maketh it easy; it removeth impediments, and promoteth success; distraction in your business causeth a distraction in your minds in holy duty. Some callings I know can hardly be cast into any order or method; but others may, if prudence and diligence be

used. God's service will thus be better done, and your work will be better done, to the ease of your servants, and quiet of your own minds. Foresight and skilfulness would save you abundance of labour and vexation.

CHAPTER V.

SPECIAL MOTIVES TO PERSUADE MEN TO THE HOLY GOVERNING OF THEIR FAMILIES

If it were but well understood what benefits come by the holy governing of families, and what mischiefs come by its neglect, there would few that walk the streets among us, appear so odious as those careless, ungodly governors that know not nor mind a duty of such exceeding weight. While we lie all as overwhelmed with the calamitous fruits of this neglect, I think meet to try if, with some, the cause may be removed, by awakening sluggish souls to do their undertaken work.

Motive I. Consider that the holy government of families, is a considerable part of God's own government of the world, and the contrary is a great part of the devil's government. It hath pleased God to settle as a natural, so a political order in the world, and to honour his creatures to be the instruments of his own operations; and though he could have produced all effects without any inferior causes, and could have governed the world by himself alone without any instruments, (he being not as kings, constrained to make use of deputies and officers, because of their own natural confinement and insufficiency,) yet

is he pleased to make inferior causes partakers in such excellent effects, and taketh delight in the frame and order of causes, by which his will among his creatures is accomplished. So that as the several justices in the countries do govern as officers of the king, so every magistrate and master of a family doth govern as an officer of God. And if his government by his officers be put down or neglected, it is a contempt of God himself, or rebellion against him. What is all the practical atheism, and rebellion, and ungodliness of the world, but a rejecting of the government of God? It is not against the being of God in itself considered, that his enemies rise up with malignant, rebellious opposition; but it is against God as the holy and righteous Governor of the world, and especially of themselves. And as in an army, if the corporals, sergeants, and lieutenants, do all neglect their offices, the government of the general or colonels is defeated and of little force; so if the rulers of families and other officers of God will corrupt or neglect their part of government, they do their worst to corrupt or cast out God's government from the earth. And if God shall not govern in your families, who shall? The devil is always the governor where God's government is refused; the world and the flesh are the instruments of his government; worldliness and fleshly living are his service: undoubtedly he is the ruler of the family where these prevail, and where faith and godliness do not take place. And what can you expect from such a master?

Motive II. Consider also that an ungoverned, ungodly family is a powerful means to the damnation of all the members of it:

it is the common boat or ship that hurrieth souls to hell; that is bound for the devouring gulf: he that is in the devil's coach or boat is like to go with the rest, as the driver or the boatman pleaseth. But a well-governed family is an excellent help to the saving of all the souls that are in it. As in an ungodly family there are continual temptations to ungodliness, to swearing, and lying, and railing, and wantonness, and contempt of God; so in a godly family there are continual provocations to a holy life, to faith, and love, and obedience, and heavenly-mindedness: temptations to sin are fewer there, than in the devil's shops and workhouses of sin; the authority of the governors, the conversation of the rest, the examples of all, are great inducements to a holy life. As in a well-ordered army of valiant men, every coward is so linked in by order, that he cannot choose but fight and stand to it with the rest, and in a confused rout the valiantest man is borne down by the disorder, and must perish with the rest; even so in a well-ordered, holy family, a wicked man can scarce tell how to live wickedly, but seemeth to be almost a saint, while he is continually among saints, and heareth no words that are profane or filthy, and is kept in to the constant exercises of religion, by the authority and company of those he liveth with. Oh how easy and clean is the way to heaven, in such a gracious, well-ordered family, in comparison of what it is to them that dwell in the distracted families of profane and sensual worldlings! As there is greater probability of the salvation of souls in England where the gospel is preached and professed, than in heathen or Mahometan

countries; so there is a greater probability of their salvation that live in the houses and company of the godly, than of the ungodly. In one the advantages of instruction, command, example, and credit, are all on God's side; and in the other they are on the devil's side.

