

A COMPANION FOR THE ALTAR

A COMPANION FOR THE ALTAR

consisting of a short

EXPLANATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER,

and

MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS,

proper to be used

BEFORE, AND DURING, THE RECEIVING OF THE

HOLY COMMUNION,

according to the form prescribed by the

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

in the

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

by

JOHN HENRY HOBART, A. M.

An Assistant Minister of Trinity Church, New-York.

A New Edition, reset from the New-York imprint of 1804

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EDITOR'S NOTE

A Note on This Edition.

John Henry Hobart's Companion for the Altar was first published in New-York in May 1804, by Peter A. Mesier, when its author was twenty-nine years old and an Assistant Minister of Trinity Church. It went through more than two dozen editions before the Civil War, becoming, with his Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church, the standard devotional manual of the early American Episcopal Church and a fixture of pious household libraries through the middle of the nineteenth century. It has not been reprinted in any complete form for over a hundred years.

The present edition is a diplomatic, not a critical, republication of the first (1804) printing. Hobart authorized several revised editions in his lifetime; we have chosen the first because it is the version of the book that established Hobart's reputation, because it preserves the freshness of the young author's voice, and because it has been the least accessible to modern readers.

We have silently regularised the use of long-s, ligatures, and obvious typographical errors of the original printer; modernised punctuation only where its retention would now obscure rather than illuminate the sense; and preserved Hobart's scripture references, italicisations of catechetical quotations, and his ordering of the meditations and prayers exactly as they stood in 1804. Scriptural footnotes, originally keyed by lower-case letters within each page, are here numbered sequentially within each chapter.

THE EDITORS

PREFACE

THE writer of the present work, near the close of the last winter, engaged, at the solicitation of the printer, to revise, for immediate publication, "The New Week's Preparation for a worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper." He soon found that, though there was a vein of piety in this work which deserved respect, there were many glaring errors of sentiment, and improprieties of language, which were calculated to mislead and to disgust. From his engagement with the printer, it appeared necessary for him either to sanction a work which was, in his judgment, very imperfect, and in some respects censurable; or to attempt to prepare a new one. He was induced to adopt the latter course; and thus found himself engaged in the humble performance which is now presented to the public.

In the explanation of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper prefixed to the work, he has endeavoured to use, as much as possible, the words of the Church in her Catechism and Office for the Communion.¹ In this introductory treatise, he has also made free use of an excellent

¹And in doing this, he has taken for his guide a short explanation of the Lord's Supper, in the *New Week's Preparation*.

tract on the Holy Communion, by Bishop Gibson, and of a Sermon of the late Bishop Seabury, on the same subject; and when he quoted their sentiments, he thought it proper to use nearly their language. As quotations from others are thus incorporated with remarks of his own, a variety of style may possibly be observed in this part of the work. It is necessary also to remark, that the devotions to be used at the administration of the Holy Communion, are not all of them entirely original. But for the rest of the work, the meditations and prayers to be used in the week before the receiving of the Communion, the author is solely responsible.

In the following pages, the writer has endeavoured to keep in view two principles, which he deems most important and fundamental. These principles are: That we are saved from the guilt and dominion of sin by the divine merits and grace of a crucified Redeemer; and that the merits and grace of this Redeemer are applied to the soul of the believer, in the devout and humble participation of the ordinances of the Church, administered by a priesthood who derive their authority by regular transmission from Christ, the Divine Head of the Church, and the source of all power in it. These are the principles which at first promulgated by the Apostles, "in demonstration of the spirit and with power," constituted the glory of the Primitive Church — that Church which was watered by the tears and blood of Confessors and Martyrs. These are the principles which, tho' in the present age unhappily disregarded and contemned, will again be cherished with sacred and inviolable ardour, when it shall please the Divine and Almighty Head of the Church to restore her to her original purity and perfection. Could Christians be persuaded heartily to embrace these principles, and

to regulate their faith and conduct by them; the Church would be rescued, on the one hand, from those baneful opinions which are reducing the Gospel to a cold, unfruitful, and comfortless system of heathen morals; and, on the other hand, from that wild spirit of enthusiasm and irregular zeal which, contemning the divinely constituted government and priesthood of the Church, is destroying entirely her order, unity, and beauty, and undermining the foundations of sound and sober piety.

It may possibly be objected to the strain of devotion in this work, that it is visionary and enthusiastic. But surely devotional writings, in order to engage and interest the affections, ought to be, in some degree at least, fervent and animated. The devotional strains of the sweet Psalmist of Israel breathe the rapturous spirit of those celestial courts, to which they are designed to lead the soul.

New-York, May, 1804.

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CHAPTER 1

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, AND THE NECESSARY PREPARATION FOR IT, STATED AND EXPLAINED

*A short Introduction to the Lord's Supper,
stating the nature of the Ordinance, the necessary preparation
for it, and the obligations on Christians to receive it; and
refuting the excuses commonly urged for neglecting it.*

THE church tells us, that Christ has ordained only *two Sacraments, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.* Baptism was instituted by Christ, to be the *rite of admission into his church,*¹ and is answerable to circumcision among the Jews.² The Lord's Supper was ordained as a memorial

¹Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them, about three thousand souls.—*Acts ii. 41.*

²In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the

of the sacrifice of the death of Christ,³ and appointed by him, instead of the Jewish passover.⁴ These sacraments are both necessary to salvation. Baptism is necessary thereto, being the ordinance, whereby we are translated from our natural state into a state of grace, and born again to a title to all the privileges of the Gospel covenant;⁵ and the Lord's Supper is necessary to salvation, because it conveys that spiritual food by which we are nourished up to everlasting life.⁶ The former is to be only *once*, the latter *often* received.

These ordinances ministering to such great ends, the church says, are only *generally* and not *absolutely* necessary to salvation; because she dare not take upon her to exclude all hope of GOD'S mercy in those extraordinary cases, where the want of opportunity or capacity prevents men from receiving these sacraments.⁷ But as the Jews were obliged under the severest penalty to be circumcised,⁸

circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.—*Col. ii. 11, 12.*

³For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.—*1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25.*

⁴For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.—*1 Cor. v. 7.*

⁵Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.—*John iii. 5.*

⁶Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.—*John vi. 53.*

⁷But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guileless.—*Matt. xii. 7.*

⁸And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin

and keep the passover;⁹ so our guilt and danger will be proportionably great in not observing, when it is in our power, these two more easy institutions,¹⁰ which are not only of a higher authority,¹¹ but also the distinguishing badges¹² of a more excellent profession.¹³

By the word *Sacrament* the church tells us, is meant *an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.* Now for the clearer understanding of this account which the church gives of a sacrament, it is necessary that the several parts of which it consists, should be distinguished. According to this definition which the church gives of a sacrament, it appears that in order to constitute a sacrament, there must be, *first*, something discernible and apparent to our senses; which, *secondly*, must represent some spiritual grace and favour vouchsafed us by God; *thirdly*, the outward sign must be of Christ's own institution; and, *fourthly*, appointed by him as a means of conveying to us the inward grace, and as a seal and pledge to assure it to us. As these properties are only to be found in Baptism and the Supper of our Lord, no other religious rite can be

is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.—*Gen.* xvii. 14.

⁹But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover; even the same soul shall be cut off from his people.—*Numb.* ix. 13.

¹⁰For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.—*1 John* v. 3.

¹¹See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.—*Heb.* xii. 25.

¹²For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.—*1 Cor.* xi. 26.

¹³For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.—*John* i. 17.

truly called, or ought to be esteemed, a sacrament.

Now the parts of which a sacrament consists are two, *viz.* The *outward visible sign*, and the *inward spiritual grace*. Outward sensible things can, by the institution of God, be a *means* of conveying, and *pledges* to assure to us, divine grace and favour. These sacramental signs were ordained by GOD in gracious condescension to our infirmities, thereby to inform our understanding, to refresh our memories, and to excite our affections. Their efficacy is not owing to any power in themselves, but to the blessing of Christ upon his own institutions and appointments.¹⁴ We are not therefore to doubt, but that, in the right use of the *outward means*, he will, by the power of his spirit, though in a manner unknown to us,¹⁵ convey, and confirm, in *Baptism*,¹⁶ and convey, and confirm, in the *Lord's Supper*,¹⁷ to the worthy receivers thereof, the divine grace signified thereby, according to his own most true promise.¹⁸

The *Lord's Supper* is so called, because the Jewish custom of eating bread and drinking wine, at the conclusion of the paschal-supper, was by our Lord converted into the sacrament of his most precious body and blood.¹⁹

¹⁴So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.—1 *Cor.* iii. 7.

¹⁵The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.—*John* iii. 8.

¹⁶And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.—*Acts* xxii. 16.

¹⁷As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.—*John* vi. 57.

¹⁸For he is faithful that promised.—*Heb.* x. 23.

¹⁹And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you.—*Luke* xxii. 19, 20.

The church teaches us, that *the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper is bread and wine, which the Lord has commanded to be received.* Though it is our duty to rest satisfied in our Lord's will and pleasure, without seeking after a reason for his appointments; we cannot but observe, that as our spiritual purification is appositely represented by *water*, in the other sacrament, so is our spiritual sustenance by *bread and wine*, in this. Bread and wine being both parts of one complete nourishment, and separately ineffectual,²⁰ this sacrament is commanded to be administered in both kinds.²¹

The church likewise tells us, that *the inward part, or thing signified, is the body and blood of Christ.* Hence we are to understand, that GOD did not only give his Son Jesus Christ, to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in this holy sacrament; and that, if we receive it with a true penitent heart and lively faith, we do spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood.²²

The church assures us, that *the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.* This memorial of Christ's death is to be a standing service in his church, so long as it continues militant here on earth. For Christ did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue a perpetual memory of his pre-

²⁰The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?—1 Cor. x. 16.

²¹And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.—Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.

²²For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.—John vi. 55.

cious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.²³ The death of Christ is called a *sacrifice*, because our heavenly Father, of his tender mercy, gave his only Son Jesus Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.²⁴ By this sacrifice we receive the remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven.²⁵ And as the Son of GOD did vouchsafe to yield up his soul by death upon the cross for our salvation; so it is the duty of all Christians to receive the communion in remembrance of the sacrifice of his death, as he himself hath commanded; and to do it so frequently, that they may always have a fresh and lively remembrance thereof, in their minds.²⁶

The Eucharist therefore is not only a Sacrament, in which, under the symbols of bread and wine, according to the institution of Christ, the faithful, truly and spiritually receive the body and blood of Christ; but also a true and proper sacrifice, commemorative of the original sacrifice and death of Christ for our deliverance from sin and death: a memorial made before God, to plead with him the meritorious sacrifice and death of his dear Son

²³For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.—1 *Cor.* xi. 26.

²⁴And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.—1 *John* ii. 2.

²⁵For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.—*Rom.* v. 10.

²⁶After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.—1 *Cor.* xi. 25, 26.

for the forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion. The Eucharist being, as its name imports, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, the bread and wine after they have been offered or given to God, and blessed and sanctified by his Holy Spirit, are returned by the hand of his minister to be eaten by the faithful, as a feast upon the sacrifice; both, to denote their being at peace and favour with God, being thus fed at his table, and eating of his food, and also, to convey to the worthy receivers all the benefits and blessings of Christ's natural body and blood, which were offered and slain for their redemption.²⁷

The church tells us, that *the benefits whereof we are partakers in the Lord's Supper are the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.* As bread and wine, considered only as natural food, strengthen and refresh our bodies; so this bread and wine, considered and taken, as memorials of the body and blood of Christ our Master, tend to the improvement and health of our souls. In this ordinance our souls are strengthened by the most solemn exercise of our faith; by the most lively acts of gratitude and love, and especially by that supernatural grace which we receive from this spiritual food.²⁸ Our souls are also refreshed in this holy sacrament by the comfortable assurance given us of GOD'S favour and gracious goodness towards us:²⁹ that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of his Son,³⁰ which is the blessed company of all faithful

²⁷See Bishop Seabury's excellent *Discourse on the Holy Eucharist*.

²⁸He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.—*John* vi. 56.

²⁹He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?—*Rom.* viii. 32.

³⁰For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.—*Eph.* v. 30.

people; and also heirs through hope of his everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of his dear Son.³¹

We are taught by the church, that it is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper *to examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life, have a lively faith in GOD's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men.* All persons are to examine into the state of their souls before they come to the Lord's Supper; because without repentance we are not capable of that pardon which is here offered us;³² nor can any but believers discern the Lord's body in this sacrament, or reap any spiritual advantage from receiving it.³³

The Lord's Supper is not designed for the nourishment of the body, but for the refreshment of the soul; and therefore the soul must be put in a proper disposition to receive it, and feed upon it. It is a *lively representation of Christ's dying for the sins of mankind;* and therefore to answer the end of the institution, the soul must be possessed with a *full sense* of the sufferings of Christ and his love to mankind, and also with a *humble and lively faith and hope and trust in his merits.* It is an *office of praise and thanksgiving* for the greatest deliverance and blessing that ever was vouchsafed to men, or that mankind are capable of receiving, namely, the redeeming us from eternal death, and restoring us to the favour of God, and making us

³¹And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.—1 *John* v. 11.

³²Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.—1 *Cor.* v. 8.

³³I said therefore unto you, That ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.—*John* viii. 24.

partakers of everlasting life; and therefore, to celebrate it aright, the soul must come prepared with a *due sense*, both of the extreme misery of our condition without a redeemer, and also, of the blessings and benefits to which we are entitled through Christ. It is also a *memorial of our deliverance from the power of sin*, and is the means by which we become partakers of the Spirit of God; and we should therefore bring with us to this ordinance not only a *willingness*, but a *desire* to be delivered from the power of our sins, an *earnest longing* for the assistance of God's grace to subdue them, with *firm resolutions* to improve his grace to that end. In this holy ordinance, we behold the supreme claim which Christ has to our homage and obedience, since he bought us with the price of his own blood; and therefore we cannot partake of this ordinance aright, without a just sense of our obligations to serve and obey him as our Lord and Master, and without resigning ourselves to his holy will. The holy Sacrament, under the most impressive and affecting emblems, sets before us the *covenant of mercy and pardon*, to which God is pleased to admit mankind, on condition of their repentance and amendment; and hence arises the indispensable necessity of repenting of our past sins, and entering into resolutions of obedience for the future, as often as we come to renew this covenant in the sacrament of Christ's body and blood. In this holy Supper we hold *communion* with our fellow Christians, as brethren, and members of the same body under Christ our head; and hence it follows, that love, and unity, must be necessary dispositions for a right participation of this holy ordinance.

There are some people who suppose that the *peril of unworthy receiving* is so great,³⁴ that they had better stay

³⁴The peril of receiving the Lord's Supper unworthily is height-

away, than run the hazard thereof. The danger indeed is great to them who will presume to eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, rashly and unadvisedly. But their guilt is not less, their situation not less hazardous, who persist in disobedience to the most important and gracious of Christ's institutions; and reject his invitations to so many great and important spiritual blessings. A serious consideration of these motives, and of that danger, which it is in their own power to avoid by their habitual care to live in obedience to God, would induce all sincere Christians to apply themselves with serious diligence to the necessary preparation for this great ordinance.

A worthy receiver must first *examine himself*, whether he truly repents of his former sins, with a stedfast purpose to lead a new life. He must seriously consider the wickedness and guilt of those sins, and what punishment, both in this life and in the life to come, they justly deserve. With the deepest abasement, he must lament the corruption of

ened in the apprehensions of some persons, by the declaration of the Apostle, that "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh *damnation* to himself." But the original word, which is translated *damnation*, is also translated by the word *judgment*; and indeed the connection in which it stands in the original Greek of St. Paul shews that it is so to be rendered. The Apostle's meaning therefore is, that the unworthy receiver eateth and drinketh *judgment*, that is, temporal punishment, to himself. By the unworthy receivers addressed by the Apostle were meant those Corinthian Christians, who in their Communion ate and drank to such excess that they appeared at the Lord's Table as if engaged in a riotous and intemperate feast. To such persons, indeed, the Apostle's denunciations applied. Some of them had been visited by sickness, others removed by death. But the eternal *damnation*, which it has been supposed unworthy communicants would incur, is not what the Apostle threatened. He only meant temporal judgments or punishments to such intemperate receivers as the Corinthians were. The English translators have unhappily used the word *damnation*, which now exclusively conveys the idea of eternal punishment.

his nature, his inclination to evil, and the various transgressions of which he has been guilty. The Christian, in his examination of himself, is to enquire into his behaviour, his words, his actions, and the thoughts and desires of his heart; comparing himself, throughout the whole of his deportment, with the precepts of God's law.³⁵ He is to call to mind the various ways in which he has departed from God,³⁶ and to humble himself under a deep and sincere sorrow for sin.³⁷ And when, upon enquiry, he discovers sins which he had forgotten, or unfaithfulness which he had not considered, there he must bewail his own sinfulness, and confess his guilt to Almighty God.³⁸

Having examined our lives and confessed our sins before God, and humbled ourselves under the sense of our natural depravity and actual guilt, we should then turn our thoughts upon the only means by which we can be redeemed from our sins, and reconciled to GOD. The means of our deliverance from sin, and restoration to the divine favour, are provided in the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. In him we have *redemption, even the forgiveness of our sins*.³⁹ Him hath God set forth to be the *propitiation for our sins*.⁴⁰ He is the *Mediator between*

³⁵But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.—1 Cor. xi. 28.

³⁶Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.—*Lam.* iii. 40.

³⁷Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.—2 Cor. vii. 9, 10.

³⁸For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.—*Psalm* li. 3.

³⁹*Col.* i. 14.

⁴⁰*Rom.* iii. 25.

*God and Man.*⁴¹ He gave himself a ransom for all. He is our advocate with the Father.⁴² By his death we are reconciled to God.⁴³ He has made our peace with the Father through the blood of his Cross.⁴⁴

It is a comfort to us, under the sense and burthen of our sins, to consider, not only that we have a Saviour and Redeemer, but that he has given humble and penitent sinners the most gracious invitations and encouragements to come to him for pardon and salvation. *Come unto me* (says the blessed Jesus,) *all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*⁴⁵ *He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*⁴⁶ And he tenderly declares, that *He came into the world, on purpose to call sinners to repentance;*⁴⁷ *and to seek and to save that which was lost.*⁴⁸

The consideration of these gracious declarations and encouragements, together with the sense of our own vileness and misery, will prepare us to come to Christ, with a *true and lively faith*; neither trusting to our own merits, nor distrusting the mercies of God, but casting ourselves *wholly upon the merits of Jesus Christ*, in a stedfast reliance that through his blood we shall *receive the remission of our sins*, and being *justified by faith*, shall have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But then we must remember, that the redemption of Christ consists in his delivering us, not only from the *guilt* of our sins past, but also from the *power and dominion* of

⁴¹ *Tim.* ii. 5, 6.

⁴² *John* ii. 1.

⁴³ *Rom.* v. 10.

⁴⁴ *Col.* i. 20.

⁴⁵ *Matt.* xi. 28.

⁴⁶ *John* vi. 37.

⁴⁷ *Luke* v. 32.

⁴⁸ *Luke* xix. 10.

sin for the time to come. *Christ gave himself for us, not only that he might redeem us from all iniquity, but likewise that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*⁴⁹ *He was manifested, not only to take away our sins, but also by his blood to purge our consciences from dead works to serve the Living God.*⁵⁰ No persons then must hope for any benefit by the death of Christ, but they who will take the redemption, which he wrought, whole and entire, and receive him as a Saviour, not only from the guilt but from the dominion of sin. None must hope for the pardon of his sins past, but he who sincerely desires to be delivered from them for the time to come.

And therefore having begun the work of repentance in the confession of our past sins, and the humiliation of our souls under a sense of them; we must continue and perfect it, by solemnly professing, in the presence of God, our earnest desires to be delivered from the power of sin, and our resolutions, through the assistance of his grace, to *forsake ungodliness and worldly lusts,*⁵¹ and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, while he shall please to continue us in this world.

When, upon examination, we think we have reason humbly to trust that we truly and earnestly repent of our sins, and are in love and charity with our neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of GOD, and walking in his holy ways, we must then *draw near without fear,*⁵² and take the holy sacrament to our comfort; firmly believing that Almighty GOD, for the sake of our blessed Redeemer, and in regard to the merits of his

⁴⁹*Tit.* ii. 14.

⁵⁰*Heb.* ix. 14.

⁵¹*Tit.* ii. 11, 12.

⁵²For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.—2 *Tim.* i. 7.

death, will mercifully pardon us, and graciously receive us as worthy communicants.

We should behave with all possible reverence and devotion, when we present ourselves amongst our brethren who come to feed on the banquet of that most heavenly food. With hearts impressed with penitence, with faith, with reverence and love, our principal business at the altar should be to give most humble and hearty thanks to GOD the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for all the blessings vouchsafed unto us; but especially for the redemption of the world, by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ both GOD and man. To the ever blessed Trinity we should, at all times, but more especially at these opportunities of commemorating the inestimable love displayed in the redemption, be most thankful; ascribing continual praise to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who created, redeemed, and sanctifieth us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER 2

THE OBLIGATION OF RECEIVING THE HOLY COMMUNION STATED, AND THE VARIOUS PRETENCES FOR NEGLECTING IT, CONSIDERED AND REFUTED

FROM the foregoing account of the holy Eucharist, it appears that it is the highest and most important act of Christian worship. It is the memorial of the passion and death of our blessed Redeemer, made before the Almighty Father, to render him propitious to us, by pleading with him the meritorious sufferings of his beloved Son. It is a sensible pledge of God's love to us, who, as he has given his Son to die for us, so has he given the precious body and blood of Christ, to be our spiritual food and sustenance. And as the bread of this world, frequently taken, is necessary to keep the body in health and vigour; so is this bread of God, frequently received, necessary to preserve the soul in spiritual health, and to keep the divine life of faith and holiness from becoming extinct in us.

An ordinance of so sublime and exalted a nature, fruitful of such inestimable blessings, and enjoined on us by

that blessed Redeemer who laid down his life for us, one would suppose, would be highly valued, and humbly and gratefully received by all who profess themselves Christians. It is however, a lamentable truth, that the greater proportion of Christians live in the habitual neglect of this distinguishing badge of their Christian profession, the ordinance which unites them to their Redeemer, and which is the invaluable seal and pledge of his mercy and grace. Let those who neglect this sacred ordinance be persuaded to pause, and seriously to consider the weighty obligations which they contemn, and the folly and guilt of the excuses which they urge.

Christians are bound to receive the holy communion by the obligations of DUTY, of GRATITUDE, and of INTEREST.

DUTY urges us. Christ our Lord and Saviour has commanded us to receive the communion, in remembrance of his death and passion. "*Do this, (says he,) in remembrance of me.*"¹ Are we not bound to revere and cherish, with the most sacred fervour, the command of a dying friend? And shall we be insensible to the pressing injunction of our Lord and Master, who, at the moment when he was about to lay down his life for us, even for us, who were his enemies, commanded us to commemorate his infinite love?

The powerful claims of GRATITUDE urge our obedience to his command. Transcendent were the love and compassion which he displayed for us. "The Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory, humbled himself even to the death upon the cross for us, miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death." He instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of this his infi-

¹Luke xxii. 19.

nite love, and for a continual remembrance of his death and passion. And shall we not gratefully commemorate his infinite love towards us, in the way that he hath appointed? Shall we refuse to render him even the tribute of thanks for the inconceivable sufferings he endured for us, for the inestimable blessings he purchased for us? By neglecting the instituted memorial of his love and mercy, we virtually say to our blessed Redeemer,—We cherish no sensibility for thy sufferings; we care not, though the displays of thine infinite love be forgotten; we set no value on the infinite condescensions of thy mercy.—Pause and reflect, ye who neglect this sacred ordinance, how great is the guilt of ingratitude, which you incur.

But, if duty does not impel you, if gratitude cannot excite you, listen at least to the calls of INTEREST. Consider how many great and inestimable benefits are annexed to this sacred ordinance. The pardon of sin; the assistance and consolations of God's holy Spirit; and an earnest pledge of a glorious resurrection to eternal life: these are the blessings assured to us by a worthy participation of the body and blood of Christ. When therefore, we absent ourselves from the holy Sacrament, we wilfully deprive ourselves of the greatest blessings which we can receive in this world, peace of conscience, the guidance and consolations of divine grace, the security of a happy resurrection to life and glory. Shall not then, the powerful considerations of interest urge us worthily to partake of an ordinance which rescues us from the guilt of sin, from the curse of God, from everlasting woe? Shall we deliberately condemn the favour of God, the consolation and powerful operations of his Spirit, and the immortal felicities of his heavenly kingdom! Not less is the folly than the guilt of neglecting this inestimable pledge of divine mercy, of

grace, of immortal life and glory.

None of the various pretences that are urged, can justify the neglect of this sacred institution.

The *cares of the world* are urged by many as an excuse for not coming to the holy Communion. In this manner they reason: —They heartily wish they were more disengaged from the business of the world; but since this is not their lot, they dare not approach so heavenly an institution, with hearts so much possessed and infected with earthly cares. But let such persons consider, that the Christian Religion allows no man, whatever his condition be, to engage his heart so far in the affairs of this world, as to neglect the care of his soul, and the concerns of the next life. Whoever, therefore, pleads that he is unfit for the holy Sacrament because his heart is over-run with the cares of the world, confesses that he leads a life directly opposed to his Christian obligations. They who were bidden to the supper in the Gospel,² excused themselves from coming, upon account of their worldly concerns; but they were pronounced unworthy of the heavenly feast for this very reason, because they preferred their temporal business before their eternal welfare. No man is rendered unfit for the Sacrament by the occupations and business of this life, who pursues them with moderation and honesty, with a due regard to the laws of God, and his good Providence over us; and whoever pursues them otherwise, makes himself unfit for heaven. The hearts of men being apt to dwell too much upon the things of this world, and to be buried in the cares and concerns of it; God has provided the holy Ordinances of the Gospel, to raise our souls from the earth, and to replenish them from time to time with heavenly thoughts and meditations. And therefore,

²Luke xiv. 16.

instead of making the cares of this life an excuse for abstaining from the holy Sacrament, those who desire in good earnest to live like Christians, and at the same time find themselves much engaged in the affairs of this world, will, upon that very account, be desirous to attend the ordinances of religion, in order to withdraw their thoughts from these worldly concerns, and to receive upon their souls, such a sense of heaven and heavenly things, as may keep them from being buried in the cares and pursuits of this life.

Others pretend, that they are desirous to come to the Sacrament; but when they *look back upon their past lives, they see so much sin and corruption*, and are so much humbled and dejected at the sight of it, that they cannot think themselves in any measure worthy to partake of so divine an institution. But such a sense of their vileness (when it produces a resolution to cast off the sins which have made them so vile) is the first qualification of a worthy receiver, because it is the step towards our reconciliation to God, and our being received into favour with him. They whom Christ particularly invites to come to him, with promises of pardon, and comfort, and spiritual strength,³ are such only as being weary under the sense and burthen of their sins, do earnestly desire to be delivered from them. For it is an idle pretence in men, to say that they are ashamed of their vileness; while they resolve to keep their sins, which they know will make them every day viler.

A third sort are afraid to come to the holy Sacrament, on account of the *many and great temptations with which the daily business of life is accompanied*; and they cannot think it the part of a good man to enter into solemn vows

³Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.—*Matt.* xi. 28.

and resolutions, which, by reason of such temptations, he must despair of keeping. Some callings and professions do, indeed, lay men open to more temptations than others. But no calling or profession, which is just and honest, can expose a man to temptations, which may not be overcome with care and watchfulness, and the assistance of God's grace. A foresight of temptations will induce every Christian, who heartily desires to live virtuously in his vocation, to come often to the holy Sacrament for new supplies of strength to resist them. They, who make the greatness of the temptations which may assail them a reason for abstaining from the Sacrament, do, in effect, give themselves up to the enjoyment of their lusts, which, in other words, is to give themselves up to eternal destruction.

There are others who are discouraged from coming to the Lord's Table, not only by the probability of their falling afterwards into sin, but by a persuasion that *sin committed after the holy Sacrament will never be forgiven*. This is so far from being true, that one good reason why Christians should come *frequently* to the holy Sacrament, is, because, by the *frequent* omissions of their duty, they have the greater need *frequently* to renew their covenant with God. If we could live in a state of innocence, we should have no need of renewing our covenant with him. But because through the frailty of our corrupt nature, and the manifold temptations that encompass us, we so frequently break our part of the covenant; we have therefore the greater need of that mercy, and those new supplies of grace, which are conveyed, to the sincere and penitent, in this sacred ordinance.

Whenever we come to renew our covenant with God, we engage to forsake our sins, by very solemn vows and resolutions. These are a great restraint from falling again

into sin. Whoever makes such vows with a sincere desire to be delivered from his sins, and, remembering his vows afterwards, is watchful over his ways, and prays for the grace of God to enable him to perform his vows; whoever thus strives to get the mastery over his sins, and to come daily nearer to perfection, is certainly in a state of salvation. His honest endeavours will be accepted by God, although he never arrive to a state of innocence to which no man ever can attain. For as long as we continue in this world, it will be true, even of the best men, that, *If they say they have no sin, they deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them.* But then it is as true, that our sins become much less, and our righteousness much greater, by frequently renewing our vows of obedience in this holy Sacrament. As to the sins, into which, notwithstanding these vows, and our most earnest endeavours to perform them, we may afterwards fall, God gives us a lively assurance in these holy mysteries, that *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and that he is the propitiation for our sins.* Although therefore men not only may fall into sin, but are very sure that they shall be sinning, more or less, as long as they continue in this frail and corrupt state; yet is this no reason to abstain from the Sacrament, but a very powerful one why they should receive it frequently. It is the means both of making us less sinful by far than we otherwise should be, and of raising and enlivening our faith in Christ for the pardon of all those sins, which, notwithstanding a conscientious care and diligence on our part, we either have committed, or may hereafter commit.

The foregoing error, that there is no pardon for sins committed after receiving the holy Sacrament, has been the occasion of another unhappy and dangerous mistake, that the way for Christians to be safe, is, never to receive the

blessed Sacrament but upon their death-bed or when they have no hope of living longer in this world. This erroneous and dangerous idea is founded on the presumptuous and absurd opinion, that the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood, saves men by some secret and resistless efficacy; that it has been instituted to encourage them in wickedness all their lives, upon an assurance, that it will carry them to heaven when they die. This dangerous mistake, also, absurdly supposes, that those persons can be partakers of the virtues and benefits of the holy eucharist, who are ignorant of its nature, its end, and benefits, and who are so far from being prepared for it, that they scarcely know what preparation is necessary. And, what preparation can men be supposed to make, who, begin not to think of receiving the communion, till they are seized with the pains, infirmities, and agonies of a dying-bed? With so short a warning, and under such weakness of body, and confusion, perhaps, distraction of mind, how can men immediately receive instruction concerning the highest and most solemn ordinance of the gospel, or recollect and confess their sins before God? At their death, and oft-times in their old age, they want to be taught the things which Christians are bound to learn betimes in their youth. When they are going out of the world, they only begin to desire, and think of, that bread from heaven, which God designed for their spiritual nourishment in their passage through life. By the very means which he appointed for a *daily restraint from sinning*, they hope at once to wash away the whole guilt of going on securely in a long life of sin. In the same day or hour that they are first taught what the Sacrament is, and what is necessary to prepare them for the worthy receiving of it, the preparation itself is at once to be begun, carried on, and finished!

They, who are yet in their youth, or at least in the enjoyment of health, should be warned not to rely upon the prospect of length of days. Instead of flattering themselves with such uncertain hopes, they are to be warned to enter immediately upon the only sure way—happily, a plain and clear way. They should inform themselves in the true nature and design of the holy Communion. Then going through the preparations requisite to make them worthy partakers, according to the degrees of leisure which their circumstances will allow, they should be *frequently at the Lord's table, in the time of their health*. When they come to die, they will then understand the state of their souls. Their hearts will have been accustomed to the thoughts of heaven and heavenly things. Thus habituated to the exercises and duties of the Christian life, they will, at the awful hour of death, be properly fitted and prepared to receive the holy Eucharist, as the seal of God's final pardon, as their invaluable comfort and support under the agonies of a dying-bed, as the joyful pledge of a triumphant passage, through the grave and gate of death, to immortal blessedness and glory.

Vain and idle therefore, are all the pretences which keep us from the table of our Lord. By this neglect and contempt of his sacred injunction, we forfeit the most inestimable blessings, we incur the heaviest guilt. No longer let us remain insensible to our duty and our interest, to our present and eternal peace. The care of our souls is *the one thing needful*—to work out our salvation, a concern of supreme importance. In tender compassion, the Redeemer hath provided, in his holy Supper, the means of our reconciliation to our offended God, and of our restoration to holiness and immortal glory. Impressed with his infinite compassion for us, and earnestly desirous to be

partakers of his salvation, let us resolve to commemorate his love in the holy Supper which he instituted, and receiving with penitent and believing hearts the symbols of his body and blood, become partakers of his mercy, his grace, his everlasting glory.

CHAPTER 3

A PRAYER

To be used by a person, who, having lived in forgetfulness of God, and in the neglect of his Christian obligations, is awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger, and is desirous to seal his pardon and reconciliation with God in the holy Sacrament.

O LORD GOD! to whom I am bound by the most powerful and endearing ties! For thou art the author and preserver of my being, the source of all my mercies, my everlasting Redeemer and Judge.—Thou hast lighted up in my soul those spiritual and immortal powers, by which I am rendered capable of the fruition of thee, the fountain of perfection and bliss.—Thy gracious Providence has conducted me through the dangers and trials of life. Thy rich bounty has supplied all my wants, and crowned my lot with mercy and loving kindness. Thy unmerited grace has offered to me the infinite blessings of everlasting life and redemption.

O my God! I acknowledge that the sincere, grateful, and ardent service of my past life would have been a feeble return to thee, for thine infinite love. With shame then, I confess, that even this inadequate tribute has been withheld from thee. With shame, I confess, that, though the solemn engagements and quickening grace of Baptism were imposed upon me, though the fountain of thy mercy has been opened to me in the Sacrament of the body and blood of thy Son, though the sacred obligations and exalted rewards of thy service have been continually displayed to me in the ministrations of the sanctuary, though thy Providence has called, thy holy Spirit warned me, I have yet continued insensible to the claims of thy love, to my own highest duty and happiness. O Lord, I have violated the most solemn obligations. I have been insensible to the most exalted privileges. I have resisted the solicitations of thy grace and mercy, though urged by the precious blood of thy beloved Son, which was poured forth a sacrifice for my sins.

Forever blessed be thy long-suffering mercy, O my God! that thou hast not given me up to the fruit of my own ways, that thou hast not inflicted upon me the awful punishment due to my ingratitude and guilt. Blessed be that grace, Almighty God, which has now awakened me to an apprehension of my guilt and danger, to a sense of thine infinite claims to my homage and obedience. O do thou strengthen my desires of returning unto thee, my humble but earnest resolutions of chusing thee, as my satisfying and eternal portion. And forasmuch as thou hast opened to the humble and penitent, in the holy Sacrament of the altar, the renovating fountain of grace and mercy; let me no longer neglect this sacred and endearing pledge of my Saviour's love. Prepare my heart,

by the powerful operations of thy grace, for worthily receiving the crucified body and blood of my blessed Lord. Awaken my contrition, quicken my faith, enliven my love, confirm my resolutions of obedience, that going to the altar relying on my Redeemer's merits and arrayed in the robes of his righteousness, I may obtain reconciliation with thee my God,—may receive supplies of that quickening grace which will conduct me, through the sorrows and temptations of this mortal pilgrimage, to the blissful fruition, in the heavenly Zion, of the everlasting glories of the Godhead; to whom, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Almighty Creator, my merciful Redeemer, my eternal Sanctifier, be ascribed, all power and might, majesty and dominion, henceforth and forever. *Amen.*

THE WEEK'S PREPARATION

THE WEEK'S PREPARATION

CHAPTER 4

MONDAY MORNING

[Preparatory Prayer, to be used every day.]

DIRECT ME, O Lord, in all my doings with thy most gracious favour, and further me with thy continual help, that in all my works, begun, continued, and ended in thee, I may glorify thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

MEDITATION

on the nature and benefits of the Lord's Supper.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.—Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, &c.

IT was in the moment when a cruel death was about to separate the blessed Jesus from his disciples, and when sorrow and despondency in the prospect of losing their beloved master had overwhelmed them—it was in this solemn and interesting moment, that our Saviour instituted a holy rite to be the seal of his mercy and grace, and enjoined it on his disciples as the endearing memorial of his dying love. Engaged in celebrating the passover, a rite commemorative of the deliverance of the Jews from the wrath of the destroying angel, he had been offering up the paschal lamb, the memorial of that lamb, whose blood, sprinkled on the houses of the Jews, had been the pledge of their deliverance. But the time had arrived, when the shadows and types of the law were to be all consummated in the glorious person of the Saviour, whom they had all, with impressive significance, foreshewn, to whom they had all, with radiant light, borne witness. Instead of the legal victim, he substituted himself, as the *true paschal lamb*, and, to avert the wrath of divine justice from a guilty world, offered himself up an all sufficient sacrifice to his Almighty Father. He took bread, and consecrated it to be the symbol of his body which was to be given for the sins of the world; he blessed the cup of *wine* to represent his blood which was to be shed to atone for sin. He appointed these sacred elements to be the representative symbols of the sacrifice of the cross, the memorial of his precious sufferings and death by which our redemption was effected. And, that the blessings of this sacrifice might be conveyed to his redeemed people to the end of the world, he gave authority to his Apostles and their successors to consecrate bread and wine as the memorials of his body and blood, thro' the devout participation of which, his humble and penitent followers should receive all the inestimable

blessings of his salvation.

Contemplate, O my soul, with holy awe, this sacred mystery; contemplate, with lively gratitude, the inestimable blessings which thy Saviour conveys to thee, thro' this hallowed ordinance. Christians, uniting with their authorised ministers in the celebration of this holy sacrament, present before God, a sacrifice commemorative of that all-sufficient sacrifice which the Saviour made. Receiving with lively faith the consecrated elements, they are made partakers of all those blessings which were purchased by the offering which Christ made of his sacred body and blood. They are cleansed from sin, they are restored to communion and peace with God, they are strengthened by the presence and consolations of his *holy Spirit*, they are preserved by the vivifying body and blood of Christ unto everlasting life.

Oh sublime and precious mystery! Jesus, exalted in glory, condescends to become, by representative symbols, the *spiritual food*, support and strength of his people. Surrounding this holy table Christians hear the voice of their blessed Redeemer pronouncing their pardon; they receive, as it were, from his own hands, the pledges of their Salvation, the sacred emblems of his life-giving body and blood. "As often as they eat this bread and drink this cup, they do shew forth the Lord's death till he come."

Bless God, O my soul, for his infinite love in giving his *only Son*, for thy redemption. Bless thy Saviour, for graciously condescending to institute a sacred rite, in which, under the most lively and affecting emblems, thou mayest commemorate his death and be made partaker of the benefits of his passion. Art thou desirous, O my soul, to obtain that peace and happiness which thou hast in vain sought from a disappointing world?—Go to the holy Sup-

per of thy Lord, where he waits to dispense to thee a peace which passeth all understanding, a peace which the world can neither give nor take away, a peace which his infinite mercy inspires, which his almighty grace cherishes, and which shall flourish forever under the smiles of his love. Art thou weary and heavy laden, O my soul, under the burden of thy sins, under the oppressing cares and sorrows of the world?—Go to the altar, where the arms of thy Redeemer are extended to embrace thee, to shield thee in his bosom from every guilty pang, from every corroding sorrow. Do unholy passions invade thy peace, does temptation overcome thy frail resolutions, does sin defile thee, O my soul, and render thee obnoxious to that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity?—Go to the altar, where thy gracious Redeemer sits enthroned, glorious in his power, mighty to save. By his almighty fiat, he will quell the tumult of thy guilty passions; his heavenly grace descending upon thee, will purify and renew thy affections, will guide thee through all difficulties, will arm thee, with victorious strength, over all temptations. In the imperfect and transitory gratifications of the present life, thou dost in vain seek, O my soul, for that full and substantial enjoyment for which thy aspiring powers ardently pant.—Go then to the altar, and receiving, with lively faith, the pledges of thy Saviour's grace and mercy, enjoy a foretaste of that never-ending and ineffable bliss, which, in the kingdom of heaven, thou shalt drink, at the everlasting fountain of perfection and love.

Yes, O my God, thy service alone constitutes the perfection of my nature, thy service alone leads to perfect and eternal bliss. Too long the sport of guilty and disappointing pleasures, I now resolve to chuse thee, O my God, as my supreme good, my unfailling and satisfying por-

tion. Blessed Jesus! thou, who art the only way of access unto the Father, conduct me to the light of his reconciled countenance.

THE PRAYER.

O MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS GOD; the fountain of being and all perfection! I bless thee that thou hast created me capable of knowing, of loving, and of serving thee. Forever blessed be thy name, that when I had wandered from thee, the source of light and felicity, thou didst not give me up to that blindness and misery, which I had courted, and which would have been my merited portion. Forever blessed be thy name, that when, by my sins, I had provoked thy just displeasure, thou didst, in mercy, forbear to execute upon me the severity of thy awful wrath. Blessed, forever blessed, O God, be thy holy name; that thou didst even give, thy only begotten and well beloved Son, to suffering and death, to purchase my redemption. Glory be forever ascribed to thee, for the inestimable gift. O may this display of infinite love awaken, in my heart, the emotions of lively gratitude, and penetrate me with compunction for having so long neglected thee, my gracious Redeemer and God. Dispose me now to return to thee, to chuse thy service as my highest duty, my supreme delight and enjoyment. Blessed Jesus, who, by thy precious blood hast atoned for my sins, and in the powerful grace of thy holy Spirit hast provided the means of my redemption, with humble reverence and gratitude, I adore thee for thy infinite love, in conveying to me, by sensible pledges, the assurances of thy grace and mercy, in nourishing and strengthening me, under lively and affecting emblems, with thy spiritual body and blood. O may my earnest desires be awakened to partake, in the holy

sacrament of thy supper, of thy life-giving body, of thy purifying blood—to seal by them my pardon, my peace, my restoration to holiness and eternal felicity. Do thou, O God, awaken, by thy grace, these holy desires, and strengthen my resolutions of serving thee. Dispel the doubts, allay the apprehensions, remove every indolent or sensual pretext, which would deter me from receiving the memorials of my Saviour's love, the pledges of my eternal salvation. With lively desire, with humble penitence, and stedfast faith, approaching thy holy table, may I be accepted and blessed as thy devoted servant and subject, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual morning devotions.]

CHAPTER 5

MONDAY EVENING

MEDITATION

The Christian directed in the serious examination of his spiritual character and state, as preparatory to his receiving the Holy Communion.

WISE is the choice thou hast made, O my soul, to serve thy God; wise thy resolution to commemorate, in the holy eucharist, the infinite love of thy Saviour, who, by his death, purchased thy redemption, and offers thee, in that holy ordinance, all the inestimable blessings of his passion.

But recollect, O my soul, that if thou dost advance, unprepared and impenitent, to the supper of thy Lord, he will not accept thee as his guest; thou wilt not be nourished with that spiritual food which diffuses its life-giving energy, only, through the heart of the humble and penitent believer. The Saviour indignantly withholds the blessings of his grace from those, who, unaffected with the infinite

condescensions of his mercy, and insensible to their own weakness and demerit, approach his altar, with impenitent, lukewarm, unmortified hearts.