Motive III. A holy, well-governed family tendeth not only to the safety of the members, but also to the ease and pleasure of their lives. To live where God's law is the principal rule, and where you may be daily taught the mysteries of his kingdom, and have the Scriptures opened to you, and be led as by the hand in the paths of life; where the praises of God are daily celebrated, and his name is called upon, and where all do speak the heavenly language, and where God, and Christ, and heaven are both their daily work and recreation; where it is the greatest honour to be most holy and heavenly, and the greatest contention is, who shall be most humble, and godly, and obedient to God and their superiors, and where there is no reviling scorns at godliness, nor any profane and scurrilous talk; what a sweet and happy life is this! Is it not likest to heaven of any thing upon earth? But to live where worldliness, and profaneness, and wantonness, and sensuality bear all the sway, and where God is unknown, and holiness and all religious exercises are matter of contempt and scorn, and where he that will not swear and live profanely doth make himself the hatred and derision of the rest, and where men are known but by their shape and speaking faculty to be men; nay, where men take not themselves for men but for brutes,

and live as if they had no rational souls, nor any expectations of another life, nor any higher employments or delights than the transitory concernments of the flesh; what a sordid, loathsome, filthy, miserable life is this! made up by a mixture of beastly and devilish. To live where there is no communion with God, where the marks of death and damnation are written, as it were, upon the doors, in the face of their impious, worldly lives, and where no man understandeth the holy language; and where there is not the least foretaste of the heavenly, everlasting joys; what is this but to live as the serpent's seed, to feed on dust, and to be excommunicated from the face and favour of God, and to be chained up in the prison of concupiscence and malignity, among his enemies, till the judgment come that is making haste, and will render to all men according to their works.

Motive IV. A holy and well-governed family doth tend to make a holy posterity, and so to propagate the fear of God from generation to generation. It is more comfortable to have no children, than to beget and breed up children for the devil. Their natural corruption is advantage enough to Satan, to engage them to himself, and use them for his service: but when parents shall also take the devil's part, and teach their children by precepts or example how to serve him, and shall estrange them from God and a holy life, and fill their minds with false conceits and prejudice against the means of their salvation, as if they had sold their children to the devil; no wonder then if they have a black posterity, that are trained up to be heirs of hell. He that will train

up children for God, must begin betimes, before sensitive objects take too deep possession of their hearts, and custom increase the pravity of their nature. Original sin is like the arched Indian fig tree, whose branches turning downwards and taking root, do all become as trees themselves: the acts which proceed from this habitual viciousness, do turn again into vicious habits: and thus sinful nature doth by its fruits increase itself: and when other things consume themselves by breeding, all that sin breedeth is added to itself, and its breeding is its feeding, and every act doth confirm the habit. And therefore no means in all the world doth more effectually tend to the happiness of souls, than wise and holy education. This dealeth with sin before it hath taken the deepest root, and boweth nature while it is but a twig: it preventeth the increase of natural pravity, and keepeth out those deceits, corrupt opinions, and carnal fantasies and lusts, which else would be serviceable to sin and Satan ever after: it delivereth up the heart to Christ betimes, or at least doth bring him a disciple to his school to learn the way to life eternal; and to spend those years in acquainting himself with the ways of God, which others spend in growing worse, and learning that which must be again unlearned, and in fortifying Satan's garrison in their hearts, and defending it against Christ and his saving grace. But of this more anon.

Motive V. A holy, well-governed family is the preparative to a holy and well-governed church. If masters of families did their parts, and sent such polished materials to the churches, as

they ought to do, the work and life of the pastors of the church would be unspeakably more easy and delightful; it would do one good to preach to such an auditory, and to catechise them, and instruct them, and examine them, and watch over them, who are prepared by a wise and holy education, and understand and love the doctrine which they hear. To lay such polished stones in the building is an easy and delightful work; how teachable and tractable will such be! and how prosperously will the labours of their pastors be laid out upon them! and how comely and beautiful the churches be, which are composed of such persons! and how pure and comfortable will their communion be! But if the churches be sties of unclean beasts; if they are made up of ignorant and ungodly persons, that savour nothing but the things of the flesh, and use to worship they know not what, we may thank ill-governed families for all this. It is long of them that ministers preach as to idiots or barbarians that cannot understand them; and that they must be always feeding their auditors with milk, and teaching them the principles and catechising them in the church, which should have been done at home: yea, it is long of them that there are so many wolves and swine among the sheep of Christ, and that holy things are administered to the enemies of holiness, and the godly live in communion with the haters of God and godliness; and that the christian religion is dishonoured before the heathen world, by the worse than heathenish lives of the professors; and the pollutions of the churches do hinder the conversion of the unbelieving world; whilst they that can

judge of our religion no way but by the people that profess it, do judge of it by the lives of them that are in heart the enemies of it. When the haters of christianity and godliness are the christians by whose conversations the infidel world must judge of christianity, you may easily conjecture what judgment they are like to make. Thus pastors are discouraged, the churches defiled, religion disgraced, and infidels hardened through the impious disorder and negligence of families! What universities were we like to have, if all the grammar schools should neglect their duties, and send up their scholars untaught as they received them! and if all tutors must teach their pupils first to spell and read! Even such churches we are like to have, when every pastor must first do the work, which all the masters of families should have done, and the part of many score, or hundreds, or thousands, must be performed by one.