Unless therefore, I come to the altar under a lively sense of the weakness and sinfulness of my heart, by which I have been led to transgress the holy laws of my God; unless I come to the altar, deeply sensible that the only pledge of my forgiveness, is the meritorious atonement of my Saviour, and stedfastly resolving, that, by the aids of his grace, I will renounce all my sins, and humbly and faithfully serve him; unless I come to the altar in this character of a humble and unfeigned penitent, earnestly desiring the mercy and grace of God, I must not hope to partake of the blessings of his salvation, or to experience those divine and ineffable joys, those strengthening and reviving consolations, which refresh the souls of those, who, by a true and living faith, spiritually feed on the body and blood of their crucified Redeemer.

To prepare then, for partaking of this holy ordinance, and to secure the inestimable blessings which are dispensed in it to sincere and penitent believers, I must deeply and impartially search my heart, and faithfully examine the course of my life, in order to ascertain my spiritual character and state.

Dispose me, earnestly and seriously to enter on this examination, Almighty God! Impress on me the infinite importance of determining the state of my soul—whether I am at peace with thee, through lively penitence and faith in the blood of thy Son; or, am obnoxious, through unrepented sin, to thy just displeasure. Enable me, with faithfulness, to search my heart, knowing that my eternal destiny depends on the issue. Thy quickening grace only, can detect the numerous errors and sins of my life, and

strip from my heart the veil of self-love which conceals its vices and sins. Do thou, therefore, O God, *try me, and seek the ground of my heart, prove me and examine my thoughts, and see if there be any evil way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

As in thy presence, and exposed to thy inspection, O thou God, who searchest the heart, who canst not be deceived, and who wilt not be mocked,—as before thy awful tribunal, O thou Sovereign Judge of men, who wilt bring to light every secret thing whether it be good, or whether it be evil, do I now seriously enter on the examination of the condition of my soul. Press home on my heart, O God, by thy powerful Spirit, the solemn enquiries which I now make. May I faithfully answer them to my own conscience, as I shall certainly have to answer them at thy tribunal, to thee my Almighty Judge.

AM I a member of the church of Christ, which he purchased with his blood, which he sanctifies with his spirit, and which, according to his unsearchable and sovereign pleasure, is made the only *channel of his covenanted mercies to a fallen world?*

Have I been admitted, to the participation of the inestimable privileges of this church, to a title to the forgiveness of sin, to the favour of God, to the presence and aids of the holy Spirit, to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, by that ordinance, which Jesus Christ its divine head instituted, the *holy sacrament of baptism?*

Do I keep up my communion with this church by devout submission to the ministrations of its *priesthood* in the orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, deriving their

authority, by regular transmission from Jesus Christ, who is the only source of authority in the church,—since he is its redeemer and head, since to him “all power is given in heaven and in earth,” and since he promised to be with the ministers of apostolic succession “always, even to the end of the world?”

Have I been diligent in imploring, by earnest and constant prayer, the continued aids of the holy Spirit, to enable me to fulfil my baptismal vows “to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God and to serve him?”

Have I ratified, in the holy rite of confirmation, the solemn vows and promises of baptism, receiving, by the ministry of Christ’s authorised servant, the manifold and strengthening gifts of the Holy Ghost?

Have all my violations of these solemn engagements, all my infirmities and sins been cleansed by repentance, and renewed faith in the blood of Christ?

Have I frequently contemplated, with earnest solicitude and deep humiliation, the state of depravity and guilt in which man is sunk, while destitute of an interest in the merits of a saviour?

Have I reviewed, with lively compunction, the numerous transgressions which have defiled my conscience?

In the bitterness of my spirit, have I acknowledged the justice of God in my condemnation; have I humbly and fervently adored the fulness of his grace and mercy in providing for me the means of redemption through Jesus Christ?

Awakened to a pungent sense of my sins, have I fled, with earnest supplication, to the throne of my incensed Almighty Judge, and reverently presented there, as the only plea of my forgiveness, the meritorious blood of my Redeemer?

Has faith opened to me the fulness and sufficiency of my Saviour's merits, and conveyed, to my troubled conscience, rest and peace?

Have I experienced the power of divine grace, in awakening my sensibility to the evil and guilt of sin, to the excellence and rewards of holiness, and in exciting the earnest and persevering resolution to renounce all the dictates of my corrupt nature and to devote myself, to my God and Saviour, in the services of a holy life?

Am I sincerely desirous, and always ready, to partake of the holy eucharist, thereby to commemorate the dying love of my Redeemer, to testify my communion with his church and people, to plead before God, for the pardon of my sins, the all prevailing merits of his cross and passion, and to refresh and strengthen my soul with his most precious body and blood?

Am I diligent and faithful in all the exercises and duties of the christian life?

Am I uniform and sincere in the duties of private meditation and prayer, in all those pious exercises which have a tendency to strengthen the reign of grace in my heart?

Are the services of God's sanctuary the source of my most pure and exalted pleasures?

Do I with constant and holy desire wait in his sacred courts, that I may taste his goodness, and experience his satisfying joys?

Sensible of my own weakness, and of the dominion of sin in my heart, do I earnestly implore the illuminating and renovating grace of God; and constantly rely on the

powerful agency of the holy Spirit, to sanctify my soul, to guide, quicken, and preserve me in my christian course?

In reliance on the aids of this holy Spirit, do I daily endeavour to weaken and subdue my sinful passions, to strengthen and exalt the holy graces of my soul?

Does my humility become more deep, my love to God more fervent, my zeal and delight in his service more exalted, my faith in my Saviour more uniform and supreme?

Does my soul glow with habitual gratitude to God, my almighty maker and benefactor, father and friend, for the manifold mercies of life; and above all, for the unspeakable gift of his son Jesus Christ, for the inestimable blessings of redeeming love?

In every event of life, do I humbly confide in his wisdom, power and goodness, and commit myself to his guidance and disposal?

In prosperity, am I humble and thankful, mindful that every advantage of honour or fortune, every talent that distinguishes me above others, is the unmerited gift of God, which I am to employ for his glory and the good of my fellow men?

When adversity assails me, do I still preserve my confidence in God—still bless the Lord “who giveth,” and humbly bow to the dispensations of that infinitely wise and merciful God, “who taketh away?”

Ever keeping in view the holy pattern of my Saviour’s life which I am bound to imitate, do I constantly endeavour to obey his gracious commands, to become like him, meek and gentle, kind and compassionate, patient and long suffering?

Animated by that sacred spirit of love, which urged the Saviour to pour out his soul a sacrifice for the sins of men, do I earnestly endeavour to “do good unto all

men," to soothe the bosom rent with affliction, to restore, to peace and gladness, the suffering subjects of disease and poverty?

Sensible of the inestimable value of the blessings of redemption, and of the infinite importance of the souls of men, do I humbly endeavour, by every proper and prudent mean, to promote the everlasting salvation of mankind?

Under an habitual sense of my obligations to God, of the solemn account I must render to him who is the present witness, and who will be the final judge, of my conduct, do I earnestly endeavour faithfully to discharge all the relative and social duties of life, of husband and wife, of parent and child, of brother and sister, of master and servant, of magistrate and subject, of neighbour and friend?

Ever mindful that my "body is the temple of the holy Spirit," and that "into the kingdom of heaven entereth nothing that is unholy and unclean," do I endeavour, by abstinence, by prayer, by holy resolution and watchfulness, to mortify my sinful lusts and passions; and do I sedulously avoid every ensnaring temptation which might lead me to violate the sacred laws of temperance, soberness, and chastity?

Considering the present life as a state of pilgrimage, the days of which are few, uncertain, and evil, am I careful not to fix my affections immoderately upon it; not to be too highly elated with its pleasures which may soon pass away, not to be too much depressed by its sorrows which may soon terminate?

Does my heavenly inheritance, the eternal kingdom of God, with whom there is fulness of joy, at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore, engage my most

devout and delightful contemplations?

Does the habitual prospect of the eternal glories, which my Saviour hath prepared for me, in his heavenly kingdom, animate me in the discharge of duty, elevate my spirit when under the pressure of grief, console me under the loss of friends and relatives, and bear me up, at all times, above the sorrows and trials, the scorn and persecution of the world?

Is this my situation? this, my spiritual character and state? these the dispositions of my soul?

THAT I have been called, from the darkness of error and sin, into the glorious light of the gospel of salvation, and restored, from the corrupting bondage of Satan, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God,

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That I have been admitted, by baptism, into that holy church, where thy mercy is my solace, thy favour my portion, thy grace my guide and safeguard, the hope of heaven my exalted privilege,

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That, in condescension to the weakness of my nature, thou hast graciously instituted sensible *memorials* of thy love, and pledges of thy grace and mercy; that, in the humble participation of the ordinances of thy church, I can derive light, health, comfort, and salvation,

Blessed be thy name, O God.

[The following paragraph, between brackets, is to be used, when a person who has lived in transgression of the laws of God and neglect of his christian obligations, is at length awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger, and is desirous to make his peace with his offended God. And then the succeeding paragraphs, to the words "To the ever blessed Jehovah," &c. are to be omitted.]

[That, though I have lived wholly regardless of the inestimable privileges of my christian vocation, though by my habitual transgressions I have defied thy power, abused thy justice, and contemned thy mercy, though the strivings of thy Spirit have been exerted in vain, and the precious blood of thy Son been in vain interposed to arrest my rebellious career,— that, though my sins have been thus multiplied, my guilt thus aggravated, thou hast yet, O God of infinite mercies, displayed towards me the riches of thy forbearance; that thine arms are yet open to receive the returning prodigal who left his father's house to riot in the sensual pleasures of a corrupting world; that thou dost even prepare for me, to be the pledge and seal of my forgiveness, the rich banquet of the body and blood of that Redeemer whom I have contemned, and art ready to cover me with the spotless robe of my Saviour's righteousness; that thou hast awakened me to a sense of my guilt and danger, and inspired me with an earnest desire to enjoy the satisfying light of thy countenance—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

O Lord, arise and save me, and let not iniquity prove my ruin.]

That thou hast quickened me when I was careless and forgetful of thee, and instead of giving me up to hardness of heart, to the merited punishment of my sins, hast graciously awakened and restored me; that when sunk under

the "grievous remembrance" of my sins, and bowed down under their "intolerable burden," thou didst enlighten my soul to discern the riches of mercy and grace in Christ Jesus, and enabled me joyfully to rest in him as *wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption,*—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That I have been excited to chuse thee, O God, as my portion; that my soul has been in any degree inflamed with love and gratitude to thee, with trust in thy power and goodness; that the holy graces of humility, meekness, purity, and love have in any degree established their reign in my heart; that I have been enabled to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour, by a holy and virtuous life, and to imitate the blessed example of the holy Jesus, by doing good unto my fellow men,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That when, from the infirmities of my nature, or the predominance of my sinful passions, I am led to forget thee my God, to violate my vows of duty to thee, and to put my Saviour to an open shame by my sins, thou dost not "cast me off forever," but art still willing to be "intreated," and to "restore to me the joy of thy free Spirit,"—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That thou art graciously pleased to promise to reward, my imperfect and unhallowed services, with the eternal fruition of the glories of thy presence; that, amidst the perplexing cares, the encumbering occupations, and the ensnaring pleasures of the world, I have been enabled to set my affections on the unseen joys of heaven, and with ardour to pant for the fruition of the immortal felicities of

that heavenly kingdom, for which, through thy mercy, I am destined,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That thou hast provided, for the sustenance and refreshment of my frail nature, while I sojourn in this vale of infirmity and sin, celestial and immortal food, even the body and blood of thy crucified Son, spiritually conveyed under the emblems of bread and wine; and that thou dost *now* invite me to the glorious banquet of the Lamb that was slain to redeem me by his blood,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

O while I extol the wonders of thy mercy, and gratefully celebrate the triumphs of thy grace, may I aspire to the highest degrees of holiness and virtue as becometh the redeemed servant of the Lord.

Evermore, O Lord, refresh me by thy mercy.

Evermore, guide and strengthen me by thy grace.

To thee, ever-blessed Jehovah, be ascribed all the glory and praise of my redemption.

For, thou, O *Almighty Father*, didst give for me thine *only begotten Son*; thou, O *eternal Son*, wast for me obedient to the death of the cross; thou, O *Holy Ghost*, dost apply to my soul, the mercies of redemption.

Glory be to the *Father*, the fountain of mercy.—Glory be to the *Son*, the redeemer of mankind.—Glory be to the *Holy Ghost*, the guide, the comforter, and sanctifier of the faithful.

Blessing and honour, and glory and power be unto our God, forever and ever.

ALAS! O God, the songs of praise must be exchanged for the sighs of contrition.

For to thee, O Lord, belongeth righteousness; but unto me, confusion of face,—for I have violated thy law.

When I have done all, I am bound to confess that I am but an unprofitable servant, and must expect the rewards of heaven, as the free gift of unmerited mercy.

How much more then am I bound earnestly to deprecate the awful inflictions of thy justice; when the course of my life has been marked by many wilful transgressions of thy laws.

I will confess mine iniquity.

I will be sorry for my sins.

A CONFSSION OF SIN.

(from the liturgy of the church.)

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men; I acknowledge and bewail my manifold sins and wickedness, which I from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against me. I do earnestly repent and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto me; the burthen of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake forgive me all that is past. To thee only it appertaineth to forgive sins: spare me therefore, good Lord, spare me. My conscience by sin is accused—O may I be absolved by thy merciful

pardon. Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me. Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant me thy peace. O God! whose nature and property it is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive my humble petitions; and though I am tied and fast bound by the chain of my sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose me, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

THE SUPPLICATION.

BLESSED LORD, who art ever merciful and gracious, not willing the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live, and who hast given thine only Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life; with the deepest humility and reverence I adore thine infinite love. What is man, O Lord, that thou shouldest be thus mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou shouldest thus mercifully visit him? O God, I confess and lament that I have been insensible to the claims of thy love, and, by my aggravated sins, have forfeited all title to thy mercy. Blessed be thy name, that thou hast laid, on Jesus Christ, the iniquities of mankind. Blessed be thy name that, in him, there is mercy and plenteous redemption. O make me deeply sensible of my need of the merits and grace of my Redeemer. Penetrate me with a lively conviction of my weakness and depravity, of my guilt and unworthiness, that I may be excited to flee for refuge, from the wrath to come, to the hope set before me in the gospel. Blessed Jesus! cleanse me by thy precious blood, and sanctify my corrupt nature by thy grace. Discerning, with lively faith, thy all-sufficiency to save and to redeem, may my trust be stayed on thee alone. O merciful God, inspire, and evermore cherish in my heart, a supreme concern for the things that belong to my eternal peace. May the salvation of my soul engross my highest, most earnest and

anxious attention. Impress on me the folly and the guilt of sacrificing my immortal interests, to the transitory, unsatisfying, and perishing pleasures of the world. O do thou quicken in my heart, Almighty God, the apprehension of my guilt and danger while in rebellion against thee; strengthen the desires, which thy grace has awakened, for that satisfying and undecaying peace which thou dost confer, on the humble suppliants for thy mercy. And since thou hast graciously instituted sacred ordinances to be the channels of conveying thy grace to the soul, may I reverently and humbly submit to thy appointments, and gratefully seek thy favour, in the way which thou hast appointed. To that hallowed and mysterious ordinance, where Jesus the Saviour, dispenses everlasting salvation, may I bring a heart humbled by thy grace, affections supremely desirous of the joys of thy love.

CHAPTER 6

TUESDAY MORNING

MEDITATION

Man in his natural state.

THE examination of thy spiritual character and state, in which thou hast been engaged, O my soul, should have occupied thy most anxious thoughts, thy most solicitous and deep attention. Every successive step of the enquiry was calculated to display, in the most tender and engaging colours, the infinite goodness and love of GOD in all his dispensations towards thee as thy Creator, thy Preserver, thy everlasting Redeemer. Base and insensible hast thou been, if the lively emotions of gratitude have not been enkindled by the animating review. Base and insensible hast thou been, if the infinite mercies which thou hast reviewed, inflaming every devout and tender affection, have not been triumphantly celebrated in the ardent burst of praise to the greatest and best of beings, thy Father, Redeemer and God.

Thou hast been exposed to the holy inspection of that God, whose penetrating eye brings to light the secret actions which the deepest shades of darkness covered. The enquiry, in which thou hast been engaged, involves, in its momentous issue, thy present peace, thy everlasting welfare and salvation. If then the enquiry has been conducted with that awakened and serious solicitude, with that sacred and resolute impartiality, with that scrutinizing and inflexible rigor, which those awful considerations are calculated to excite, thou hast found, O my soul, that thou art *guilty*—deeply guilty, in the sight of thy almighty and holy Judge. The searching and illuminating beams of the Spirit of God, probing thy inmost thoughts and affections, have disclosed the latent and dreadful depths of thy depravity and guilt. The abasing view of the infection of sin, which like a subtle and paralysing poison, diffuses its deadly and corrupting taint throughout thy powers and affections, must have laid prostrate thy towering claims to spotless purity and undeviating virtue. The view of thy deplorable degeneracy, irresistibly urged on thy reluctant pride, must have prostrated thy aspiring pretensions to that matchless perfection of intellectual faculties, to that unerring rectitude and celestial purity of moral powers, which rendered thee the hallowed boast and delight of thy maker, when, at the first, his inspiring voice arrayed thee in the resplendent glories of his divine image. Alas! “How has the gold become dim! how has the fine gold become changed! the crown has fallen from my head. Woe unto me, for I have sinned!”

An *understanding* once enlivened by the unerring beams of divine light, and drawing the luminous rays of knowledge from the infinite source of truth, is now wrapped in heavy and impervious mists, which blunt and bear down

that penetrating vigour, by which, in her state of primeval perfection, she intuitively discerned the glory of God, and attained a full and resplendent knowledge of his laws. Alas! her once noble and lofty powers, now enfeebled and depraved, are the continual sport of resistless prejudice and furious passion which misguide, pervert, and defeat her most vigorous researches. A *will*, which once erect and active, followed, with undeviating and certain course, the enlightened dictates of an unclouded understanding, and centered all her pursuits in God as the final, supreme, and glorious object of her virtuous choice, now prone and corrupt, blindly obeys the dictates of ignoble passions. With bold and fearless presumption, she impiously turns, in rebellion against God, the very energies which she holds dependent on his invigorating power. With intractable and fatal determination, she wilfully chuses those trivial, degrading, and debasing pleasures which are directly opposed to that divine law in which she once placed her supreme perfection and delight. Sublime and elevated *affections*, which once glowed with lively, ardent, holy, and unceasing love to God the ever-blessed source of excellence and glory, in the fruition of whose enrapturing smiles, their virtuous fervors were once rewarded with full, perfect, and consummate bliss, are now bound in the invincible chains of base and sensual appetite. Depraved and corrupt, they now eagerly fasten their glowing emotions on the vain, perishing and unsatisfying enjoyments of sense; and, with deplorable infatuation, resolutely condemn the enrapturing communion, which it was once their glory to maintain, with the eternal and perfect source of purity and love. Now, impiously disdaining the hallowed streams of bliss which flow from the light of God's countenance, they basely devote their insatiable ardours to the

gratification of those grovelling propensities which ally the celestial and aspiring nature of man to the brutes, who ingloriously sink into the earth from whose degenerate bosom they sprung. O my soul! when I contrast the pure, celestial and resplendent powers, which, in thy primeval state, conformed thee to the image of thy Creator, and admitted thee to the immediate vision and enjoyment of his love, with the sensual, impure, and corrupting passions by which thou art now enslaved, can I wonder, that, till restored by his grace to the glorious image thou hast forfeited, thou dost groan under the agonizing weight of his displeasure, under his indignant and awful curse.

Abasing to thy towering pride, painful to thy aspiring self-love, O my soul, but irrefragable and certain as the oracles of truth in which it is decisively revealed, as that divine plan of salvation of which it is the conspicuous and essential basis, is the truth, that *human nature is degenerate and corrupt*. When God viewing man in his fallen state, pronounces, that “the imaginations of his heart are evil continually”; when the holy Job, borne down by the blaze of divine glory which displayed, in overwhelming colours, the deep corruption of his nature, vents his profound contrition in the affecting exclamation “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes”; when the holy king of Israel, awakened to remorse at the view of crimes of the deepest dye, which, through the rage of fell lust, he had committed, follows back his guilt to its corrupt source, a degenerate nature,—declaring in penitential confession, that he was “conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity”; when an inspired apostle, tracing, by his glowing pen, the frightful assemblage of vices which had brutalised mankind, pronounces the alarming declaration, that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,”—thou

dost hear a truth, proclaimed, as it were, by the sacred lips of God himself, which the view of the world, which the history of man, which the testimony of conscience, irresistibly confirm.

Sayest thou, man is not a fallen being? Trace then his perfection in the *world which he inhabits*. Is it decked with those celestial glories which render it a habitation worthy of the illustrious being for whose enjoyment it was created? Is the exalted strain of harmony and peace, evermore poured forth from this august temple, where man, pure and perfect, enjoys the enrapturing smiles of his Maker's love? Ah! scourged by war, pestilence and famine, the earth sends forth the rending sighs and groans of a wretched race; loaded with the ponderous guilt of human crimes, it trembles under the tremendous frown of the Almighty; riven and blasted, by the thunder and lightning of heaven, it seems to anticipate, in awful agony, the dread fiat, which, will overwhelm it in destruction, for the sin of man.

Sayest thou, man is a perfect being? Display then his resplendent virtues in the long *records of his history*. Alas! these boasted records are dyed in blood. They exhibit the portrait of human guilt in colours more deep and glaring, than even the boldest imagination would be willing to conceive. Do the fair forms of justice, benevolence, and mercy rise to view, and, extending their benignant reign over the human race, pronounce that man is blest and happy? Does one soul of celestial love pervade the family of mankind, united by the strongest and most endearing ties, by common wants, by common feelings, by an exalted and eternal destiny?—Ah! oppression sweeps her relentless sceptre over her sullen victims; ambition rides her devastating course, erecting the trophies of tri-

umph amidst the ruins, into which her merciless and insatiable spirit has madly swept the fairest works of man, the proudest boasts of human grandeur; the spectre of revenge, brandishing the steel streaming with human gore, urges guilty man to seal, with fell and remorseless fury, the purpose of vengeance, in his brother's blood.