Motive VI. Well-governed families tend to make a happy state and commonwealth; a good education is the first and greatest work to make good magistrates and good subjects, because it tends to make good men. Though a good man may be a bad magistrate, yet a bad man cannot be a very good magistrate. The ignorance, or worldliness, or sensuality, or enmity to godliness, which grew up with them in their youth, will show itself in all the places and relations that ever they shall come into. When an ungodly family hath once confirmed them in wickedness, they will do wickedly in every state of life: when a perfidious parent hath betrayed his children into the power and service of

the devil, they will serve him in all relations and conditions. This is the school from whence come all the injustice, and cruelties, and persecutions, and impieties of magistrates, and all the murmurings and rebellions of subjects: this is the soil and seminary where the seed of the devil is first sown, and where he nurseth up the plants of covetousness, and pride, and ambition, and revenge, malignity, and sensuality, till he transplant them for his service into several offices in church and state, and into all places of inferiority, where they may disperse their venom, and resist all that is good, and contend for the interest of the flesh and hell, against the interest of the Spirit and of Christ. But oh! what a blessing to the world would they be, that shall come prepared by a holy education to places of government and subjection! And how happy is that land that is ruled by such superiors, and consisteth of such prepared subjects, as have first learnt to be subject to God and to their parents!

Motive VII. If the governors of families did faithfully perform their duties, it would be a great supply as to any defects in the pastor's part, and a singular means to propagate and preserve religion in times of public negligence or persecution. Therefore christian families are called churches, because they consist of holy persons, that worship God, and learn, and love, and obey his word. If you lived among the enemies of religion, that forbad Christ's ministers to preach his gospel, and forbad God's servants to meet in church assemblies for his worship; the support of religion, and the comfort and edification of believers, would then

lie almost all upon the right performance of family duties. There masters might teach the same truth to their households, which ministers are forbidden to preach in the assemblies: there you might pray together as fervently and spiritually as you can: there you may keep up as holy converse and communion, and as strict a discipline, as you please: there you may celebrate the praises of your blessed Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and observe the Lord's day in as exact and spiritual a manner as you are able: you may there provoke one another to love and to good works, and rebuke every sin, and mind each other to prepare for death, and live together as passengers to eternal life. Thus holy families may keep up religion, and keep up the life and comfort of believers, and supply the want of public preaching, in those countries where persecutors prohibit and restrain it, or where unable or unfaithful pastors do neglect it.

Motive VIII. The duties of your families are such as you may perform with greatest peace, and least exception or opposition from others. When you go further, and would be instructing others, they will think you go beyond your call, and many will be suspicious that you take too much upon you; and if you do but gently admonish a rout of such as the Sodomites, perhaps they will say, "This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge," Gen. xix. 9. But your own house is your castle; your family is your charge; you may teach them as oft and as diligently as you will. If the ungodly rabble scorn you for it, yet no sober person will condemn you, nor trouble you for it (if you teach

them no evil). All men must confess that nature and Scripture oblige you to it as your unquestionable work. And therefore you may do it (among sober people) with approbation and quietness.

Motive IX. Well-governed families are honourable and exemplary unto others. Even the worldly and ungodly use to bear a certain reverence to them; for holiness and order have some witness that commendeth them, in the consciences of many that never practised them. A worldly, ungodly, disordered family, is a den of snakes, a place of hissing, railing, folly, and confusion: it is like a wilderness overgrown with briars and weeds; but a holy family is a garden of God; it is beautified with his graces, and ordered by his government, and fruitful by the showers of his heavenly blessing. And as the very sluggard, that will not be at the cost and pains to make a garden of his thorny wilderness, may yet confess that a garden is more beautiful, and fruitful, and delightful, and if wishing would do it, his wilderness should he such; even so the ungodly, that will not be at the cost and pains to order their souls and families in holiness, may yet see a beauty in those that are so ordered, and wish for the happiness of such, if they could have it without the labour and cost of self-denial. And, no doubt, the beauty of such holy and well-governed families hath convinced many, and drawn them to a great approbation of religion, and occasioned them at last to imitate them.

Motive X. Lastly, consider, that holy, well-governed families are blessed with the special presence and favour of God. They are his churches where he is worshipped; his houses where

he dwelleth: he is engaged both by love and promise to bless, protect, and prosper them, Psal. i. 3; cxxviii. It is safe to sail in that ship which is bound for heaven, and where Christ is the pilot. But when you reject his government, you refuse his company, and contemn his favour, and forfeit his blessing, by despising his presence, his interest, and his commands.