Alas! the world groaning under the curse of God, and waiting, in awful despair, the final execution of the sentence of his wrath; the history of human nature, presenting the dreadful picture of crimes and misery, illumined only by some scattered and feeble rays of virtue and happiness, force on my reluctant conviction, *the degeneracy, the corruption, the guilt of man.*

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD! who, at the first, didst create man in thine own image, and impress on his soul the seal of immortality,—if by transgression he has forfeited his primeval glories, and sunk his nature in sin and misery,—on his own wilful folly, and not on thy decree, most holy God, be the shame and guilt. I acknowledge, that I perceive the fatal proofs of my degeneracy in my clouded understanding, in my perverse will, in my corrupt affections. I acknowledge, that every view which I take of the world around me and of the conduct of my fellow men, powerfully confirms the humiliating truth. Almighty God! let me not deceive myself in the estimate, which I form, of my spiritual character and state. Let me not flatter the vain-glorious emotions of my heart, by false ideas of my purity and perfection. Let me not seek to cast a veil over the enormity of my sins; and thereby weaken the sacred ardours of my repentance, the lively conviction of my need of the atoning merits

and purifying grace of my Redeemer. Do thou, by the penetrating beams of thy Holy Spirit, search through all the folds of my heart; detect my secret vices; bring to light my numerous errors and transgressions; expose, to my awakened conscience, all the deep aggravations of my guilt; that thus, humbled, convicted, and alarmed, I may see no way of escape from thy just displeasure, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Morning Devotions.]

CHAPTER 7

TUESDAY EVENING

MEDITATION

Man in his natural state.

The subject of the Morning Meditation, continued.

BOASTEST thou, that thou art exempt from the stains of guilt which pollute the rest of thy wretched race? Bring thy powerful pleas to the tribunal of conscience. Estimating highly the opinion of the world, perhaps, thou hast always sought to regulate thy conduct by the laws of honour. Calculating from motives of worldly prudence, thou hast been, in all thy dealings, honest and just. Desirous of the applause of men, or, from the impulse of a blind and undistinguishing sympathy, thou hast been generous and charitable. Are these then thy pleas, for exemption from the general sentence of guilt passed on mankind?

Carry thy claims to integrity and virtue higher. Allow, that thou hast been honorable, that thou hast been

just, that thou hast been generous and liberal, from the best motives. Allow, that no gross crimes have marked thy conduct; that thy life, on the contrary, justly claims the reputation of being exemplary and upright. Allow, that thou hast not obtained the homage due to virtue, by imposing on the world a correct and honourable exterior, while thy principles have been base and sordid. Allow, that when urged by interest, and restrained by no fear of detection, thou hast not secretly practised the arts of injustice and dishonesty, which thou dost affect openly to abhor. Allow, that while just and true in thy intercourse with others, thou hast not been regardless of the sacred duties due to thyself. Allow, that thou hast faithfully cherished the virtues of temperance, soberness, and chastity, and hast never indulged in the secret commission of vices which dishonoured and defiled thy nature.

Carry still higher thy pretensions in the scale of virtue. Allow, that thou dost cherish just and reverential ideas of the attributes, the providence, and the dispensations of God; that thou hast never wilfully profaned his name, or spoken lightly of his sacred word. Allow, that thou dost entertain a high esteem and reverence for this sacred word, resolutely and ably defending it, as an excellent code of religious and moral duties, against the libertine attacks of infidelity and scepticism. Allow, that from some sense of thy obligations to God, and regard for the order and peace of society, thou dost reverence the ordinances of religion, and attend on the ministrations of the sanctuary.

Advance thy pretensions thus high. And few of those, who indignantly disclaim the imputation of their depravity and guilt, can advance these bold pretensions.—They are conceded to thee. These things thou hast done. On these, thou dost rest thy claims to innocence and recti-

tude, to exemption from guilt. On these, thou dost found a proud claim to the favour of God.—O my soul! before thou dost thus presume to encounter the penetrating inspection of thy Almighty Judge, and to stand at his tribunal on the bold claims of thy own merit, let thy conscience answer for thee, the solemn enquiry,—*What hast thou left undone?*

It is not superficial, negative, partial virtue which will constitute the full perfection of thy nature, and satisfy the claims of thy maker and judge. Thy exemption from guilt, thy bold claims to innocence and uprightness, thy pretensions to the favour of God, must be founded on a sincere, supreme, universal obedience to the divine laws. This obedience is demanded by the obligations, by which reason will acknowledge thou art bound, to devote to the God that made thee, to the greatest and best of Beings, thy supreme and most ardent homage. By an original, a sublime, a powerful dictate, thou art urged to admire and esteem excellence and goodness. Humble and feeble degrees of excellence, in man, deservedly attract and receive thy warm and generous esteem and regard. Oh! then, are not the most sacred fervours of admiration and love justly due to that Almighty Being who centers, in an infinite degree, every possible excellence, in his adorable person, and from whom emanates every ray of goodness and bliss that illumines the universe. On thee, O my soul, this Almighty Being has exercised his goodness—thee, he has crowned with the rich gifts of his bounty and love. To him, therefore, thou art bound, by the most sacred and powerful obligations. From him thou hast derived thy existence, every high and noble power that exalts thee in the scale of being, all those elevated, capacious, and aspiring desires, which limit thy powers of enjoyment,

only, with the fruition of infinite perfection, itself. On him, whose all-pervading spirit sustains and governs universal nature, thou art dependent, for every present enjoyment which swells thee with pleasure and delight, for every resplendent blessing which, in the anticipated fruition, makes thee bound with the ardent emotions of exstasy and transport. Behold the claims of God to thy homage and obedience. I speak not now of the riches of his mercy in Jesus Christ; I speak not now of that infinite compassion which urged the Almighty Father to yield his only Son, a sacrifice for thy sins; I unfold not now that stupendous mystery of love, into which angels desire to look, and which their most ardent adorations but feebly celebrate. The infinite mercy of thy God, who spared thee, the wilful transgressor of his law, the bold contemner of his authority and justice, who even gave, for thy ransom from that misery and death into which sin had plunged thee, the precious blood of his beloved Son—the infinite grace of God in thy redemption, constitutes a claim to love more lively and ardent, than thy most vigorous affections, even when inflamed with a coal from the altar of heaven, will be able to render.—But, the glory of this redemption is raised, on the ruins of thy guilty and fallen nature. And while thou dost deny, or only imperfectly realize, thy guilt and misery, fruitless would be the attempt, by displaying the wonders of redeeming mercy, to enforce thy obligations to thy God! I present therefore, only, the *acknowledged* claims of God to thy homage and obedience. And say,—if the native graces and charms of goodness are calculated to command irresistible esteem and love; if a dependent creature feels, deeply seated in his nature, an invincible sense of obligation to his maker and preserver,—on whom should thy supreme love be exercised, to whom

should thy exalted obedience be rendered, but to him, who, centering in himself infinite perfection and essential happiness, has displayed, on thee, the glories of his goodness and love.

Say, then, my soul, hast thou rendered to God that supreme and ardent love which is, on his part, the claim of acknowledged right; on thine, the dictate of generous gratitude and duty? Hast thou loved him, as in justice and in gratitude thou wast bound, *sincerely, supremely, universally*? Hast thou considered it as thy highest honour, and has it been thy supreme delight, to contemplate and adore the glorious attributes of thy Creator, reverently and gratefully to trace the wonders of his Providence, the riches of his mercy? Impressed with his supreme and infinite excellence and glory, and with a lively conviction of thy dependence upon his power, and thy obligations to his bounty, hast thou uniformly rendered him the tribute of homage and worship, earnestly supplicating his protection, and ardently celebrating the displays of his goodness? To the Almighty Father of spirits, to him who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, hast thou rendered not merely a cold, superficial, external worship, but the spiritual, lively, affecting homage of thy most ardent powers? Has sacred communion, with thy Almighty Father and Benefactor, in the exalted exercises of prayer and praise, been observed, not only as a public tribute exacted by custom, extorted by a sense of decency, and at last rendered easy by habit; but has it been the uniform exercise, the delight, the solace of thy retired hours? Has the sacred principle of love to God transfused life, alacrity and delight, into every act of obedience to him? Has it been the supreme principle, which animated, which regulated, which enforced every duty, which prompted sincere obe-

dience to all his commands? Ah! my soul! presumptuous self-love has veiled from thee thy real character. Thou hast been asserting thy innocence and rectitude on thy exemption from gross crimes, and on thy partial obedience to the divine commands, while thou hast been destitute of that *spiritual and universal holiness* which thy omniscient judge requires. Thou hast founded thy claims to merit on thy *external* obedience to the laws of God, while thou hast been destitute of that supreme love to him which is thy highest duty, perfection and happiness, and which must animate even the most exalted acts of virtue, to render them acceptable in his sight.

Yes, my God, with deep humility, I acknowledge the presumption which proudly disclaimed my depravity and guilt. With deep humility, I acknowledge, that thy grace has enkindled every emotion to goodness which animates my disordered nature. Forgetful have I been of thee, when the most powerful obligations, when the most tender and affecting motives urged my supreme and ardent love. Thou canst justly claim the sincere, universal and holy services of a life devoted supremely to thee—imperfect, partial, and unhallowed has been my obedience. O God, when my *omissions* of duty thus involve me in the deepest guilt, what loud calls, for the inflictions of thy justice, do my *actual* transgressions present. Flagrant and avowed, rise, before my dismayed conscience, my *presumptuous* sins;— O, who can disclose my *secret* faults. Alas! my iniquities are too many to be numbered. Yes, my God, from the impure fountain of my heart, have flowed the noxious and corrupting streams which have defiled and debased my nature, and, with ruinous and devastating force, swept away the exalted vestiges of primeval rectitude and glory. “Thou art found wanting,”— the awful

sentence, marked, by the finger of thy holiness, on the most brilliant virtues of man, confounds all the bold pretensions of human pride. The purest seraph that treads thy courts, most holy God, renouncing all claim to merit, in deep humility, casts his crown at thy throne! What overwhelming emotions then should penetrate a worm of the dust, a polluted sinner, when he approaches the resplendent throne of his Maker and Judge. Ah! though arrayed in the most splendid righteousness of which the most exalted saint can boast, when the beams of thy glory dart upon me, it will become me, imitating the deep abasement of the inspired prophet, to lay my hand upon my mouth, and prostrate in the dust to deplore my guilt, "Wo is me, for I am unclean."

Explore then, O my soul, with profound humility, the awful abysses of thy guilt. Consider thyself as cast, by transgression, at an infinite distance from that throne of glory, with which, in thy state of innocence, thou wast permitted to hold near and hallowed communion. Consider thyself, while unrenewed by grace, as obnoxious to the displeasure and curse of that God, who, from the essential holiness of his nature, must ever regard sin with inflexible abhorrence. Revolt not against the humiliating conviction of thy depravity; presume not, with impious effrontery, to cast back thy sins on thy most holy maker. Pure and upright, thou didst come forth, from his hallowed hands. But though blessed with his animating smiles, though admitted to the immediate vision of his glory, though holding near and blissful communion with thy adorable maker, wilfully yielding to base temptation, thou didst transgress his commands. Deadly was the taint that seized and degraded all thy powers, and still infects thee with its corrupting venom. But the goodness and love of thy

maker, infinitely surpassed thy deserts, overcame the aggravated provocations of thy guilt. Transgression had no sooner sunk thee into the abyss of guilt and misery, than his mercy provided the glorious means of thy restoration. Satan had no sooner triumphed in thy fall, and cast on thee his enslaving chains, than the price of thy ransom was laid on one that was mighty, than a glorious redeemer was provided to baffle and rout the enraged forces of the adversary. Sin had no sooner weakened and destroyed the glorious powers of thy primitive virtue, than the fountain of grace was opened to strengthen, renew and console thee by its invigorating streams. Inheriting from the first degenerate Adam, a fallen, unholy, and polluted nature, thou mayest derive from thy second glorious representative, the divine Saviour of mankind, pardon, holiness, everlasting salvation. The sacrifice of his death, as the sacrifice of an all-perfect and almighty victim, is infinite in value; and, extending its exalted and beneficent efficacy to all mankind, restores them to the means and hopes of salvation. His quickening grace, flowing from the exhaustless fountain of eternal love, diffuses, through the hearts of all the degenerate offspring of Adam, the cheering light, which would conduct them to the reconciled countenance of their offended God, —the invigorating grace, which would enable them to render that imperfect, but sincere obedience which his mercy will vouchsafe to accept.

Thy transgressions, therefore, O my soul, are marked by the guilty character of perverse and wilful rejection of proffered grace. Thy condemnation is now aggravated by the bold and impious contempt of the mercies of salvation, purchased for thee by a Saviour's merits, pressed upon thee by the awakening persuasions, the urgent intreaties of a Saviour's love. In his exalted state of original perfec-

tion, thy first parent, walking in the resplendent beams of divine glory, was evermore blessed by the enrapturing streams of bliss which from the throne of Jehovah descended upon him. Exalted and glorious as was his state, animating and powerful as were his motives to obedience, the agonies of a divine Saviour consumed as a victim to incensed justice did not display to him the inviolable sanctions of the law of God. The glories of *the word made flesh*, the blessings of life, mercy, and salvation which flowed from the cross, did not swell his soul with the unutterable emotions of sacred adoration, did not display to his astonished contemplation, the surpassing condescension and love of the everlasting Jehovah. Ah! thy transgressions have cast contempt and scorn on the glories of the Son of God manifested in the flesh to redeem thee;—*thy* transgressions have repaid with cruel mockery and insult, the agonizing sufferings by which he atoned for thy guilt; contemning, by obstinate continuance in sin, the grace of God in thy salvation, *thou* hast hurled defiance against the cross where the lightning of his justice was consuming the Son of his love. Ah, my soul, thy sins committed against brighter displays of glory, contemning more tremendous manifestations of divine justice, have involved thee in deeper guilt than that which crushed, under the avenging curse of heaven, the wretched forefather of our race.

Here then, my soul, place the basis of thy repentance. From the view of thy fallen and wretched state, derive the awakening springs of penitential sorrow. From the view of the ruins in which sin has involved thy once glorious nature, seek to excite the lively conviction of thy need of the atoning mercy, and renovating grace of a Redeemer. Arrayed in the celestial garments of mercy, he came, the divine messenger of the Father, “to proclaim liberty to

the captives, to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort those who mourn." And until thou art sensible that the galling chains of sin enslave thee; until the view of the misery and wretchedness of thy fallen nature, excites the anguish of thy awakened conscience; until the just sentence of condemnation passed against thee, penetrates thy humbled spirit with deep and unfeigned sorrow,—thou wilt not implore the saving power of the almighty arm of thy Redeemer, thou wilt not with humble and fervent importunity implore the balm of divine mercy, thou wilt not seek to wash away the deep stains of thy guilt in the ever-living fountain of thy Redeemer's grace.

Let then, the lively sense of thy unworthiness and guilt be ever sacredly cherished, O my soul,—to humble thee in the sight of God, to awaken the fervours of thy repentance, to excite thee evermore to seek comfort, peace and salvation, by a lively faith in thy Saviour's merits and grace. Especially, when thou art called to celebrate his love, and to invoke his mercy and power, in the holy sacrament of his supper, be it thy care to form the most lively and affecting views of thy fallen and lost estate. Ah! who will cherish with the most fervent gratitude, the precious emblems of the Saviour's love? who will invoke with the most sincere and sacred solicitude, the divine manifestations of grace and glory which this holy ordinance was designed to dispense? who will experience in their most exquisite fervours, the pleasures of that holy communion with God, which sometimes lift the soul on the wings of ardent hope, to the celestial streams of bliss which flow in the city of the living God?—The humble christian, who, cherishing a deep sense of his weakness, his unworthiness, his need of mercy and grace, stays his soul, with supreme and ardent faith, on that all-sufficient

and glorious Saviour, who gave himself to be the *life of the world*.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, who art infinitely pure and perfect, and in whose sight dwelleth nothing that is unholy or unclean; with deep humility, I confess the numerous sins which have defiled my conscience, and which call for the condemning sentence of thy justice. I acknowledge, O Lord, that thy laws are infinitely holy, just, and good; calculated to advance the perfection and glory of my nature, my present peace, and everlasting welfare. But, though thou hast mercifully endued me with that heavenly grace, by which I was enabled to work out my salvation, and, through the merits of my blessed Redeemer, to obtain thy favour, I have basely neglected the powerful succours of thy Holy Spirit; I have wilfully contemned the means provided by thy grace for my redemption; and I have eagerly cherished and pursued the unhal- lowed dictates of my depraved nature. O Lord, with deep humility I confess, that I have disregarded the invitations of thy mercy, I have contemned the succours of thy grace, I have defied, by wilful and deliberate transgression, the avenging terrors of thy justice. Enlightened, by the beams of thy truth to discern the exalted excellence and joys of thy righteous laws, and endued with celestial strength to resist the temptations which would seduce me from thy service, "I have yet done the things that I ought not to have done, and I have left undone the things, that I ought to have done; and there is no health in me." Alas! O Lord, by the numerous and great deficiencies of duty which have marked my life, by my numerous and repeated violations of thy laws, I have justly incurred thy displeasure;—I stand

condemned at thy tribunal; my conscience confirms the justice of that sentence which would banish me, from thy presence, beyond the reach of hope. Blessed be that mercy, which is thy most resplendent attribute, thou hast spared me, O God of my salvation. In the exercise of unalterable compassion and love, thou hast laid on Jesus, thy eternal Son, the heavy burden of my sins. O thou precious lamb of God! who wast wounded for my transgressions and bruised for my iniquities; whose agonizing sufferings, and all sufficient merits are displayed to the eye of faith, in the lively memorials, and commemorative sacrifice of the altar, hear the earnest supplications, which my soul, bowed down by its guilt and unworthiness, lifts to thee for pardon and salvation. Grant, O my Saviour, that while the sacrifice of the altar, displaying the lively emblems of thy sufferings and death, forcibly carries to my heart the sense of my guilt, it may also be the seal and pledge of the mercy, the grace, and favour of my offended God. Holy Spirit! the source of quickening grace, whose sacred office it is to convince of sin; light up in my soul, the lively and habitual conviction of my weakness, depravity, and unworthiness. Blessed Guide and Comforter! lead my convicted and contrite spirit to repose its full and ardent trust in the intercession and merits of my Saviour's blood. Almighty Father! whose holy and just indignation I have incurred, cast me not off forever; listen to the interceding calls of thy mercy, listen to the powerful pleadings of my Saviour's blood, and turn from my guilty soul, the severity of thy wrath. O grant, that, penetrated with the lively conviction of my demerits, and my utter insufficiency to answer the claims of thy holiness and justice, I may flee with ardent and stedfast desire and faith, to the plenteous fountain of mercy opened in my Saviour's blood, to the renovating streams of grace which flow from his crucified body. From the altar, where under lively emblems, my Saviour

is set forth crucified for my sins, may his cleansing blood flow into my soul—may his almighty grace dispense, through my depraved nature, its purifying and renovating streams. Thus, O eternal God, recovered by thy mercy from the awful depths of guilt and misery, and restored by thy grace to health, purity, and peace, be all the glory of my redemption ascribed unto thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, forever and ever. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Evening Devotions.]

CHAPTER 8

WEDNESDAY MORNING

MEDITATION

Repentance.

O MY soul! if the conviction of thy fallen and condemned state thus irresistibly forced upon thee, by the unerring declaration of *Christ* himself, by the view of the *world* around thee, by the *history of human nature*, by the faithful *testimony of thine own conscience*,—if this conviction of thy fallen and condemned state, has been sincere and lively, thou wilt perceive the necessity of deep and effectual repentance.

How shalt thou express thy sensibility to thy demerit, thy deep sorrow for the sins, which have roused against thee the wrath of heaven, but by humble, earnest and reiterated confession. How shalt thou awaken the mercy of that God whom thy sins have provoked, but by those unfeigned sighs and tears of lively sorrow by which the

true penitent always seeks to express his sense of his aggravated guilt. How wilt thou subdue the unhallowed passions which destroy thy purity and peace, and continually plunge thee in transgression and guilt, but by the holy mortification and self-denial which are the principal constituents of genuine repentance. Thy Saviour hath declared that he came to "seek and to save that which was lost."—thy Almighty Judge hath declared that he dispenses mercy only to those "who turn from their wickedness and do that which is lawful and right." Seek to excite then, O my soul, by deep abasement and humiliation, the infinite compassion of thy Saviour—by the vows of obedience which always characterise the true penitent, prove that thou art stedfastly resolved to serve thy God,—and thus lay thy humble claim to the displays of his mercy.

Thou art preparing to participate in that holy supper, where thou wilt be admitted to intimate and sacred communion with thy heavenly Father—where thou wilt engage, in the closest and most endearing intercourse of love and duty, with thy blessed Redeemer. O consider, how lively should be thy emotions of contrition, how profound thy abasement, how deep and universal thy renunciation of sin, how ardent and firm thy resolutions of obedience, how sincere and unfeigned thy repentance, when by the most solemn and affecting symbols, thou dost devote thyself to thy Redeemer and implore the mercy and grace of the God of thy salvation. Art thou then desirous, O my soul, to be rescued from that guilt and condemnation into which sin has cast thee? Art thou desirous, to be restored to the enjoyment of the reconciled countenance of thy God? Art thou desirous to enjoy the exalted and pure delight that enlivens the conscience which the blood of the Saviour hath cleansed from guilt? Art thou desirous

to experience the powerful and glorious efficacy of that body and blood, by which Jesus redeems and renews his penitent people? Art thou desirous to enjoy the refreshing and invigorating streams, which flow from the throne of grace, erected by the Saviour on the altar of his love?—Let thy most ardent desires be excited, let thy most vigorous exertions be roused, let thy most fervent prayers be directed to heaven, for that holy and evangelical repentance which is the only passport to purity and peace, to the merciful arms of thy God,—to the affectionate bosom of thy blessed Redeemer.