So that it is an evident truth, that most of the mischiefs that now infest or seize upon mankind throughout the earth, consist in, or are caused by, the disorders and ill-governedness of families. These are the schools and shops of Satan, from whence proceed the beastly ignorance, lust, and sensuality, the devilish pride, malignity, and cruelty against the holy ways of God, which have so unmanned the progeny of Adam. These are the nests in which the serpent doth hatch the eggs of covetousness, envy, strife, revenge, of tyranny, disobedience, wars, and bloodshed, and all the leprosy of sin that hath so odiously contaminated human nature, and all the miseries by which they make the world calamitous. Do you wonder that there can be persons and nations so blind and barbarous as we read of the Turks, Tartarians, Indians, and most of the inhabitants of the earth? A wicked education is the cause of all, which finding nature depraved, doth sublimate and increase the venom which should by education have been cured; and from the wickedness of families doth national wickedness arise. Do you wonder that so much ignorance, and voluntary deceit, and obstinacy in errors, contrary to all men's common senses, can be found among

professed christians, as great and small, high and low, through all the papal kingdoms, do discover? Though the pride, and covetousness, and wickedness of a worldly, carnal clergy, is a very great cause, yet the sinful negligence of parents and masters in their families is as great, if not much greater than that. Do you wonder that even in the reformed churches, there can be so many unreformed sinners, of beastly lives, that hate the serious practice of the religion which themselves profess? It is ill education in ungodly families that is the cause of all this. Oh therefore how great and necessary a work is it, to cast salt into these corrupted fountains! Cleanse and cure these vitiated families, and you may cure almost all the calamities of the earth. To tell what the emperors and princes of the earth might do, if they were wise and good, to the remedy of this common misery, is the idle talk of those negligent persons, who condemn themselves in condemning others. Even those rulers and princes that are the pillars and patrons of heathenism, Mahometanism, popery, and ungodliness in the world, did themselves receive that venom from their parents, in their birth and education, which inclineth them to all this mischief. Family reformation is the easiest and the most likely way to a common reformation; at least to send many souls to heaven, and train up multitudes for God, if it reach not to national reformation.

CHAPTER VI.

MORE SPECIAL MOTIVES FOR A HOLY AND CAREFUL EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

Because the chief part of family care and government consisteth in the right education of children, I shall adjoin here some more special motives to quicken considerate parents to this duty; and though most that I have to say for it be already said in my "Saints' Rest," part iii. chap. 14. sect. 11, &c. and therefore shall be here omitted, yet something shall be inserted, lest the want here should appear too great.

Motive I. Consider how deeply nature itself doth engage you to the greatest care and diligence for the holy education of your children. They are, as it were, parts of yourselves, and those that nature teacheth you to love and provide for, and take most care for, next yourselves; and will you be regardless of their chief concernments? and neglective of their souls? Will you no other way show your love to your children, than every beast or bird will to their young, to cherish them till they can go abroad and shift for themselves, for corporal sustenance? It is not dogs or beasts that you bring into the world, but children that have immortal souls; and therefore it is a care and education suitable to their natures

which you owe them; even such as conduceth most effectually to the happiness of their souls. Nature teacheth them some natural things without you, as it doth the bird to fly; but it hath committed it to your trust and care to teach them the greatest and most necessary things: if you should think that you have nothing to do but to feed them, and leave all the rest to nature, then they would not learn to speak; and if nature itself would condemn you, if you teach them not to speak, it will much more condemn you, if you teach them not to understand both what they ought to speak and do. They have an everlasting inheritance of happiness to attain; and it is that which you must bring them up for. They have an endless misery to escape; and it is that which you must diligently teach them. If you teach them not to escape the flames of hell, what thanks do they owe you for teaching them to speak and go? If you teach them not the way to heaven, and how they may make sure of their salvation, what thanks do they owe you for teaching them how to get their livings a little while in a miserable world? If you teach them not to know God, and how to serve him, and be saved, you teach them nothing, or worse than nothing. It is in your hands to do them the greatest kindness or cruelty in all the world: help them to know God and to be saved, and you do more for them than if you helped them to be lords or princes: if you neglect their souls, and breed them in ignorance, worldliness, ungodliness, and sin, you betray them to the devil, the enemy of souls, even as truly as if you sold them to him; you sell them to be slaves to Satan; you betray them to him that will