Examine then, faithfully, my soul! the characteristics of thy repentance. Recal to view the sacred and penetrating properties of this evangelical grace. Recollect, there are false and unhallowed counterfeits of genuine repentance, by which many flatter and fatally deceive their own hearts. Ah! when God inflexible and holy sits in judgment on the soul, he will institute a profound and penetrating scrutiny which will detect and confound the base hopes of the hypocrite.—Holy Spirit! repentance is thy gift! descend, and awaken its most sacred and glowing fervours in my soul.

That thou mayest in the awful day of retribution and trial escape the condemning judgment of God, investigate now, my soul, with faithful and serious concern the characteristics of thy repentance.

It is not sufficient, that the awakening spring of thy repentance should consist, in an *awful apprehension of divine wrath*. In a certain degree, and within certain bounds, an apprehension of the infliction of divine justice due to sin, is not only necessary to call forth the conviction, the concern, the sorrow, the zeal of the penitent; but it is also the powerful principle which corrects and chastens the

fervours of love, and which may at times animate and strengthen the obedience and zeal of the confirmed christian. For that reverential, sublime, and exalted fear of God, which lies at the foundation both of the contrition of the penitent, and the homage and duty of the christian, in some degree arises from a lively and awful impression of the *inflexible justice* of God, of the terrible stores of *wrath* which will overwhelm the disobedient contemners of his laws. The holy and avenging flames which issue from the throne of Jehovah confound the ministering cherubim who waits his orders, and chasten with reverence and awe, the rapturous chorus of praise, which the host of heaven, inflamed with lively love, send forth to the adorable source of goodness and mercy. Oh then, what overwhelming emotions of reverence should confound a worm of the dust, polluted, in his most perfect state, with the deep taint of sin, when he contemplates that resplendent holiness and justice, which encircle the throne at which he is to receive his eternal doom. Into the emotions of penitence, therefore, an apprehension of divine *wrath* arising from the combined view of the justice, holiness and power of God, and of our guilt and demerit, may justifiably enter. But when it is the sole, the supreme, or even the dominant spring, it destroys the efficacy, the purifying and consoling virtue of repentance. For, a repentance which is founded only on an apprehension of divine wrath, is selfish and disingenuous in respect to its motives, it will be feeble and superficial in its *sacrifices* and in its *services*. When uncontrolled and uninfluenced by other, more ingenuous and noble, motives, a repentance characterised by the fear of divine wrath, regards only the *consequences* of sin as incurring punishment, and wholly keeps out of view its more aggravated and heinous

characteristics, its ingratitude, its baseness, its criminality. This kind of repentance, therefore, may very well comport with an entire insensibility to the intrinsic deformity of sin, and to its guilt as the violation of the law of God, the just and holy judge of the world. A penitent influenced only by an *awful apprehension of divine wrath*, will be earnestly anxious to avert the *penalties* of sin; but will not be solicitous to avoid the *commission* of it. Supremely and ardently cherishing his sinful passions, he will merely aim at those partial sacrifices, at that superficial obedience by which he hopes to elude the exterminating sentence, which God will pronounce on the avowed and presumptuous sinner. He would therefore riot in the intoxicating bosom of sensual indulgence, did not the apprehension of divine indignation arrest his guilty passions. Unaffected by a sense of the evil of sin and supremely devoted to licentious enjoyments, he secretly curses the unrelenting arm of justice which pursues the transgressor, with the pangs of remorse, with poignant and interminable misery. His soul unhumbled and unmortified, and still retaining its native aversion to holiness and virtue,—his is the repentance of unsubdued guilt, of terrified remorse—like the impious repentance of condemned spirits, who, trembling under the chains of hell and consumed by its torturing fires, implore a suspension of their torment, a release from their galling fetters, only to hurl their enraged but impotent vengeance against the throne of heaven. Oh! what an insult this base repentance to God, whom its slavish fears regard as an unbending and merciless tyrant; and who, it impiously supposes, will be satisfied with that disingenuous and hypocritical expression of sorrow which is extorted by the terrors of his justice! How unworthy this degenerate repentance of the devout and humble commu-

nicant, who, in the sufferings of his Saviour portrayed in the affecting emblems of the altar, beholds the awakening spring of lively and ingenuous sorrow!

It is not even enough that repentance should be founded on a view of the evil of sin *as destructive to the purity and peace of the soul.*

The purity and peace of the soul are inseparably connected, by the constitution of human nature and by the appointment of God, with obedience to his laws. Obedience to the decrees of the infinite source of perfection and power constitutes the harmony of the universe. Obedience to the will of the eternal fountain of intelligence and goodness constitutes the rapturous bliss of those countless myriads of celestial spirits, who encircle the throne of Jehovah, adoring, with supreme and devoted fervour, his transcendent glory and perfection. Only, in a conformity to the image, and in a sincere obedience to the will, of his eternal lawgiver and judge, will man find pure and perfect bliss. All the powers of his nature, by an original and irresistible impulse, tend to the eternal fountain of perfection, as the centre of their enjoyment. In proportion as they are exercised upon God; in proportion as they are animated, regulated and controlled by his will; in proportion as they are invigorated and enlivened by the cheering smiles of his favour, will be the happiness of man in the present life, will be his capacity for the fruition of the holy and blissful presence of his God, in the life to come. When therefore, thou dost consider, O my soul, that by disobedience to the laws of God, thou hast forfeited thy claim to his favour; when thou dost consider that in departing from the infinite source of perfection and goodness, thou hast forsaken the "fountain of living waters," and hast sought to gratify thy noble and aspiring desires at the un-

hallowed, polluted, and unsatisfying “cisterns” of worldly pleasure; when thou dost, with awakened solicitude, contemplate the fatal disorder and ruin into which sin has cast thy once exalted and perfect powers; when conscience, aroused and inflamed, touches thy trembling spirit with the pangs of remorse; when convicted and alarmed thou dost contemplate the degrading infamy, the aggravated guilt, the intolerable misery which attend the indulgence of agitating, turbulent, and unholy passions;—thou dost behold the most powerful motives to deep humiliation, to lively and pungent sorrow. But even here, the glow of contrition is tarnished by the selfish principle by which it is excited. Transgression has destroyed thy peace, has cut thee off from the divine fountain of true felicity, has degraded and debased thy powers, has blasted the sources of thy enjoyment. Disgrace, dishonour, misery and destruction are the certain fruits of thy sinful course. Here, there is not a motive to repentance which does not terminate on self, which does not draw all its force and ardour from a regard to thy own welfare and happiness. Ah! if indeed the consequences of sin involved only thy own purity and peace, motives drawn from these considerations would constitute the sole springs of thy repentance. But when thou dost consider, that thy transgressions have defied the authority, and have contemned the mercy and love of thy God and Saviour, thou wilt perceive that there are motives to contrition still more legitimate and noble,—motives, more worthy those ingenuous and disinterested emotions, with which, the penitent should commemorate, in the holy supper, the infinite love of his Redeemer.

Thy penitential sorrow therefore should be founded on a deep sense of the evil of sin, as a *presumptuous contempt of the righteous authority of God*. Consider, that as

the infinite source of perfection, power, and goodness, he justly claims the homage of the universe. Consider, that his omnipotent hand sustains and governs all things; himself, the sovereign lord of nature. Consider, that the sacred object of that dominion which, with sovereign and resistless sway, he exercises over the world, is the advancement of the perfection, the purity, and happiness of all the countless orders of intelligent creatures. Consider, that, as thy eternal Maker, thy omnipotent Lawgiver, thy just and holy Judge, he claims thy supreme, thy unreserved, thy uniform obedience. Ah! by transgression, thou hast impiously refused to render that homage, which universal nature offers to its omnipotent Maker and Lord—By transgression, thou hast proudly spurned thy dependence on that Almighty arm which preserves thee in being, and which, in a moment, could crush thee into the dust from whence its inspiring power raised thee—By transgression, thou hast revolted against the righteous dominion of the Sovereign of the universe and sought to defeat the glorious and beneficent purposes of his righteous sway—By transgression, thou hast presumptuously defied the infinite power of thy Maker, thou hast impiously contemned the righteous mandates of thy supreme and holy Lawgiver, thou hast raised the arm of defiance against the omnipotent Judge of heaven and earth. Oh, by what deep and profound contrition, must thou seek to avert the wrath which impends over thy presumptuous and criminal rebellion.

Until we are deeply impressed with the supreme claims of God to our homage and obedience; until we discern and acknowledge his power, his justice and his holiness, the awful presumption of sin, as a contempt of his authority, will not be displayed in full force. The throne, on which

God exercises the dominion of the universe, is founded on his inviolable holiness and justice. To resist his authority, to violate his laws, is therefore the most presumptuous contempt of these exalted attributes—arrogant rebellion against that righteous government the subversion of which would overwhelm, in dreary chaos, the purity, the splendour, and glory of the universe. The true penitent, therefore, will humbly acknowledge, that his guilt is aggravated, by the presumptuous contempt of the authority of God with which it is marked. Casting his eyes on the sacrifice of the altar, he will behold, in the awful sufferings and agonies of the almighty victim there immolated under affecting symbols, at once, the infinite price which God exacted, as the vindication of his violated authority, and the enormity of that presumptuous guilt which rendered an infinite sacrifice necessary. At the altar, therefore, the devout communicant will, in profound abasement, adore the sovereignty of God, and pour forth his penitential sorrow for his presumptuous violations of the laws of the righteous Maker and Judge of the world.

The view of sin, which is calculated to awaken, in the penitent, the most lively conviction of its baseness and enormity, and to excite those generous and noble emotions, which enliven and increase the regrets of contrition, and awaken its most exalted and vigorous resolutions, has not yet been displayed. To all the other powerful aggravations of sin, will be added the characteristic of *base insensibility and ingratitude*, when the penitent regards it as a *deliberate and wilful contempt of the infinite mercy and love of God*. That by transgression we have incurred divine wrath, that by transgression we have blasted our purity and peace, that by transgression we have defied the righteous and beneficent authority of God—are con-

siderations powerfully calculated to display the evil of sin, and to excite profound and earnest sorrow for it. But the affecting consideration, that by transgression we have discovered base insensibility to the goodness of God, and ungratefully contemned his infinite love, displays, in its full enormity, our guilt, and constitutes the most ingenuous and exalted source of true repentance. Yes! my soul! thou hast withheld the tribute of just and generous homage from that glorious Being, who centers in himself all loveliness and perfection. Thou hast withheld the tribute of just and generous gratitude from thy almighty Father, Preserver, and Benefactor,—who has guided and defended thee when helpless and exposed, who has cherished thee with an affection which even thy neglect and insensibility could not overcome,—who has crowned thee with mercy and loving-kindness, who has provided for thee an eternal and glorious destiny beyond the grave. Ah! thou hast not only been deficient in the exalted acts of gratitude and duty. By repeated and *wilful transgressions* of his commands, thou hast discovered the most criminal indifference to his love, the most aggravated contempt of his mercy. Thou hast even slighted the most exalted display of his goodness, the gift of his only Son to redeem thee from sin and misery. O my soul, thou hast sinned not against a hard and cruel master, whose service was burdensome and without reward; not against a tyrannical and merciless sovereign who ruled thee with the relentless sceptre of wrath; but against thy most compassionate Father, thy most generous Benefactor, thy most tender Friend; against that merciful Redeemer who shrunk not from the ignominy of the cross to purchase thy redemption. Oh! what emotions of lively and ingenuous sorrow will agitate the bosom of the sincere penitent, when he

beholds, in the resplendent mercies, in the transcendent love of his Redeemer and God, the dismaying representation of his *ingratitude and guilt*. Penetrated with pungent and disinterested sorrow, he will humble his soul in the deepest contrition, and, by the glowing fervours of his repentance, seek to testify that he is, at last, awakened to the affecting force of those infinite mercies which he, so long, resisted and contemned.

The sacrifice of the altar was designed to convey a lively representation of the sufferings and death of Christ. The altar, therefore, is the hallowed throne where the sincere penitent will pour forth the confessions of his sins. When, prostrate before its hallowed symbols, he beholds the body of his Saviour broken and bruised, and the precious blood of the lamb of God shed forth as an atoning sacrifice, the enormity and guilt of his sins, which could so long resist and condemn the infinite love of his Redeemer, rushing on his awakened feelings, will dissolve his soul in the sacred emotions of ingenuous and fervent penitence.

THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL AND ALMIGHTY GOD! whose authority I have violated, whose power I have defied, whose justice I have contemned, whose mercy I have resisted, by my repeated and aggravated transgressions—sensible of my baseness, my presumption, my ingratitude and guilt, I now humbly cast myself at the throne of thy mercy, and fervently implore thy forgiveness. O thou Father of mercies, whose compassions fail not, whose love and pity cannot be subdued by the ingratitude and sins of man; vouchsafe to pardon, to restore, and bless

the unworthy sinner who sees no refuge, from the just sentence of condemnation which awaits him, but in the gracious overtures of salvation thou hast proclaimed through Jesus Christ, the eternal and blessed Son of thy love. Praises evermore be ascribed unto thee, that thou hast declared thou art willing to accept through Jesus thy Son, the imperfect but sincere repentance of the awakened and contrite sinner. O, do thou inspire in my soul that humble, lively, and ingenuous contrition which is alone thy gift. Spirit of the Father! fountain of quickening grace! descend into my soul, and awaken in me a deep sense of the evil and guilt of my sins, that, with humble and earnest sorrow, I may deplore and confess them. Set before my awakened conscience the terrors of that wrath to which sin renders me obnoxious, the deep and degrading impurity and misery in which it has plunged me. But, Oh, let the liveliest emotions of sorrow and contrition arise from the view of my guilt and ingratitude in having contemned the righteous authority, the infinite and unutterable mercies of my God and Saviour. Almighty God, let me not seek to extenuate the guilt of my transgressions or to offer to thee an imperfect, superficial or unhallowed repentance. But mercifully grant that, humbly and deeply deploring my guilt and confessing my unworthiness, I may approach to thy holy altar, and there be restored to thy reconciled countenance, through the prevailing merits and efficacy of the body and blood of him who died for my sins, Jesus Christ my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Morning Devotions.]

CHAPTER 9

WEDNESDAY EVENING

MEDITATION

Resolutions of obedience. — The invigorating and sanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit.

THE important and glorious object of repentance, to which indeed all its genuine exercises and acts tend, is the restoration of the soul to holiness and virtue. We can have no claim to the favour of a just and holy God, we are not indeed capable of enjoying the pure and perfect bliss of his presence, until the corrupting dominion of sin is subverted in our hearts, until we are reinstated in the holy graces and virtues of the divine image. Every expression of repentance is vain and presumptuous, unless poured forth from a heart, supremely desirous to be released from the degrading dominion of sinful passions—supremely desirous to obtain that celestial purity which only conducts to the favour of God, to

satisfying peace, to unfailing joy in his presence. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

To release us from the corrupting and miserable bondage of sin, was the glorious object which brought down from the celestial mansions of bliss, the eternal Son of the highest. It was the glorious object for which he promulgated his enlightening and renovating instructions, for which he displayed the perfect and resplendent example of a spotless life. It was the glorious object which animated all his labours, which conducted him, cheerful and triumphant, through the series of his bitter sufferings. It was the glorious object for which he finally shed, on the cross, that precious blood which was to be the seal and the means of our deliverance from sin, for which he poured forth the rich effusions of the Holy Spirit to sanctify and restore our degenerate nature. While therefore, sensual and unholy passions enthral us; while we are destitute of those pure and celestial virtues by which we must be qualified for everlasting happiness; in vain for us will the Son of God have published his divine instructions—in vain for us will he have displayed his glorious example—in vain for us will he have triumphantly sustained the agonizing sufferings and death of the cross—in vain for us will he have purchased the renovating gifts of the Holy Spirit. Ah! these powerful aids, these resplendent motives of holy obedience, perverted and contemned, will strip us of all excuse for our impenitence, will silence the vain pleas by which we may seek to extenuate our perverse continuance in sin, will arm, with heavier vengeance, the sentence of almighty justice which consigns us to interminable remorse and misery.

Contemplate, O my soul, the awful and affecting import of the holy rite which thou art to celebrate.—Contemplate

the lively exhibition which the sacrifice of the altar affords, both, of the inflexible and holy justice of God, and, of the rich overflowings of his mercy.—Contemplate, under the affecting symbols there exhibited, the infinite love of the Saviour, who cheerfully encountered the consuming fires of divine justice to avert from thee their overwhelming fury.—And if, after this awful and affecting exhibition, no desires are awakened to be delivered from the dominion of those sins which poured the wrath of heaven on thy innocent Redeemer—if, after this penetrating view, no desires are awakened to testify, by thy vows of love and duty, thy unutterable gratitude to thy God and Saviour, to obtain, by a life of holy obedience, the enlivening and consoling smiles of their favour,—thou art utterly unworthy to partake of an ordinance to the exalted and affecting tendency of which thou art entirely insensible—thou art utterly unworthy to receive those inestimable communications of mercy and grace which, in this hallowed ordinance, ever meet and reward the earnest prayers and vows of the humble and faithful. Oh! to receive the body and blood of the Saviour into a heart, which, ardently cherishing unholy passions, contemns his authority and mercy, and proudly erects the throne of rebellion against him,—would display a hardened and consummate presumption deserving the most tremendous inflictions of divine justice.

By every alarming or affecting consideration which awakened lively thy sorrow for sin, thou art excited, O my soul, to the most earnest desires to be *rescued from its dominion*,—thou art urged to the most zealous and ardent vows of *duty and obedience*. How canst thou expect to escape the wrath of God, while by cherishing thy sins, and persevering in impious rebellion against him,

thou dost wilfully expose thyself to the severest inflictions of his justice. How canst thou expect to enjoy that peace, which diffuses its refreshing and enlivening influence only through the conscience that is redeemed from guilt, when thou dost wilfully cherish those unhallowed passions which inevitably produce agitation, anxiety, and remorse. How canst thou expect to avoid the presumptuous guilt of rebellion against the righteous and just authority of the Sovereign of the universe, when the sensual passions, which rule in thee, with supreme sway, bear testimony, that thy expressions and vows of penitence are insincere, that thou dost yet proudly oppose the just claims of God to thy service and obedience. How canst thou avert the opprobrium of the basest insensibility and ingratitude, while the most affecting display of the mercies of God, and of the exalted riches of his love towards thee in Jesus Christ, cannot induce thee to relinquish the sins, which are daily abusing his mercy and contemning his love, which are daily renewing the pangs that rent the bosom of the Saviour, a victim for thy guilt, to the unsparing wrath of heaven. Ah! my soul! while sin reigns in thy affections; while wilful violations of the laws of God defile thy conscience; though thy pretended sorrow should burst forth in loud, and ardent, and reiterated confessions and supplications, thou art still obnoxious to the wrath of God—still the slave of degrading, corrupting, and disappointing pleasures—still exposed to the pangs of anxiety, apprehension, and remorse,—thou art still the presumptuous rebel against the authority of God, still the guilty and hardened contemner of his love.

There is no way in which thou canst prove that thy repentance is genuine—no way in which thou canst obtain a title to the love and favour of God—no way in which

thou canst prepare for being a worthy and accepted guest at the table of the Lord, but, by earnest and uniform desire to be delivered from the dominion of sin, by sincere and ardent vows of obedience to thy God and Saviour.

Let then thy desires to be delivered from the dominion of sin, and thy vows of duty and obedience, be *sincere and lively*.

If, in proportion to the disgrace, the infamy, and misery of the calamities that oppress us, should be the sincerity and warmth of our desires to be delivered from them; deliverance from the degrading and miserable bondage of sin should awaken the most sincere and lively desires of our hearts. If, in proportion to the magnitude of the favours we have received from a benefactor, and the value of the blessings which he has still in store for us, should be the sincerity and ardour of our devotion to him; the vows of obedience to our heavenly Father and Redeemer, who is the source of all our blessings, and the only stay of all our hopes, should awaken and engage the highest fervour of our affections. From a degrading dominion, that corrupts and blasts our purity and peace, we seek to be delivered. To a merciful and gracious God, who is worthy our highest homage, and who claims our most ardent gratitude, we are to vow allegiance. The most splendid and exalted object of worldly desire and pursuit, sinks, in the comparison with the sublime and momentous concerns of our eternal destiny. Desires and resolutions, if possible, infinitely more ardent than those which carry us impetuously forward in the chace of worldly enjoyments, should be devoted to the attainment of that spiritual redemption, of that sacred fidelity and zeal in the service of God, which are the only pledges of our present and eternal peace. Thy desires and resolutions, O my soul, are

to be offered up to a holy God, who searches the heart; who, jealous of his honour, and the sacred claims of his authority, will indignantly resent and punish the hypocritical and superficial professions of love and obedience. Thinkest thou, he will behold thee panting with eager desire in the pursuit of worldly pleasure, vowing, with supreme ardour of affection, devotion to the idols of honour and wealth; and, when to him, thy most sincere love, thy most zealous and active obedience are due, be himself content with the empty and feeble homage of affections which are wasting their most exalted and generous fervours, on debasing and transitory gratifications. View, the unexampled prodigies of divine love, in the sufferings and death commemorated on the altar. Contemplate the rich, the refreshing, the invigorating, the immortal blessings of that spiritual banquet which a merciful Redeemer hath graciously provided. Redemption from sin and its convulsive pangs, restoration to the favour of God and the never-failing consolations of his love, purity of heart and the inexpressible peace which is always its blest attendant, communion with God and the divine and unutterable pleasures which he pours upon the soul, a lively foretaste of the ineffable joys of heaven, that bears the sublimed affections, on the wings of sacred rapture, to the eternal source of glory and bliss,—these are the rich and exalted blessings, which, in the spiritual banquet of his body and blood, the love of thy Saviour hath prepared for thee. Impenetrable and hardened art thou, if blessings thus exalted do not excite thy supreme and most ardent desires;—lost to every amiable feeling, and deserving of the indignant curse of heaven, if, at the very moment when thy Saviour displays the awful depths of his sufferings, and offers thee the rich and eternal blessings which were purchased by

them, thou canst repay his unutterable love with feeble, superficial, hypocritical vows of duty.

It is not enough that thy desires and resolutions be lively and sincere; they must be *uniform and universal*.

Those desires and resolutions cannot be sincere, which, while they urge us to make partial sacrifices to the laws of God, still seek to retain some particular favourite gratifications. Those desires and resolutions cannot be sincere, which are capricious and irregular, and which are only occasionally and rarely exerted. The ardours of holy desire and resolution should glow, with steady and uniform fervour. No temptations, however seducing, should damp or quench them; no duties, however difficult or arduous, should dismay or arrest them. The true penitent, who is awakened to a due sense of the immense debt of gratitude, which he owes to his Almighty Father and Redeemer, will not measure his obedience, by the nice calculations of cold and selfish policy. His vows of duty will burst forth, from the lively emotions of a heart beating high with grateful love. His vows of obedience will embrace all the sacrifices, to which, devotion to his blessed Lord may call him. They will extend to all the various and most exalted acts of duty, by which he may advance the glory and honour of his Redeemer and God, and prove himself worthy of their applauding fiat.

For an entire deliverance from the corrupting dominion of sinful passions, and for a restoration to the holy and celestial image of thy maker, let then thy most ardent desires, O my soul, be uniformly exerted. Offer not to God resolutions of duty, the sudden fruit of transitory glows of feeling. Be thy vows of allegiance founded, on a deep and serious conviction, of the weighty obligations that should bind thee to him, of the exalted and ennobling nature of

his service, of its brilliant and glorious rewards. Except not, from thy vows of obedience, any hallowed precept of thy Saviour, though it may require thee to crush the indulgence to which, thou dost cling, with supreme ardour of affection. Resolve on that universal obedience to his commands which he requires, and which alone he will accept and reward. Then “shalt thou not be confounded, when thou hast respect unto all his commandments.” When disposed to murmur at the severity of the sacrifices to which he calls thee, at the extent and difficulty of his service—cast thy view upon the altar—contemplate the number and poignancy of his sufferings for thee—explore the astonishing riches of his mercy and grace—and blush, that thou hast for a moment indulged an ungrateful murmur—deplore the utter inadequacy of thy most zealous services to repay the debt of love—offer, to the gracious Redeemer who bought thee with his blood, the best tribute thou canst render—though insufficient and unworthy—*zealous and uniform* obedience to all his sacred commands.

Thy desires for redemption from the dominion of sin, and thy resolutions of holy obedience must be accompanied with *thy own vigorous exertions*, and with *the diligent use of all the means of grace*.

To work out thy salvation, is, indeed, the momentous business that should occupy thy supreme cares and exertions. Consider, how potent the sway which sin maintains over thy enslaved affections. Consider, how deep the unhallowed taint of iniquity which is to be washed away. Consider, how strong the chains of corrupt passion from whose ignoble thralldom thou art to burst. Consider, how holy and resplendent the graces whose renovating and celestial reign over thy affections is to be established. Consider, how extensive and important the circle of duties

which thou must resolve sacredly to discharge. Consider, how many painful sacrifices must be made, how many dismaying obstacles triumphantly surmounted, in that sacred course of holy obedience to God which thou art bound to render. Wilt thou indulge the vain and presumptuous expectation, that, to fulfil these momentous and highly difficult engagements, feeble and occasional efforts only will be necessary? Wilt thou presumptuously hope to subdue the raging dominion of sensual passions, by those superficial and slight exertions, which, thou wouldest deem it folly, to apply to any temporal enterprize that was difficult or hazardous! Ah! the new and holy life, at which thou must aim as the only pledge of thy salvation, is opposed to the most powerful propensities of thy fallen nature, to the domineering principles and spirit of a corrupt world, to the seducing pleasures and allurements that, from a thousand quarters, assail thee, with their insinuating solicitations. Oh! what vigorous and persevering exertions, what bold resolution, what determined courage will be necessary, to surmount the obstacles which will oppose thee in thy christian course, and to enable thee to persevere, with unshaken zeal and fidelity, in the service of thy God.

The utmost strength thou wilt be able to bring to the contest with thy spiritual enemies, the most vigorous exertions thou wilt be able to engage in the discharge of the high duties of the christian life, will prove impotent and vain, unless inspired and invigorated by the diligent use of the *means of grace*. By frequent and devout reflection on the exalted and ennobling privileges and rewards of thy holy vocation; by the serious and attentive perusal of those sacred records, whose inspired pages convey the illuminating beams of divine truth; by humble and reg-

ular attendance on the ministrations and ordinances of the sanctuary, where, the God of grace is ever ready to strengthen, refresh, and bless his penitent worshippers; above all, by frequent, humble, and earnest prayer to God for the quickening, strengthening, and sanctifying influences of his Holy Spirit,—by these pious and holy exercises, only, wilt thou be able to advance, in the course of holiness, with that increasing zeal and vigour, which will ensure final and glorious success. Under the regenerating and invigorating guidance of the Holy Spirit, thou mayest attain the most exalted heights of christian perfection and virtue; but, “without him thou canst do nothing.” The grace of God is sufficient for the most difficult and dangerous trials—*his* strength will be gloriously perfected in the *weakness* of the most humble of his children. By his Almighty Spirit, “the whole body of the church is governed and sanctified.” The work of sanctification, by which the soul is redeemed from sin, and reinstated in the divine image, is, in its commencement, its progress, and its glorious consummation, conducted by the powerful agency of the Spirit of God. Not *independently* on human exertions, but *through their instrumentality*, does this blessed Spirit effect the renovation of the soul. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do.* Inscrutable, but claiming our supreme adoration and gratitude, is the wonderful method by which God accomplishes our redemption. THE SPIRIT OF THE MOST HIGH, descends, in all the glorious majesty and power of the God-head, and dwells in CORRUPT AND FALLEN MAN! Stupendous mystery! O my soul, let the unsearchable and adorable wisdom of a Sovereign God prostrate the impious doubts of thy blind and erring reason. Let not that mysterious and di-

vine agency, by which thy redemption is effected, excite thy ungrateful and proud scorn. Justly due to God is the tribute of profound gratitude, that, by the mysterious but powerful communion of his Holy Spirit with thee, he pours light, strength, and glory on thy blind, weak and corrupt affections. Humbly and thankfully, embrace the proffered grace of God—fervently and unceasingly, implore its invigorating and sanctifying influences. Relying on its powerful succours, resolutely aim at subduing every depraved passion; resolutely vow eternal allegiance and duty to the Lord thy God; resolutely engage in that new and celestial life of holiness to which thy Saviour's commands call thee. Behold! he leaves thee not weak and defenceless—he imposes not restrictions and duties, without conveying to thee his invigorating and consoling aids—he does not call thee to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, the enemies of thy salvation, without providing celestial armour for the warfare, heavenly consolations and rewards to crown thy victories. Behold! spread on the altar, are, the hallowed symbols of that divine body and blood which convey, immortal joys, invincible strength, to the souls of his humble and penitent people. Go—my soul—seal, over these precious symbols of his love, the vows of eternal enmity to thy sins, the implacable enemies of his cross, the fatal enemies of thy peace. Go—my soul—over these precious symbols of his love, vow eternal fidelity to thy Lord—take up the cross and follow him, though the path lie, through the gloomy vale of suffering and death.

O GOD of everlasting mercy and salvation! infinite and eternal source of compassion and love! Worthy art thou to receive, blessing and honour, and adoration, and praise, from all in heaven, and all in earth. For thou hast made all things; for thy good pleasure they are, and were created; and from thee, the everlasting fountain of perfection, flow, the glory and excellence of all the works of thy hands. Worthy art thou, O God of eternal mercies, to receive the supreme homage and service of the children of men. For, thou hast washed away their sins, in the blood of thy Son; thou hast opened to them, through the merits of a Redeemer, the glorious prospect of immortal blessedness and felicity beyond the grave. Penetrated with a profound sense of thy majesty and glory, with a lively view of thine infinite compassion and love, I acknowledge thy supreme claims to my homage and obedience. I acknowledge that all the powers of my soul, with ardent affection and gratitude, should ever have adored thy power, and celebrated thy praise. —I acknowledge that the sincere, vigorous, and constant service of my life should have proclaimed my supreme devotion to thee, the profound and lively sense of obligation to thy bounty and love. Author of my being! God of my salvation! I bow myself, in the dust before thee, under the conviction of the presumption and insensibility, which have, so long, openly disclaimed thy authority, and ungratefully resisted the affecting displays of thy mercy. Awakened to a lively sense of the ingratitude and baseness of my sinful course, of the deplorable folly and guilt of that career of transgression by which I have rebelled against thee, I now desire to return unto thee, O my God, to cast myself at the foot of thy throne, imploring thy forgiveness.—I now desire to relinquish those corrupting and disappointing pleasures, for which, I have contemned thy authority and laws, and forfeited the joys of thy favour—I desire to be rescued from the

dominion of my sinful passions which are offensive to thee, most holy God, and whose bitter fruit is shame, remorse, and misery—ferently do I desire, to devote myself to thy service, to obtain the satisfying joys of thy mercy and loving-kindness. O most compassionate Father! hear, and accept, the humble, but sincere vows of duty, which, thy disobedient, but penitent child offers, at thy throne. Thee, O God, I desire to chuse, as my eternal and satisfying refuge and portion—to thy glory and praise, I desire to devote all the powers of my soul—for that divine and celestial purity which will conform me to thine image, I ardently pant—resolutely, do I engage, to fulfil all thy commands—cheerfully, will I sustain all the sacrifices which thy service may require me to make—vigorously, will I oppose the alluring temptations, and threatening difficulties, that would seduce or intimidate my allegiance to thee—to thy disposal, I resign myself; patiently will I submit, to all the chastenings of thy hand. Thou knowest the humble sincerity of my heart—thou knowest, also, O God, its weakness and depravity. —O save me from a presumptuous dependence on my own strength. Teach me, evermore to rely, on thy omnipotent arm—to implore supernatural and celestial succours. Excite me, diligently to use all the means of divine illumination and grace. By the holy exercises of meditation and prayer, may I seek to fortify myself, for the arduous and hazardous conflict with sin and temptation. O God! on thy Almighty grace, is my sole dependence—evermore refresh my soul, by its succours and consolations. O grant, that, by humble and earnest prayer and supplication, and by a diligent attendance on the ordinances of thy church, I may obtain the regenerating, sanctifying, and invigorating presence of thy Holy Spirit. By his Almighty energies, may my disordered and corrupt nature be quickened, renovated, and redeemed. Encouraged by thy gracious invitations, and humbly relying on thy mercy, I go to the sacred

supper, where, thou hast provided, for thy people, heavenly and immortal food. O, when, at his holy table, over the sacred symbols of his body and blood, I celebrate the love of my Saviour, and renew the ardent vows of duty and obedience, —Spirit of God! impart to my soul thy holy unction—shed thy invigorating and consoling graces—seal me to the day of redemption—that, finally advanced, by thy power, to the courts of the celestial temple of the Living God, I may celebrate the love of my Saviour, in unceasing and eternal strains—and join in the exulting jubilee of adoration and praise to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, forever and ever. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Evening Devotions.]

CHAPTER 10

THURSDAY MORNING

MEDITATION

Faith in Christ.

BOTH as a creature, and a sinner, man is entirely dependent on the will of his sovereign Maker and Judge. Whatever God prescribes or commands, that, immediately, becomes his duty and happiness. God, in infinite wisdom and goodness, has provided a plan of salvation for fallen man. By the inscrutable determination of the Almighty Father, the eternal Son, in the person of man, sustains the penalties of a violated law; and his obedience, sufferings, and death, are accepted, as an all-sufficient atonement to offended justice. All the blessings of salvation are conveyed to us, in virtue of the meritorious atonement of Christ; and *faith in him* is made the indispensable condition of our enjoying these blessings. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Even then, if faith were not an exalted grace which involves the exercise of the noblest powers of the understanding, and the most amiable virtues of the heart; if it were not the powerful principle which purifies and renews the soul, and inspires every act of holy obedience—still, as the *command* of our Almighty Lawgiver and Judge, as the *prescribed condition* of our salvation, it must appear a binding and necessary duty; and it would evidence the most criminal presumption, as well as the greatest folly, to contemn or disregard it. The holy sacrament of the supper presents the Saviour, offered up an Almighty victim for sin. His sufferings and death are represented, as the meritorious cause of our redemption. The only fountain of pardoning mercy and redeeming grace is opened, in his body and blood. While, therefore, we are ignorant of these truths, or insensible to them, we cannot be prepared for approaching that holy ordinance which derives, from them, all its efficacy and force. Until we cordially believe that the eternal Son of God, in our nature, shed his blood, to purchase our redemption; until we believe, that, through his merits alone, we can have access unto the throne of our offended Judge, and that, by his grace, we must be sanctified and restored to the favour of God; the holy sacrament of his supper, where he is set forth as crucified for our redemption, will appear an unmeaning and useless rite. Our participation of it would only be a wilful mockery of God and the Saviour, and tend to the condemnation of our souls. Pardon, salvation, and grace, the inestimable blessings of this sacred ordinance, are conveyed, only, to the true believer.—The penitent, who is awakened to a sense of his guilt and his subjection to sin, will never experience rest or peace, until his soul heartily embraces the exalted truths, that the blood of the

Saviour is all-sufficient to cleanse from sin, and his grace all-powerful to redeem from its dominion.

Let then thy most earnest solicitude, O my soul, be directed, to the examination, whether thou dost possess, that *lively faith in God's mercy through Christ*, which will convey to thee holiness and peace, and make thee an acceptable guest at the table of the Lord.

Rest not satisfied in a faith which embraces the gospel, merely, as a *well-authenticated record of facts*. Thou mayest acknowledge the birth, life, and miracles of the Saviour. Thou mayest cherish a high esteem and regard, for his character and instructions. But what will this faith avail thee, while thou dost refuse to receive the Saviour, as thy merciful and Almighty Lord and Master, by whose righteous laws thou art to be guided, by whose precious blood thou art to be redeemed, by whose gracious Spirit thou art to be sanctified and governed? Was it not his primary, his sole object, to effect the redemption of fallen man from the guilt and dominion of sin? Are not his all-sufficient merits and grace presented to us, as the powerful and certain means of our redemption and salvation? A faith, which, passing over these infinitely momentous objects of the Redeemer's mission, regards him, merely, as a distinguished personage, and barely assents to the record of the various events of his life, offers the most presumptuous affront to the dignity and glory of the Saviour, and can lay no claim to the exalted blessings of his salvation.

Equally futile and presumptuous is a faith, which embraces the gospel, only, as a *system of speculative truth*. The superficial faith, just mentioned, embraces the gospel as an authentic history of facts, while it is indifferent to the truths which it promulgates and the duties which it enjoins. This speculative faith advances farther, and re-

garding Christ as the author of divine truth, forms, from the gospel, a system of doctrines which it embraces and enforces, on the ground of divine authority. But this faith is fundamentally defective, in considering the doctrines of Christ, as designed merely to correct and regulate the *opinions* of men, and not principally to renew and purify their *hearts*. It is wholly insensible to the important truth that the doctrines of the Saviour are designed to redeem the soul from error and sin, and to establish, in the heart, all divine and holy graces. This speculative faith will never impress on the soul her subjection to sin and misery, her need of divine mercy and grace—it will never awaken the exalted emotions of love and gratitude to God, for the gift of his Son to be the Redeemer of fallen man—it will never excite that sacred peace, those holy transports of joy, which arise, from the experience of the mercy and grace of the Redeemer, and which urge to generous and universal obedience to his commands. Unfruitful either of holiness or peace, it cannot be a passport to the favour of that God who requires the homage of the heart, it cannot confer an interest in the merits of that glorious Saviour, who came to establish in the soul, the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy.

Beware also of resting in an *imperfect or obscure faith*, which does not thoroughly comprehend the plan of salvation, and which is not deeply sensible of its value and efficacy.

Dost thou entertain, O my soul, only imperfect and superficial views of the evil and guilt of sin, of the necessity of the mercy and grace of the Saviour, to redeem thee from its power? Instead of regarding, with supreme and habitual trust and hope, his precious blood, as the only fountain of pardon and peace, and his Almighty

grace as the only source of holiness, of strength, and consolation, dost thou content thyself with an occasional, a vague, a lukewarm confidence in his merits and power? Dost thou rest thy hopes of salvation, on the feeble and superficial ideas which thou dost entertain of Christ, as a benevolent and glorious personage who is to procure thy pardon with an offended God—instead of cordially receiving him, in all his sacred and important offices, as the divine *Prophet* who is to enlighten and instruct thee in the will of God—as the merciful *High Priest*, by whose atonement and intercession thou art to have access unto the Father—as the glorious *King*, by whose holy laws thou art to be governed, to whose righteous authority thou art to be subject, by whose victorious grace thou art to be defended, and finally exalted to everlasting glory? Ah! my soul! this imperfect and obscure faith in the Saviour, on which thou dost rest thy salvation, will disappoint and condemn thee. Weak and irresolute, it will not allay the poignant stings of guilt; it will not repel the enraged assaults of temptation; it will not subdue the inveterate power of sinful passions; it will not inspire thee, with holy serenity and hope, at that dread tribunal, where, a supreme and lively affiance on thy Saviour's merits will be thy only refuge, from the penetrating and condemning scrutiny of thy Almighty Judge.

The faith, then, which is effectual to salvation, and which, in the participation of the holy supper, will vitally unite the devout communicant to his Lord and Saviour, does not consist, in a bare acknowledgement of the truth of the *facts* recorded concerning the character and life of Christ; in a speculative belief in his gospel as an excellent and admirable *theory* of religious and moral truth; or in a loose and general trust in the Saviour, without a clear,

lively and just apprehension of his character and offices. To approach the altar with these imperfect, speculative, and feeble views of the Saviour, would be casting dishonour on the precious efficacy of his blood, insult and mockery on his divine dignity and power.

That *genuine faith*, which will lead the soul to Christ, as her only trust and refuge, must be founded, on a *lively conviction of our guilt and misery*. On the degeneracy and guilt of human nature, is the glorious superstructure of redemption raised. Merely to *instruct* mankind; merely to improve and enlarge the code of moral duties; merely to display a resplendent example of moral virtue, it surely was not necessary, that the eternal Son of the Highest should divest himself of the unutterable majesty and bliss of the Godhead, should descend into this vale of sin and misery, should shroud his eternal glories in the awful gloom, in the tremendous horrors of the cross. Man is a fallen and guilty creature—A divine personage only, can vindicate the insulted majesty of heaven, and by his sufferings and death, appease the inexorable claims of divine justice. Behold, here, the truths which develop the impenetrable mystery of redemption; which present an object worthy the infinite stoops of the Son of God; which shed resplendent light and glory on the profound and dismaying gloom that envelopes the cross. “The word was made flesh,” “the Son of God humbled himself to the death of the cross,” that man “dead in trespasses and sins,” might be “quicken’d” to the glorious privileges and hopes of pardon, holiness, peace and immortality. From a lively conviction, then, of thy guilt and misery, O my soul, must arise the exalted virtue of evangelical faith. This conviction alone, will awaken a sense of thy urgent need of a Saviour, and excite thy earnest desires for his

pardoning mercy, and renovating grace. "Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost." "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Lost to the favour of God, and to every claim to his mercy, thou must acknowledge thyself to be, before thou canst repose, with supreme affiance, on the merits and power of him who is mighty to save. The taint of sin, which infects and corrupts thee, thou must deeply feel and deplore, before thou wilt have recourse to the purifying fountain, opened in the Redeemer's blood. Earnestly desirous, to be rescued from the galling and condemning bondage of sin, thou must be, before thou wilt embrace with grateful and supreme faith, the glorious Saviour offered to thee, under the precious symbols of the altar, in the inspiring and satisfying fulness of his mercy and grace.

The faith, which will vitally unite thee to thy Redeemer, and prove effectual to thy salvation, founded on a deep sense of thy guilt and misery, must lead thee *cordially, supremely and joyfully* to rely, on the all-sufficient merits of Christ, for pardon; and on his all-powerful grace, for complete redemption.—God hath "set forth his Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the world;" and it is his merciful declaration, that, "whosoever believeth in him should not perish but should have everlasting life." When, by the penetrating conviction, which the Spirit of God has excited in the soul of the sinner, of his guilt, condemnation, and misery, "every high and lofty imagination is brought down," he will be disposed humbly to submit to the plan, which the infinite and sovereign wisdom and goodness of God have provided, for his redemption. When his understanding is "enlightened to discern" the excellence and glory of the Saviour, and the resplendent mercy and grace which are shed around the eternal Son of the Father; when

he views the fulness of pardon, peace, and salvation treasured up in that divine Redeemer who, in the persuasive accents of compassion and tenderness, invites “the weary and heavy laden to come unto him and receive rest”—the humble and contrite sinner, will repose with *cordial, supreme and joyful* affiance on him whom “God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour,” to dispense, from the eternal throne of mercy and power, pardon, grace, and everlasting redemption. Disclaiming every presumptuous and vain dependence on his own righteousness and strength, the reliance of the true believer, on his Saviour, is entire and supreme. In the merits, the mercy, and power of Jesus Christ, he discerns his only refuge from the terrors of a violated law, the only means of his redemption from the dominion of sin, the only armour with which he can repel the vengeful assaults of his spiritual enemies, his only pledge of final exaltation to the transcendent felicities and glories of heaven. Evermore “looking unto Jesus” for every spiritual blessing, with the supreme and glowing ardour of grateful affection and love, he will constantly adore and bless his Saviour, as “the author and finisher of his salvation.” To his Redeemer, rich in grace, compassion and mercy, he clings with faith lively and vigorous—a faith, which realizing strongly the all-sufficiency of the atonement of Christ, the almighty power of his grace, and his infinite willingness to save, allays every doubt and every apprehension, and inspires holy hope, fervent and unceasing triumph. The reliance of the true believer, in his Saviour, is also *uniform and stedfast*. Emphatically it may be said of him, that he “lives by faith.” Faith, is, the animating principle, which inspires, cherishes, and preserves his spiritual life—the invigorating fountain, whence flow all his virtues and all his consolations.