deceive them and abuse them in this life, and torment them in the next. If you saw but a burning furnace, much more the flames of hell, would you not think that man or woman more fit to be called a devil than a parent, that could find in their hearts to cast their child into it, or to put him into the hands of one that would do it? What monsters then of inhumanity are you, that read in Scripture which is the way to hell, and who they be that God will deliver up to Satan, to be tormented by him; and yet will bring up your children in that very way, and will not take pains to save them from it! What a stir do you make to provide them food and raiment, and a competent maintenance in the world when you are dead! and how little pains take you to prepare their souls for the heavenly inheritance! If you seriously believe that there are such joys or torments for your children (and yourselves) as soon as death removeth you hence, is it possible that you should take this for the least of their concernments, and make it the least and last of your cares, to assure them of an endless happiness? If you love them, show it in those things on which their everlasting welfare doth depend. Do not say you love them, and yet lead them unto hell. If you love them not, yet be not so unmerciful to them as to damn them: it is not your saying, God forbid, and we hope better, that will make it better, or be any excuse to you. What can you do more to damn them, if you studied to do it as maliciously as the devil himself? You cannot possibly do more, than to bring them up in ignorance, carelessness, worldliness, sensuality, and ungodliness. The devil can do nothing else to damn either them

or you, but by tempting to sin, and drawing you from godliness. There is no other way to hell. No man is damned for any thing but this. And yet will you bring them up in such a life, and say, God forbid, we do not desire to damn them? but it is no wonder; when you do by your children but as you do by yourselves. Who can look that a man should be reasonable for his child, that is so unreasonable for himself? or that those parents should have any mercy on their children's souls, that have no mercy on their own? You desire not to damn yourselves, but yet you do it, if you live ungodly lives: and so you will do by your children, if you train them up in ignorance of God, and in the service of the flesh and world. You do like one that should set fire on his house and say, God forbid, I intend not to burn it: or like one that casteth his child into the sea, and saith, he intendeth not to drown him; or traineth him up in robbing and thievery, and saith, he intendeth not to have him hanged; but if you intend to make a thief of him, it is all one in effect, as if you intended his hanging; for the law determineth it, and the judge will intend it. So if you intend to train up your children in ungodliness, as if they had no God nor souls to mind, you may as well say, you intend to have them damned. And were not an enemy, yea, is not the devil more excusable, for dealing thus cruelly by your children, than you that are their parents, that are bound by nature to love them, and prevent their misery? It is odious in ministers that take the charge of souls, to betray them by their negligence, and be guilty of their everlasting misery; but in parents it is more unnatural,

and therefore more inexcusable.

Motive II. Consider that God is the Lord and Owner of your children, both by the title of creation and redemption: therefore in justice you must resign them to him, and educate them for him. Otherwise you rob God of his own creatures, and rob Christ of those for whom he died, and this to give them to the devil, the enemy of God and them. It was not the world, the flesh, or the devil that created them, or redeemed them, but God; and it is not possible for any right to be built upon a fuller title, than to make them of nothing, and redeem them from a state far worse than nothing. And after all this, shall the very parents of such children steal them from their absolute Lord and Father, and sell them to slavery and torment?

Motive III. Remember that in their baptism you did dedicate them to God; you entered them into a solemn vow and covenant, to be wholly his, and to live to him. Therein they renounced the flesh, the world, and the devil; therein you promised to bring them up virtuously, to lead a godly and christian life, that they might obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their lives. And after all this, will you break so solemn a promise, and cause them to break such a vow and covenant, by bringing them up in ignorance and ungodliness? Did you understand and consider what you then did? how solemnly you yourselves engaged them in a vow to God, to live a mortified and a holy life? And will you so solemnly do that in an hour, which all their life after with you, you will

endeavour to destroy?

Motive IV. Consider how great power the education of children hath upon all their following lives; except nature and grace, there is nothing that usually doth prevail so much with them. Indeed the obstinacy of natural viciousness doth often frustrate a good education; but if any means be like to do good, it is this; but ill education is more constantly successful, to make them evil. This cherisheth those seeds of wickedness which spring up when they come to age; this maketh so many to be proud, and idle, and flesh-pleasers, and licentious, and lustful, and covetous, and all that is naught. And he hath a hard task that cometh after to root out these vices, which an ungodly education hath so deeply radicated. Ungodly parents do serve the devil so effectually in the first impressions on their children's minds, that it is more than magistrates and ministers and all reforming means can afterwards do to recover them from that sin to God. Whereas if you would first engage their hearts to God by a religious education, piety would then have all those advantages that sin hath now. Prov. xxii. 6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The language which you teach them to speak when they are children, they will use all their life after, if they live with those that use it. And so the opinions which they first receive, and the customs which they are used to at first, are very hardly changed afterward. I doubt not to affirm, that a godly education is God's first and ordinary appointed means, for the begetting of actual faith, and other