But it is the consummation of the exalted excellence of genuine faith, and it is its inseparable characteristic, that it "*works by love,*" that "*it purifies the heart,*" that "*it overcomes the world.*" Faith, is, in the true believer, an active and animated principle, which is ever inspiring him, with the most ardent love, to that God who has mercifully provided for him the means of redemption, and to that Saviour, through whom alone he is redeemed from sin, and misery, and death. Faith is an invigorating principle, which is ever urging the true believer, to testify, by the most exalted acts of obedience, the divine love which warms his heart, and to endeavour to advance, by the uniform and sacred service of his life, the honour and glory of his God and Saviour. It is a purifying principle, which, by subduing the dominion of sin in the heart, removes the sense of guilt from the conscience; which, by impressing upon the soul the holy image of God, restores her to the enlivening joys of his favour; which prepares the soul for the felicity of heaven, by forming in her those holy graces, that yield, on earth, a foretaste of celestial joys. The true believer acknowledges the Saviour, not only as the gracious *High Priest*, by whose atonement and intercession he is rescued from guilt and condemnation; but as the divine *Prophet* who illumines the soul with celestial and renovating truth; as the Almighty *King*, who establishes in the heart, the dominion of righteousness, and who inflexibly claims the submissive homage and obedience of his people.

Behold, now, my soul! the exalted characteristics of that faith, which, alone, is effectual to salvation. Founded on a lively sense of the guilt and condemnation, in which, through sin, he is involved, it opens, to the true penitent, the full and resplendent mercy and grace of the Saviour,

and excites him, disclaiming every other dependence, to rely, with supreme, lively, and uniform confidence, on the merits and power of Christ, for pardon and salvation. An active and vigorous principle, it renews and purifies the heart, and excites the believer to aim at that universal obedience by which, alone, he can glorify his Saviour, and prepare his soul for the fruition of the pure and holy presence of his God.

This supreme, lively, and obedient faith in Christ, O my soul, is made, by the decree of God, thy Almighty Lawgiver and Judge, the indispensable condition of thy salvation. By this exalted principle alone, canst thou testify thy generous sensibility to the infinite glory and love of thy Redeemer, or obtain the inestimable blessings of pardon, peace, and everlasting glory. It is this divine faith which, applying to the soul the Saviour's merits and grace, plucks from her the envenomed sting of guilt; bursts, with resistless power, the enthralling chains of sin; and finally, bears the soul, triumphant over death, in the robes of celestial righteousness, to the throne of her Redeemer and God.

Blest is thy state, O my soul, glorious thy destiny, if thou art animated by this exalted faith in the Son of God. To the irritating pangs of conscience, thou canst apply the pacifying merits of the Saviour's blood—To the turbulent throws of guilty passions, thou canst oppose the conquering energies of his grace—Clad in a sacred panoply of invincible energy and virtue, thou shalt sustain, unhurt and fearless, the enraged assaults of thy spiritual enemies—Death himself shall see his envenomed shafts fall, harmless, at thy feet, and behold thee, contemning his enraged efforts, enter on the felicities of an immortal kingdom. Glorious triumphs of Christian faith! O my

soul! aim at obtaining the highest energies of this divine and exalted virtue. Cultivate a lively sense of thy degeneracy and guilt.—Cherish glowing and sublime views of the mercy and power of Christ. Implore the quickening Spirit of grace to unite thee, to thy Saviour, by a consoling, holy and triumphant faith. Behold! seated on the throne of mercy erected on the altar, he now waits to bless thee with his love. Opening, to the guilty sons of men, the living fountain of salvation, he invites them to “come and drink of the waters of life freely.” “Without money and without price,” he dispenses the rich blessings of his grace. Urgently needing his mercy, O my soul, refuse not the pressing solicitations of his love. Weak and humble as thy faith may be, if it has only awakened a conviction of thy need of a Saviour, and a desire to partake of the blessings of his salvation—go! and he, who came not “to break the bruised reed,” or to reject the desire of the humblest of his children, will encircle thee with the arms of his mercy—will cherish, by his grace, thy feeble and expiring faith, until, vigorous and triumphant, it reposes on him, in the fulness of peace, hope, and salvation.

THE PRAYER.

O MOST BLESSED AND GLORIOUS LORD GOD! who, in infinite compassion and mercy, hast given thine only Son to be the Saviour of mankind, and art in him reconciling the world unto thyself, not imputing unto us our trespasses and sins; teach me, with deep humility and lively gratitude, to adore and bless thee for the transcendent display of grace and mercy in the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. May this adorable mystery of love

engage my profound contemplations, and my lively and exalted affections. May my most fervent desires be excited, my most earnest exertions roused, to obtain the inestimable blessings of this great salvation. Inspire me, O God, with that lively faith, which will unite me to the Redeemer, and be the pledge of my forgiveness and everlasting redemption. Teach me humbly to adore thy sovereign will, in requiring faith in thy Son, as the indispensable condition of thy mercy. Enable me to form profound, just, and lively views of this exalted virtue. May I not rest contented in a nominal acknowledgement of the Saviour, in a speculative and unfruitful belief in his doctrines, or in an indistinct and general view of his character and offices. O teach me, that these external, superficial and imperfect views of Christ, thy blessed Son, while they presumptuously dishonour his dignity and glory, will not stand the awful scrutiny of thy justice; will not convey peace and consolation to my soul; or entitle me to the exalted joys of thy favour. Teach me to lay the foundation of my faith, in a deep and humbling conviction of my unworthiness and guilt. And when thus awakened and alarmed, O do thou enlighten me to discern the excellence and glory of Christ Jesus, and to apply his precious blood, to the consolation and peace of my soul. May I discern the all-sufficiency of his merits, the perfection of his righteousness, the fulness of his grace, his ability and willingness to save. May I cordially, joyfully, and stedfastly repose on him as the Almighty Mediator, by whose *righteousness* alone I can be *justified*, by whose *Spirit* alone, *sanctified* and saved. May my faith, by the sweet but powerful constraints of love and duty, purify my heart, raise me above the unhallowed gratifications of the world, and form in my soul, the holy graces and virtues which will prepare me for the exalted fruition of thy presence. Thy grace, alone, Almighty God, can inspire and perfect my faith—earnestly I implore thy quickening and sanctify-

ing strength. Lead me humbly and thankfully to that spiritual banquet where every holy grace of the soul is nourished and strengthened, by the body and blood of thy Son. There, O God, may I seal, through faith, my title to thy favour; there, may the smiles of thy reconciled countenance be shed upon me; and there, may my weak and humble faith be quickened to the holy triumphs of joyful assurance and hope, through the mighty power of that Redeemer, who, as the eternal Son of thy love, liveth and reigneth, with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Morning Devotions.]

CHAPTER 11

THURSDAY EVENING

MEDITATION

*Faith in Christ, as the Eternal Son of God, and
as a Prophet, a Priest, and King.*

THOU dost perceive, O my soul! that, faith in Christ consists in such a lively, supreme, and stedfast reliance on his merits and grace, as produces peace of conscience, joy in the favour of God, redemption from the dominion of sin, sincere devotion to the Saviour, universal obedience to his commands. This faith, necessarily, implies a just and lively view of his glorious character and offices. Until the glories of Christ, and his exalted and important offices are fully displayed to our minds, we shall not discern the all-sufficiency of his merits, his almighty power to save us, his supreme claims to our homage and obedience. Faith, when exercised upon the Saviour in the various offices which he sustains towards us, is a most sublime, ennobling, and consoling principle.

It opens, to our astonished contemplations, those eternal glories of the Godhead, which concentrated their most resplendent beams, in the person of Jesus Christ. It exhibits this glorious Saviour, dispensing the luminous revelation of the attributes and will of Jehovah, of the duties, hopes and final destiny of man. It displays him, clothed in the illustrious garments of righteousness and mercy, standing before the flaming altar of divine justice, and sending up that costly incense of his blood, which propitiates the holy wrath of an offended God, and invokes, for man, the immortal blessings of peace and salvation. It displays him, "clad with the garments of vengeance,"—"with zeal as with a cloak," marching, triumphant, over his subdued adversaries, "treading them down in his anger, and trampling them in his fury,"—and, finally ascending, in resistless majesty and power, to the eternal throne of universal dominion, where he rules, the almighty conqueror of death and hell, dispensing to his people the invigorating and invincible succours of his grace, and receiving their ardent homage and obedience, as the glorious King and Captain of their salvation. When the believer sincerely and fully embraces his Saviour in all these glorious offices, as the eternal Son of the Father, as the illustrious Prophet of the Highest, as the atoning Priest and Intercessor of his people, as the resistless King and Captain of their salvation,—adoration, gratitude, love and joy unutterable will swell his transported soul.—Every thought, every power, every affection, in fervent and rapturous harmony, will celebrate the Saviour's glory.—Uniform, sincere, zealous obedience will attest the sincerity of the ardent devotion of the believer to his Almighty Lord and King.

From a lively belief in the divine character and glori-

ous offices of the Saviour, thou must derive, O my soul, the streams of peace, holiness and consolation. And the most clear and lively fervours of this sacred faith should be excited, when thou art to partake of that hallowed ordinance, the exalted efficacy of which will depend on thy lively apprehension of that Saviour, whom it sets forth as thy everlasting strength and refuge.

Contemplate, then, the Saviour, with lively faith, as the *eternal Son of the Father*. The acclaiming voice of the Prophets, his fore-runners; the declarations of his inspired Apostles attesting his own pretensions; the exalted offices which he came to execute; the glorious triumphs of his cross; the eternal throne on which he governs, and will, finally, judge the world;—all proclaim his *divine dignity and glory*, and urge thee, with supreme faith, to adore him as thy Lord and thy God. Hear the glorious names and titles of divinity conferred by the prophets on the Messiah that was to come—“Emanuel, God with us—The Mighty God—The Lord our righteousness—The Lord who shall suddenly come to his temple—The God whose throne is forever and ever.” Hear the united testimony of the holy apostles, who, in declaring that Christ was “God manifest in the flesh,” and that in him “dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead,” only confirm the divine pretensions of Jesus himself, “I and the Father am One—I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, which was, and which is, and which is to come, the Almighty.” The exalted offices which he came to execute—to unfold the eternal counsels of the Father; to establish the everlasting rules of truth and duty; to satisfy the inexorable and infinite claims of divine holiness and justice; to demolish the dominion which sin and death had established over mankind; to open the gates of everlast-

ing bliss which divine wrath had closed against a guilty world—these are offices, which a creature, stamped with native weakness and imperfection, could never execute—they require the omnipotent strength of the Creator of the universe—they claim for Jesus who triumphantly executes them, divine and eternal powers. The triumphs of his cross, which bore down the opposing prejudices, learning, and power of the world, and still reduces under its sway the stubborn and towering imaginations of the heart, proclaim the divinity of that Jesus, who, though he suffered as a malefactor, confers upon the cross, which was the mark of ignominy, these divine and splendid powers. View, finally, the glorious throne on which he governs, and will at last judge the world. What divine splendour and majesty surround it—How extensive and resistless its dominion—How potent and irresistible its decrees—What appalling and overwhelming thunders burst from it, on the impenitent adversaries of God—What celestial and immortal felicities are dispensed from it, on his obedient subjects—What divine and immortal honours are paid to the glorious personage who is seated on it, holding “the keys of hell and death”—“Thousand thousands stand before him, ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto him”—The host of heaven present their eternal adoration to him, who is infinitely exalted above the most perfect of their celestial orders, “the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” Ah! my soul! These are illustrious and resistless proofs that he, with whom thou art to confide thy everlasting salvation, is, indeed, thy Lord and thy God, claiming thy most profound homage, thy unbounded confidence, thy universal and unreserved submission. In every view which faith opens to thee, of the Saviour, fix thy most ardent and vigorous contemplations on the glory of his

divine nature. When thou dost repose on the omnipotent arm of a divine Saviour, the sacred glows of love shall be exalted; the ardours of hope strengthened; the triumphs of thy faith shall rise above all the malignant enemies of thy salvation. What sublime and profound awe is shed over the symbols of the altar, when faith discloses to thee the glories of the incarnate God, whom they set forth. Oh! what reverential, yet what delightful emotions swell the bosom of the believing communicant, when, in the reception of the sacred elements, he enjoys the exalted assurance, that he is united to a divine Redeemer—that he is admitted into the most close, the most endearing, the most affectionate communion with the *Son of God*—that in the person of that blessed Redeemer, to whom he has committed the salvation of his soul, dwell all those divine attributes which are calculated to excite and invigorate his love, his gratitude, his joy, his holy triumphs.

The lively exercises of faith should be directed to the Saviour as the *divine and illustrious Prophet*, by whom we are instructed in the holy laws and counsels of God. Through him were the beams of celestial truth to be shed on a world enveloped with the deepest shades of error—through him was the benighted and blinded mind to be enlightened in that spiritual knowledge which its most exalted researches could never attain. Behold, O my soul, what infinite claims, as thy divine instructor and guide, the Saviour possesses, to thy reverence, attention and obedience. He whom thou art to receive as thy Prophet, is himself the eternal *word*—he was from all eternity in the bosom of the Father—in him dwelt the Holy Spirit without measure. Perfectly acquainted, therefore, must he have been with the will of his Almighty Father. To the prophetic office he was illustriously inaugurated, by the *overshadow-*

ing of the Highest, by the descent of the Holy Ghost—by the solemn declaration of the Father, *this is my beloved Son, hear ye him*. Gloriously and fully does this divine prophet execute his office. A luminous and perspicuous revelation of divine truth, developing the glorious attributes of the Godhead, the means of access to the throne of offended justice, the exalted and universal circle of religious, moral and social duties, the resplendent and eternal mansions beyond the grave—did this celestial prophet promulgate. By stupendous miracles, which proved that his power was from on High, did he enforce his doctrine—by his own illustrious and splendid example, did he elucidate, impress, and urge his holy precepts—by the shedding of his precious blood, did he put the sacred and affecting seal to the divinity of his mission. Evangelists and Apostles he inspired, to proclaim his Gospel to the world—in the hallowed oracles of the law and the testimony, we still behold the divine truths of salvation—through the ministrations and ordinances of the sanctuary, Christ our Almighty prophet, still sheds on the soul that enlightening radiance which opens to her the excellence, the glory, and consolations of divine truth. Oh my soul! when the blindness, the weakness, the depravity of human reason, forced upon thee by thy own lamentable experience, and by the view of the world sunk in ignorance and error, awakens the anxious and impatient desire to find a refuge, from thy dark and perplexing doubts, in the bosom of an infallible guide and instructor—embrace by faith that holy Jesus who was *“anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power”* *“to preach good tidings unto the meek”*—*“to put his laws into the hearts,”* and, *“to write them upon the minds”* of the children of men. Bring all thy errors, thy doubts and prejudices at his feet—humbly and fervently implore that

enlightening guidance which will translate thee from the darkness of natural reason, into the glorious light of celestial truth. Let every approach to the holy supper, be seized with ardour, as affording thee an opportunity of renewing the exercises of faith in Christ, as thy divine prophet; and of contemplating with renewed admiration and gratitude, the excellencies of that celestial instructor, on whose head is shed the refulgent radiance of the Godhead, from whose lips flow the insinuating and persuasive accents of truth and love. At the altar, where thou dost commemorate the infinite condescension of this divine guide, seal thy sacred vows of bringing every thought into captivity to his obedience, of embracing—as the endeared subjects of thy daily and reverential meditations, as the holy standards by which thy opinions are to be formed, and thy practice regulated, as the infallible guides by which thou art to be conducted through the perplexing mazes of error and sin to the glorious fulness of eternal truth—the inestimable revelations and laws of that blessed Redeemer, who only is the way, the truth, and the life.

Behold what exalted claims the Saviour possesses to thy lively faith as a *gracious Priest and Intercessor*. For man, sunk under the condemning sentence of a violated law, and obnoxious to divine wrath, he “gave himself an offering and sacrifice unto God.” “Holy, harmless, undefiled,” shedding over the atonement which he offered the glories of his divinity, he made “a full, free, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.” Ascending up on high, into the holy of holies, not made with hands, he presents before the flaming altar of divine justice the all-sufficient incense of his crucified body and blood, and averts from all penitent believers the consuming wrath of an indignant Judge. Seated on the

right hand of God “he ever liveth to make intercession for us”—he implores from his Almighty Father the blessings of pardon, peace, grace, holiness, and glory, which through him descend in rich and refreshing streams on the souls of his penitent people. Infinitely glorious and powerful, O my soul, is the gracious High Priest through whose merits and intercession thou art to be restored to the reconciled countenance of thy offended God. Vested with Almighty power to save those who were the purchase of his blood, in sublime and awful, yet enlivening language, he declares the riches of his redemption, and invites the humble and penitent to come, and receive the satisfying fulness of his love. “I have been crushed in the wine-press, by the avenging arm of divine justice, I have drunk the dregs of that cup of trembling into which the Almighty Father, incensed at your presumptuous rebellion, emptied the tremendous vials of his unsparing wrath. Ah! in one direful moment, I was consumed by all those vengeful fires which, through all eternity, would have racked with despair a guilty world. But I was wounded for your transgressions; I was bruised for your iniquities; the chastisement of your peace, was upon me; and by my stripes ye are healed. Yes! the sentence of condemnation gone forth against you, I have nailed to my cross—my blood has flowed an all-sufficient ransom for the guilty—sprinkled on the mercy-seat, it ascends as acceptable incense to the Father, and propitiates his incensed justice. By the blood of my cross, have I made peace. Crowned for the suffering of death with glory and honour, at the right hand of the Father, I am exalted, the prevailing Intercessor for the guilty sons of men, dispensing, to the humble and penitent, pardon, peace, and salvation. Come then unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you

rest. Be not dismayed by the number, or enormity of your sins which call for vengeance. All powerful is the efficacy of my blood. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." O my soul, let the affectionate and persuasive invitation of thy compassionate High Priest excite thee to place thy supreme confidence in his all-sufficient merits, and prevailing intercession. When, discerning the inflexible claims of God's justice, and the unspotted rigour of divine holiness, thou dost tremble under the sentence of condemnation which thy sins have merited, look, with lively and joyful affiance, to that compassionate Saviour who has expiated thy guilt by the merits of his blood. The divine fountain, whence flow the exhilarating streams of pardon and comfort, is still opened, in that holy ordinance which the redeemer instituted as the lively memorial of his sufferings, and the precious pledge of thy salvation. There, thy compassionate High Priest is waiting to sprinkle thee with that precious blood which will be the pledge of thy deliverance from the exterminating stroke of divine justice. Behold! infinite mercy and infinite power shed, around the Saviour, their glorious effulgence, and invite the most lively fervours of confidence, the most sacred triumphs of holy hope. Wretched and guilty, flee to this friend of the wretched, this Almighty Saviour of sinners, devoting thyself to his service, rendering him thy profound homage and trust. Sheltered in his compassionate bosom, and covered with the protecting robes of his righteousness, thou shalt view, undismayed and fearless, the desolating storms of wrath that overwhelm the ungodly. By the merits and power of this great High Priest of thy salvation, thou shalt be conducted to the resplendent light of the reconciled countenance of thy Heavenly Father.

The blood of the all-sufficient victim, which still, under a lively symbol, flows on the altar, received by steadfast faith, will allay, by its penetrating and powerful efficacy, every doubt and pang which thy guilty fears awakened, and pour upon thee the unfailing and plenteous stream of divine consolations. O thou gracious Saviour! the merciful High Priest, through whom we have access unto the Father! impotent are the highest efforts of the soul, to conceive the illustrious glories of thy righteousness, the transcendent merit of thy intercession.—Impotent are our most exalted feelings, to render thee the just tribute of gratitude for that sacred and ineffable peace, which the healing balm of thy mercy awakens in the bosom that ever reposes supremely upon thee.