graces, in the children of believers: many may have seminal grace before, but they cannot sooner have actual faith, repentance, love, or any grace, than they have reason itself in act and exercise. And the preaching of the word by public ministers is not the first ordinary means of grace, to any but those that were graceless till they come to hear such preaching; that is, to those on whom the first appointed means hath been neglected, or proved in vain: that is, it is but the second means, to do that which was not done by the first. The proof is undeniable; because God appointeth parents diligently to teach their children the doctrine of his holy word, before they come to the public ministry: parents' teaching is the first teaching; and parents' teaching is for this end, as well as public teaching, even to beget faith, and love, and holiness; and God appointeth no means to be used by us, on which we may not expect his blessing. Therefore it is apparent, that the ordinary appointed means for the first actual grace, is parents' godly instruction and education of their children. And public preaching is appointed for the conversion of those only that have missed the blessing of the first appointed means. Therefore if you deny your children religious education, you deny them the first appointed means of their actual faith and sanctification; and then the second cometh upon disadvantage.

Motive V. Consider also how many and great are your advantages above all others for your children's good. As, 1. Nothing doth take so much with any one, as that which is known to come from love: the greater love is discerned in

your instruction, the greater success may you expect. Now your children are more confident of their parents' love, than of any others; whether ministers and strangers speak to them in love, they cannot tell; but of their parents' love they make no doubt. 2. And their love to you is as great a preparative to your success. We all hearken to them that we dearly love, with greater attention and willingness than to others. They love not the minister as they do their parents. 3. You have them in hand betimes, before they have received any false opinions or bad impressions; before they have any sin but that which was born with them: you are to make the first impressions upon them; you have them while they are most teachable, and flexible, and tender, and make least resistance against instruction; they rise not up at first against your teaching with self-conceitedness and proud objections. But when they come to the minister, they are as paper that is written on or printed before, unapt to receive another impression; they have much to be untaught, before they can be taught; and come with proud and stiff resistance, to strive against instruction, rather than readily to receive it. 4. Your children do wholly depend on you for their present maintenance, and much for their future livelihood and portions; and therefore they know that it is their interest to obey and please you; and as interest is the common bias of the world, so is it with your children; you may easilier rule them that have this handle to hold them by, than any other can do that have not this advantage. They know they serve you not for nought. 5. Your authority over your children is most unquestionable. They

will dispute the authority of ministers, yea, and of magistrates, and ask them who gave them the power to teach them, and to command them? But the parents' authority is beyond all dispute. They will not call you tyrants or usurpers, nor bid you prove the validity of your ordination, or the uninterruptedness of your succession. Therefore father and mother, as the first natural power, are mentioned rather than kings or queens in the fifth commandment. 6. You have the power of the rod to force them. Prov. xxii. 15, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." And your correction will be better understood to come from love, than that of the magistrate or any other. 7. You have best opportunity to know both the diseases and temperature of your children; which is a great advantage for the choosing and applying of the best remedy. 8. You have opportunity of watching over them, and discerning all their faults in time; but if a minister speak to them, he can know no more what fault to reprehend, than others tell him, or the party will confess. You may also discern what success your former exhortations had, and whether they amend or still go on in sin, and whether you should proceed to more severe remedies. 9. You have opportunity of speaking to them in the most familiar manner; which is better understood than the set speech of a minister in the pulpit, which few of them mark or understand. You can quicken their attention by questions which put them upon answering you, and so awaken them to a serious regard of what you say. 10. You are so frequently with them, that

you can repeat your instructions, and drive them home, that what is not done at one time, may be done at another; whereas other men can seldom speak to them, and what is so seldom spoken is easily neglected or forgotten. 11. You have power to place them under the best means, and to remove many impediments out of their way which usually frustrate other men's endeavours. 12. Your example is near them and continually in their sight, which is a continual and powerful sermon. By all these advantages God hath enabled you, above all others, to be instruments of your children's good, and the first and greatest promoters of their salvation.

Motive VI. Consider how great a comfort it would be to you, to have your children such as you may confidently hope are the children of God, being brought to know him, and love, and serve him, through your own endeavours in a pious education of them. 1. You may love your children upon a higher account than as they are yours; even as they are God's, adorned with his image, and quickened with a divine celestial life; and this is to love them with a higher kind of love, than mere natural affection is. It would rejoice you to see your children advanced to be lords or princes; but oh how much greater cause of joy is it, to see them made the members of Christ, and quickened by his Spirit, and sealed up for life eternal! 2. When once your children are made the children of God, by the regeneration of the Spirit, you may be much more free from care and trouble for them than before. Now you may boldly trust them on the care of their heavenly

Father, who is able to do more for them than you are able to desire: he loveth them better than you can love them; he is bound by promise to protect them, and provide for them, and to see that all things work together for their good. He that clotheth the lilies of the fields, and suffereth not the young lions or ravens to be unprovided for, will provide convenient food for his own children (though he will have you also do your duty for them, as they are your children). While they are the children of Satan, and the servants of sin, you have cause to fear, not only lest they be exposed to miseries in this world, but much more lest they be snatched away in their sin to hell: your children, while they are ungodly, are worse than among wolves and tigers. But when once they are renewed by the Spirit of Christ, they are the charge of all the blessed Trinity, and under God the charge of angels: living or dying they are safe; for the eternal God is their portion and defence. 3. It may be a continual comfort to you to think what a deal of drudgery and calamity your child is freed from: to think how many oaths he would have sworn, and how many lies and curses he would have uttered, and how beastly and fleshly a life he would have lived, how much wrong he would have done to God and men, and how much he would have pleased the devil, and what torments in hell he must have endured as the reward of all; and then to think how mercifully God hath prevented all this; and what service he may do God in the world, and finally live with Christ in glory: what a joy is this to a considering, believing parent, that taketh the mercies of his children as his

own! 4. Religion will teach your children to be more dutiful to yourselves, than nature can teach them. It will teach them to love you, even when you have no more to give them, as well as if you had the wealth of all the world: it will teach them to honour you, though you are poor and contemptible in the eyes of others. It will teach them to obey you, and if you fall into want, to relieve you according to their power: it will fit them to comfort you in the time of your sickness and distress; when ungodly children will be as thorns in your feet or eyes, and cut your hearts, and prove a greater grief than any enemies to you. A gracious child will bear with your weaknesses, when a Ham will not cover his father's nakedness: a gracious child can pray for you, and pray with you, and be a blessing to your house; when an ungodly child is fitter to curse, and prove a curse, to those he lives with. 5. And is it not an exceeding joy to think of the everlasting happiness of your child? and that you may live together in heaven for ever? when the foreseen misery of a graceless child may grieve you whenever you look him in the face. 6. Lastly, it will be a great addition to your joy, to think that God blessed your diligent instructions, and made you the instrument of all that good that is done upon your children, and of all that good that is done by them, and of all the happiness they have for ever. To think that this was conveyed to them by your means, will give you a larger share in the delights of it.

Motive VII. Remember that your children's original sin and misery is by you; and therefore, in justice, you that have undone

them, are bound to do your best to save them. If you had but conveyed a leprosy, or some hereditary disease, to their bodies, would you have not done your best to cure them? Oh that you could do them but as much good as you do them hurt! It is more than Adam's sin that runneth down into the natures of your children, yea, and that bringeth judgments on them; and even Adam's sin cometh not to them but by you.

Motive VIII. Lastly, Consider what exceeding great need they have of the utmost help you can afford them. It is not a corporal disease, an easy enemy, a tolerable misery, that we call unto you for their help; but it is against sin, and Satan, and hell-fire. It is against a body of sin; not one, but many; not small, but pernicious, having seized on the heart; deep-rooted sins, that are not easily plucked up. All the teaching, and diligence, and watchfulness that you can use, is little enough, and may prove too little. They are obstinate vices that have possessed them; they are not quickly nor easily cast out; and the remnants and roots are apt to be still springing up again, when you thought they had been quite destroyed: oh then what wisdom and diligence is requisite to so great and necessary a work!

And now let me seriously speak to the hearts of those careless and ungodly parents, that neglect the holy education of their children: yea, and to those professors of godliness, that slubber over so great a work with a few customary formal duties and words, that are next to a total omission of it. Oh be not so unmerciful to the souls that you have helped to bring into the

world! Think not so basely of them, as if they were not worth your labour. Make not your children so like your beasts, as to make no provision but only for their flesh. Remember still that it is not beasts, but men, that you have begotten and brought forth: educate them then and use them as men, for the love and obedience of their Maker: oh pity and help the souls that you have defiled and undone! Have mercy on the souls that must perish in hell, if they be not saved in this day of salvation! Oh help them that have so many enemies to assault them! Help them that have so many temptations to pass through; and so many difficulties to overcome; and so severe a judgment to undergo! Help them that are so weak, and so easily deceived and overthrown! Help them speedily while your advantages continue; before sin have hardened them, and grace have forsaken them, and Satan place a stronger garrison in their hearts. Help them while they are tractable, before they are grown up to despise your help; before you and they are separated asunder, and your opportunities be at an end. You think not your pains from year to year too much to make provision for their bodies: oh be not cruel to their souls! Sell them not to Satan, and that for nought! Betray them not by your ungodly negligence to hell. Or if any of them will perish, let it not be by you, that are so much bound to do them good: the undoing of your children's souls is a work much fitter for Satan, than for their parents. Remember how comfortable a thing it is, to work with Christ for the saving of souls. You think the calling of ministers honourable and happy; and so it is, because

they serve Christ in so high a work: but if you will not neglect it, you may do for your children more than any minister can do. This is your preaching place; here God calleth you to exercise your parts, even in the holy instruction of your families: your charge is small in comparison of the minister's, he hath many hundred souls to watch over, that are scattered all abroad the parish; and will you think it much to instruct and watch over those few of your own that are under your roof? You can speak odiously of unfaithful, soul-betraying ministers; and do you not consider how odious a soul-betraying parent is? If God intrust you but with earthly talents, take heed how you use them, for you must be accountable for your trust; and when he hath intrusted you with souls, even your children's souls, will you betray them? If any rulers should but forbid you the instructing and well-governing of your families, and restrain you by a law, as they would have restrained Daniel from praying in his house, Dan. vi. then you would think them monsters of impiety and inhumanity; and you would cry out of a satanical persecution, that would make men traitors to their children's souls, and drive away all religion from the earth. And yet how easily can you neglect such duties, when none forbid them you, and never accuse yourselves of any such horrid impiety or inhumanity? What hypocrisy and blind partiality is this! Like a lazy minister that would cry out of persecution, if he were silenced by others, and yet will not be provoked to be laborious, but ordinarily by his slothfulness silence himself, and make no such matter of it. Would it be

so heinous a sin in another to restrain you? and is it not as heinous for you, that are so much obliged to it, voluntarily to restrain yourselves? O then deny not this necessary diligence to your necessitous children, as you love their souls, as you love the happiness of the church or commonwealth, as you love the honour and interest of Christ, and as you love your present and everlasting peace. Do not see your children the slaves of Satan here, and the firebrands of hell for ever, if any diligence of yours may contribute to prevent it. Do not give conscience such matter of accusation against you, as to say, All this was long of thee! If thou hadst instructed them diligently, and watched over them, and corrected them, and done thy part, it is like they had never come to this. You till your fields; you weed your gardens; what pains take you about your grounds and cattle! and will you not take more for your children's souls? Alas, what creatures will they be if you leave them to themselves! how ignorant, careless, rude, and beastly! Oh what a lamentable case have ungodly parents brought the world into! Ignorance and selfishness, beastly sensuality, and devilish malignity, have covered the face of the earth as a deluge, and driven away wisdom, and self-denial, and piety, and charity, and justice, and temperance almost out of the world, confining them to the breasts of a few obscure, humble souls, that love virtue for virtue's sake, and look for their reward from God alone, and expect that by abstaining from iniquity they make themselves a prey to wolves, Isa. lix. 15. Wicked education hath unmanned the world, and subdued it to Satan, and make it

almost like to hell. O do not join with the sons of Belial in this unnatural, horrid wickedness!

CHAPTER VII.

THE MUTUAL DUTIES OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES TOWARDS EACH OTHER

It is the pernicious subversion of all societies, and so of the world, that selfish, ungodly persons enter into all relations with a desire to serve themselves there, and fish out all that gratifieth their flesh, but without any sense of the duty of their relation. They bethink them what honour, or profit, or pleasure their relation will afford them, but not what God and man require or expect from them.⁹ All their thought is, what they shall have, but not what they shall be and do. They are very sensible what others should be and do to them; but not what they should be and do to others. Thus it is with magistrates, and with people, with too many pastors and their flocks, with husbands and wives, with parents and children, with masters and servants, and all other relations. Whereas our first care should be to know and perform the duties of our relations, and please God in them, and then look for his blessing by way of encouraging reward. Study and do your parts, and God will certainly do his.

Direct. I. The first duty of husbands is to love their wives (and

⁹ Gen. ii. 18; Prov. xviii. 22.

wives their husbands) with a true, entire, conjugal love. Eph. v. 25, 28, 29, 33, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. – So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. – Let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself." See Gen. ii. 24. It is a relation of love that you have entered. God hath made it your duty for your mutual help and comfort; that you may be as willing and ready to succour one another, as the hand is to help the eye or other fellow-member, and that your converse may be sweet, and your burdens easy, and your lives may be comfortable. If love be removed but for an hour between husband and wife, they are so long as a bone out of joint; there is no ease, no order, no work well done, till they are restored and set in joint again. Therefore be sure that conjugal love be constantly maintained.

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