Behold, O my soul, the exalted claims of Jesus to thy homage, thy submission and obedience, as thy *Almighty King*. He is the eternal “King whom God hath set upon the holy hill of Zion—of the increase of whose government there shall be no end. He is the head of all principality and power—At his divine name every knee shall bow of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth.” By the sovereign power of God was Jesus exalted, in his human nature, to the throne of dominion. “God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion.” “Prince of the kings of the earth” and head of all the armies of heaven, he hath “on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” O my soul! with the profound homage of lively faith, shouldest thou submit to that glorious King by whose grace alone thou canst be redeemed from the bondage of *sin*, by whose Almighty power alone thou canst be rescued from the dominion of *death and the grave*. Ah! in vain wilt thou

attempt to burst the enthralling chains of sin, unless thy Almighty King exerts the sceptre of his grace. Errors and prejudices cloud thy understanding—sensual appetites and passions control and debase thy noble powers and affections—temptation either imperceptibly enthrals thee by seductive allurements, or pours upon thy frail resolutions a sudden and overwhelming shock. Sinking in despair, a victim to thy relentless foes, raise the ardours of holy faith to the glorious King, who, in the accents of sublime and animating triumph, invites thee to repose on his Almighty arm. “I am he who giveth you the victory—The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he hath anointed me to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound—Strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees—My grace shall be sufficient for you, my strength shall be made perfect in your weakness—Fear not then, for I am with you—Be not dismayed for I am your God—I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness—Trust in me forever—for in the Lord Jehovah, there is everlasting strength.” O my soul! bow with submissive and holy confidence to the Almighty sceptre of thy glorious and invincible Redeemer—He will subdue the rebellious emotions of sinful passion, and induce the celestial reign of peace and love. Wait upon him, with humble and persevering faith, in that sacred ordinance where he dispenses the pledges of his grace, and thou shalt see his glorious salvation displayed in thy everlasting redemption from the ignominious bondage of sin. Rescued by his invincible grace, from the corrupting chains of unholy passions, thou shalt rejoice in the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

O my soul! when thou hast escaped from the en-

thralling dominion of sin, a contest still more formidable awaits thee. Death, thy implacable enemy, will seek to crush thee under his ireful arm. Whence wilt thou derive the ethereal armour, that will enable thee to quench his fiery darts, and triumphantly to bind, under thy victorious feet, this inexorable tyrant of the human race? Whose invincible power will exalt thee to those immortal seats of blessedness, which no strength of nature can attain, and which infinitely exceed the merit of thy most exalted virtues? Thy Almighty King, in majestic power, proclaims himself the glorious conqueror, under whose banners thou art to be led to triumphant victory over death and the grave. "I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death. O death, I have been thy plagues; O grave, I have been thy destruction. Fear not then, ye who humbly repose on my omnipotent arm. I will redeem you from death, I will ransom you from the power of the grave. Your corruption shall put on incorruption, and your mortal immortality. In that glorious kingdom on which I have entered, I have prepared seats for you, and where I am, there ye shall be also."—Thy Almighty Saviour and King, O my soul, after having conducted thee, triumphant, through the inflamed assaults of thy spiritual foes, will not desert thee, in that last awful conflict, when death enfolds thee in his agonizing embrace. Faith in that Almighty King, whose unseen but powerful arm supports thee, will enable thee to foil the deadliest assaults of thy implacable foe. In the ardours of lively faith and gratitude, O, then forever magnify the all-conquering power of the glorious King and Captain of thy salvation. To invigorate thy triumphant confidence, and to enliven the ardours of joyful hope, he provides for thee, in his holy supper, sacred and endearing pledges

of his grace and love. Penetrate, then, through the veil of sense; and, in the humble elements that crown the altar, behold, by the eye of faith, the immortal body and blood of thy Redeemer, by whose vivifying power, thou art nourished and strengthened to everlasting life. On the altar, Jesus erects the throne of resistless dominion, and extends that invincible sceptre, which is the pledge of final and glorious triumph, to his followers, over the enraged assaults of the powers of darkness. Be it thy habitual care, to renew, in the holy eucharist, thy vows of ardent faith in thy divine Redeemer, of subjection to his sovereign sway—His body and blood shall quicken in thee a spring of life and consolation that never shall decay; and which, translated into the celestial kingdom of thy Saviour, shall flow in enrapturing and immortal streams. Oh, esteem it a glorious and exalted privilege which should inflame the most lively ardours of gratitude and love, that, during thy wearisome sojourn in this vale of tears, thou art permitted to refresh thy drooping spirits at the exhilarating fountain of immortal joys. Ever hasten, with reverent and holy triumph, to that hallowed ordinance, where thy glorious King dispenses strength, victory, immortal life. There, prepare thyself by invigorating supplies of grace, for the inevitable conflict, which, before the crown of glory rewards thee, thou must sustain with the King of Terrors. And when the rending pangs of sickness, or the gradual but fatal decays of frail nature, proclaim the near approach of thy fell enemy, seek, with renewed frequency and fervour, the pledges of thy Redeemer's grace conveyed to thee in his holy supper. Hope, peace, and consolation shall flow upon thy sinking spirits. The immortal VIATICUM, transfusing divine and celestial energy, shall support thee through the darkest

shadows of the desolate vale of death. Under the guidance of the Almighty Captain of thy salvation, triumphantly mounting the everlasting hills, thou shalt reach the city of the Living God. In the glorious temple of the celestial Zion, those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, shall "serve God day and night; they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun light upon them nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto thee, O holy Jesus! Eternal Son of the Father! who, as our divine Prophet, dost instruct and guide us; who, as our gracious High Priest, dost intercede for us, and bless us; who, as our Almighty King, dost redeem us from the bondage of sin and Satan, and exalt us, victorious over death and the grave, to the immortal glories of thy celestial throne.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD! who hast gloriously displayed thy infinite wisdom and goodness, in the covenant of mercy which thou hast offered to fallen man; open mine understanding to discern the exalted excellence and glory of this wonderful dispensation of grace; and may my heart be impressed with the profound and lively emotions of reverence, gratitude and love.—With deep and grateful humility, I adore thee, Almighty Father, that thou hast appointed, as the Mediator of this gracious covenant, thy eternal and only begotten Son, "the brightness of thy glory, and the express image of thy person." I adore

thee, that in the Redeemer who is to restore fallen man to thy favour are treasured those divine powers and glories which render him at once the object of holy adoration and worship, and of lively gratitude, confidence, and love. Glory be unto thee, O God, for thy unspeakable mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, who, *as God*, is *mighty to save—as man*, is touched with feeling for our infirmities. O may I humbly and thankfully commit the salvation of my soul, to that blessed Jesus, whom thou hast “anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power”; whom thou hast “set forth to be a propitiation for the sins of the world”; whom thou hast exalted to be “a Prince and a Saviour,” to rescue and redeem guilty and perishing man. In all his divine, glorious, and consoling offices, may my understanding clearly and fully discern him,—my soul submissively and triumphantly embrace him.

As the *Eternal Son of the Father*, may I bow before him with humble reverence and homage—may I ascribe unto him glory and dominion—may I magnify the divine fulness of his mercy, and the Almighty energies of his grace—may I evermore triumphantly rejoice in the certainty, the all-sufficiency, the everlasting glories of his salvation.

Grant, O God, that, embracing by faith the Saviour as my *divine Prophet and Instructor*, I may evermore revere the glorious lustre which surrounds him—may implicitly receive his illustrious revelations as the only certain standard of truth and duty—may study with devout admiration and gratitude his hallowed doctrines and precepts—and with humble fidelity and zeal seek to bring all the powers of my soul into holy obedience to the instructions of this divine teacher whom thou hast sent.

As my *gracious and compassionate Priest and Intercessor*, may I gratefully revere and celebrate his mercy and

grace—may I apply, to his precious blood, for pardon and peace—with the spotless robes of his righteousness, may I desire to be clothed, that I may escape the unsparring scrutiny of thy justice—through his mediation and intercession alone, may I seek an access to the throne of thy mercy.

As my *Almighty King*, may I evermore profoundly adore his eternal glory, his invincible power—may I humbly submit to the sceptre of his righteous dominion—may I sacredly observe his holy decrees and laws, threats and promises—on his omnipotent arm, may I ever place my supreme reliance for victory over my spiritual foes, for final redemption from death and the grave.

And, Oh thou holy Jesus! Eternal Son of the Father! have mercy upon me. “Thou, who only art holy, who only art the Lord, who only art most high in the glory of God the Father, grant me thy peace.”

Divine Prophet of the Highest! illumine my darkened understanding with the beams of celestial truth; instruct me in the knowledge and love of the Father; guide and lead me in the way of righteousness, holiness, and peace.

Gracious and prevailing Priest and Intercessor! sprinkle my guilty soul with the blood of the atonement, and present it pure and spotless before the Father. “By thine unknown and dreadful agonies,” by the all-sufficiency of thy atonement, by the mighty power of thy death, by all that thou hast done and all that thou hast suffered, intercede for me and bless me, most compassionate Jesus.

O thou Almighty King! to whom the Father hath given all power in heaven and in earth; stretch out thy omnipotent arm and save me; subdue every thought, desire, and passion that riseth in rebellion against thee; purify and sanctify my heart by the mighty power of thy grace; “guide and govern both my soul and body, in the ways

of thy law and in the works of thy commandments;” in every difficulty and trial, be thou my Almighty Helper and Defender; over all my spiritual enemies, enable me to rise triumphant; and finally, O thou omnipotent Saviour, exalt me, sanctified by thy grace, and redeemed by thy power, to the immortal seats of bliss thou hast prepared for thy chosen.

Blessed be thy name, O thou most High God, that, in Jesus the Mediator, thou hast engaged, for my salvation, omnipotent power and infinite love. Blessed be thy name, that thou dost invite me to that sacred banquet, where the illuminating guidance of Jesus the divine Prophet, the all-sufficient atonement of Jesus the merciful High Priest, the Almighty power of Jesus the glorious King, are provided for the instruction, comfort, and salvation of the humble and penitent. Earnestly imploring thy guidance, confiding in thy mercy, and dedicating myself to thy service, may I repair to thy holy altar, and there experience that thou art as infinite in mercy, as almighty in power, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Evening Devotions.]

CHAPTER 12

FRIDAY MORNING

MEDITATION

Thankful remembrance of Christ's Death.

THE devout communicant is called to prepare for participating in the Lord's supper, by cherishing a *thankful remembrance of the death of Christ*. This sacred ordinance is, indeed, powerfully calculated to impress on the mind the most lively and affecting idea of the sufferings of the Redeemer. The period of its institution carries us back to that dark and sorrowful hour, when the blessed Jesus, whose life had exhibited one continued course of beneficence and mercy, in the near prospect of an ignominious death, was shedding on the beloved companions of his sufferings, his mournful blessing, and laying upon them the sacred injunctions of his dying love. It brings to our view, in all its direful horrors, and in all its affecting glory, the cross, on which the Saviour was consumed by the fires of divine justice, and on which he

poured out his life a sacrifice for the sins of the world. This holy ordinance presents, to the view of faith, under forcible symbols, the victim again bound and offered on the altar. The bread broken on the altar forcibly recalls to our mournful recollection the sacred body of the Saviour, which was bruised for our iniquities by the tremendous arm of divine wrath. And the wine which is pressed from the grape, is a lively emblem of that precious blood which the agonizing burden of our sins pressed from the tortured body of the Saviour of the world. O my soul, discern through these humble but affecting emblems, thy crucified Lord; and, penetrated with the view of his awful agonies, render him the homage of ardent gratitude and love.

The thankful remembrance which thou art called to cherish, of the death of thy Redeemer, is not merely a glow of sympathy and sorrow which the view of suffering and distress is calculated to excite in every heart. Thou art to contemplate the sufferings of Christ, not as the sufferings of a common man, but as the sufferings of a divine instructor, come to proclaim the most important truths to the world, to enforce and seal them by his sufferings and death; and as the sufferings of a divine Redeemer who atoned for our sins, and purchased, by his blood, our everlasting redemption. Consider the sufferings of Christ as a powerful seal to the truth of his holy religion; consider his sufferings and death as the all-sufficient expiation for the sins of man; finally, consider them as powerfully impressing and enforcing, the spirit of meekness, patience and love, the essential and principal characteristics of his disciples. This view of the sufferings of Christ, will tend to excite the emotions of devout admiration, faith, gratitude and love; and it will also tend to impress on the heart the

most useful and important instruction, the most grateful and exalted joy and consolation.

Consider the sufferings and death of Christ as a powerful *seal to the religion he proclaimed*.

In the humble and suffering Saviour whom the altar sets forth, we behold displayed magnanimity, condescension, disinterested love, that call for our devout, and grateful admiration, and that tend to excite our full and firm confidence in the divine instructor who, by these sufferings, sealed the truth of his mission. He was ushered into the world not amidst the sumptuous splendour of courts and palaces; but amidst the meanness, the inclemencies, the degradations of a manger. He chose, for his kindred in the flesh, not the noble, the rich and the mighty; but the humble, the obscure, the despised. He selected, for the sacred companions of his private hours, for the affectionate soothers of his cares and sorrows, for the endeared partakers of all his labours and instructions, not the learned, the refined, and the wealthy; but fishermen, humble, illiterate, and contemned. He courted, not the cheering company of the gay, the luxurious, and the opulent;—but the contemned society of the children of poverty, of ignorance and affliction. The Redeemer did not proudly surround himself with the splendid and luxurious trappings of wealth and power; he did not sedulously court the seducing ease of elevated and wealthy stations, and shun the walks of poverty, calamity, and distress.—Ah! revilings, contempt, insult repaid all the prodigies of love which distinguished his beneficent life. At the unrighteous and cruel judgment seat of Pilate, this innocent and holy martyr was arraigned. All the insults and tortures which ingenious and inflamed malice could suggest, were poured into that hallowed bosom which beat only with

ardent love to mankind.—On Calvary's Mount that innocent blood was poured forth, which pleaded for mercy on the barbarous hands that shed it. Oh my soul! impotent is language to do even feeble justice to the exalted magnanimity, the astonishing love of the holy Jesus. His divine dignity and glory rendered still more astonishing and profound the stoops of his mercy. The uncreated image of the Father's glory, was born, the child of poverty and wretchedness. He, who in heaven received the profound adoration of the angelic host, placed himself among the ignorant and profligate herd of publicans and sinners. He, who held in his hand the thunders of omnipotence, calmly submitted to be the sport of an infuriate rabble. He, whose head divine lustre surrounded, was crowned with thorns, and mocked with the impious acclamations of his implacable enemies. The Lord of life and glory, he, who created and sustained the worlds, sunk in the agonies of death an ignominious victim on the cross. The bitter sufferings, which, unmitigated and uncheered by friendly sympathy, pursued him, afford the strongest proof that no sinister motives of pride, of interest or ambition could have swayed his breast. The exalted messages of salvation which he proclaimed, the pure and heavenly precepts which he inculcated, the works of mercy and love which he performed, did not procure for him affection, gratitude, and love; they did not receive the applauses and honours by which the benefactors of mankind are rewarded. Ah! Contumely, insult and death crowned his benevolent exertions. O my soul! thy Saviour exhibited, in his suffering life, the strongest proof of sincere and disinterested zeal, of exalted and magnanimous virtue. Persevering in his divine work of love, though contempt and suffering met him at every step; though he foresaw, that the malignant

hatred of his enemies would at length prevail in his destruction; and that, amidst their bitter taunts and revilings, he should sustain an ignominious death,—thy exalted Redeemer claims thy highest admiration and confidence. Zeal, thus self-denying and disinterested, in the pursuit of the noblest objects, should silence every base and ungenerous suspicion. Contemplating the divine fortitude and resolution, with which the Saviour sealed in death the truth of the doctrines which, through his suffering life, he had inculcated, thou shouldest acknowledge, in the holy fervours of a faith, like that which animated the Centurion beholding at the cross the magnanimity and patience of the crucified Redeemer, “Truly this was the Son of God.”

At the altar, therefore, O my soul, thou art called to commemorate the sufferings and death of a divine teacher, whose magnanimity, fortitude and patience, while they claim thy fervent love, gratitude, and homage, are powerfully calculated to confirm, strengthen and exalt the ardours of thy faith. Contemplate the gross ignorance of all the interesting truths and duties connected with the spiritual welfare, hopes, and destination of man, which enveloped the world, before this divine teacher rose in the glorious splendour of celestial truth and knowledge. Contemplate the impious superstition, the cruel rites, the debasing crimes which enthralled the world, before this divine teacher, by the lustre of his beams, chased before him the dark clouds of pagan idolatry, error, and vice. Then turn thy view to the glorious revelation, which he promulgated; to the splendid lustre which it sheds on all the duties and all the hopes of man, on every religious and moral truth, which can awaken his desires or his fears, which can conduce to his present or eternal welfare. In the revelation of Jesus Christ, the ardent desires of the soul,

seeking, with earnest solicitude, the path to duty and bliss which a blind and erring reason in vain endeavoured to discover, are fully gratified—the way is tracked out, with luminous lustre, to the throne of God—resplendent light and glory burst from the gloomy mansions of the tomb. O my soul! adore with lively gratitude and faith, the divine teacher, who hath sealed to thee these glorious truths and hopes by the resistless and affecting testimony of his blood. While the tears of lively sympathy and sorrow are shed over the sacred memorials, which recall to thy remembrance the pungent and unparalleled sufferings of thy blessed Lord, let the altar be also the hallowed throne, where thou dost present the grateful vows of fidelity and obedience to that divine teacher, who, from the terrors and agonies of the cross, shed light, life, and immortality on the world.

THE PRAYER.

O MOST MERCIFUL GOD! who hast given us thy only begotten Son, to be our divine guide and teacher, to lead us from the darkness of ignorance and error into the glorious light of thy truth; grant, that the contemplation of his patience, his resolution, his magnanimity and fortitude under the various sufferings which assailed him, while it awakens my lively gratitude, may serve to cherish and confirm my faith in his glorious doctrines. May the ardent, the disinterested, the persevering zeal, which the Saviour displayed in encountering the malicious calumny and persecution with which his relentless enemies repaid him for his benevolent instructions, excite at once my admiration, my gratitude, and steadfast confidence. I bless thee, most holy Jesus, that thou wast

not deterred from the prosecution of thy divine work of enlightening and restoring fallen man, by the sufferings and persecutions that assailed thee—by the prospect of the ignominious death that was to close thy infinite labour of love. I bless thee, most holy Jesus, that by the shedding of thy precious blood in attestation of the sublime and glorious truths thou didst promulgate, thou hast afforded the highest evidence of thy sincerity, thy divine and disinterested benevolence and zeal. O may I evermore love and serve thee as a divine and beneficent teacher, who, in proclaiming and establishing the glorious revelation of mercy and grace, consulted only our peace, our welfare, our instruction, and everlasting consolation; and benignantly and generously sacrificed thy own ease, comfort, happiness, and life. O may the commemoration of thy sufferings and death in thy holy supper powerfully recal to my awakened feelings, the infinite condescensions of thy love, the painful sacrifices, the awful conflicts which thou didst sustain in the establishment of that divine dispensation of grace, by which thou hast shed the luminous rays of immortal truth and glory on a blind and perishing world. Receiving with humble gratitude and faith the memorials of thy love, may I resolutely and fervently devote myself to thy service. Evermore following the light of thy divine instructions, and regulating my life by thy celestial doctrines and precepts, may I thus evidence the sincerity of my gratitude, my faith and love, and seek, in some measure, to make amends to thee for the contumely, scorn, and suffering with which, while on earth, thy benevolent instructions and labours were repaid. O thou eternal light of the world, “send forth thy light and truth. Let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy hill—to God my exceeding joy,” to the blissful fruition of the excellency and glory of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Morning Devotions.]

CHAPTER 13
FRIDAY EVENING

MEDITATION

Thankful remembrance of the Death of Christ. — Charity with all men.

THOU hast been gratefully contemplating, O my soul, the sufferings and death of Christ as affording affecting and powerful evidence of the divinity of his mission and the truth of his doctrine. Turn now thy mournful view to the sufferings and death of Christ as *an all-sufficient expiation and atonement for sin.*

The sufferings of Christ, considered as the infinite price or the ransom of a guilty world from condemnation and misery, rise to the highest importance and significance, and claim our most profound adoration and love. From the awful gloom of suffering and sorrow, the illustrious virtues of magnanimity, patience, and fortitude will, indeed, shine forth with the brightest and most affecting lustre. Contrasted with the awful horrors of that eventful

hour, when, in the agonies of death aggravated by every painful circumstance of reproach, insult, and ignominy, our divine instructor closed his suffering life, how resplendent and endearing appear the mild and submissive patience, the ardent and benignant love which he displayed. Rising triumphantly from the dark cloud of suffering which enveloped the cross, the holy Jesus appears clothed with the celestial radiance of divine power and glory, and with irresistible authority and conviction, proclaims to the world the everlasting dispensation of grace, and imposes the luminous and immutable rules of truth and duty. But when, with the authority of a divine Instructor, we connect the mercy and power of an *Almighty Redeemer*, the sufferings and death of Christ, which before inspired admiration, gratitude and confidence, will penetrate us with emotions of the most profound adoration, and will excite the liveliest fervours of love, the most ardent triumphs of holy faith. A Redeemer, who, in sustaining the penalties of sin, rescues us from its awful condemnation; who, in sinking under the angry stroke of death, breaks forever the sceptre of the relentless tyrant; who, in yielding for a short period to the dominion of the prince and powers of darkness, bursts forever the degrading and torturing chains which they had cast on guilty man; a Redeemer who from the cross which was the ignominious scene of the temporary triumphs of his foes, displays the splendid banners of victory, and "proclaims liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound;"—a Redeemer who thus turns ignominy, suffering, and death into triumph, victory and glory, presents a display of mysterious and divine power, which, while it transcends and confounds our feeble comprehensions, should excite the profound and grateful fervours of adoration and love.

Contemplate, then, O my soul, the sufferings of Christ as the price of thy redemption. View thyself as fallen from that exalted rectitude and glory which distinguished thy primeval state, into the awful abyss of blindness, depravity and guilt. Regard thyself as having forfeited the cheering favour of that merciful Being whose favour is the only source of bliss—as obnoxious to the indignation of that Almighty Sovereign, whose angry frown awakens misery and despair. Ah! when thou art thus abased by the humiliating and poignant conviction of thy guilt and wretchedness, thou wilt be able to estimate the full and exalted value of those unparalleled sufferings by which the Son of God achieved thy rescue from condemnation and death. Yes—“while we were yet sinners,” in a state of avowed and presumptuous rebellion against the Supreme Majesty of Heaven, of ungrateful and perverse contempt of the mercy and goodness of our Almighty Benefactor and Father—while our crimes and impiety called for the arm of divine justice to crush and confound us, the infinite love of God prompted the wonderful purpose of our redemption, and “Christ,” the Eternal Son, clothed with our nature, “died for us.” The poverty, the scorn, the persecution, the ignominy, the direful agonies of the cross which overwhelmed him, were the punishments due to our sins, they were the glorious price of our redemption. Blessed Jesus! *we* transgressed the righteous laws of our God; and *thou*, innocent and guiltless, didst sustain the penalties due to our crimes.—We incurred the sentence of divine justice; and thou, the immaculate Lamb, didst sink under its avenging curse.—We were enthralled by the degrading and miserable chains of the prince of darkness; *thou* didst sustain the overwhelming shock of his fiery assaults, to rescue *us* from his dominion.—We were

bowed down, the miserable captives of death, the relentless tyrant of our race—thou didst bare thy bosom to his deadly dart, which, drinking up thy blood, was quenched forever! Oh, profound mystery of love! that calls for the deepest adoration, for the most lively and unceasing emotions of gratitude. O my soul! is it possible for thee to contemplate, unmoved and unaffected, the agonizing sufferings and conflicts which the Redeemer sustained, in effecting the glorious purpose of his love—thy redemption from guilt and misery and death. The heir of guilt and wretchedness—shall not the emotions of holy gratitude be excited to the gracious Redeemer, who, by offering himself the victim to divine justice, expiates thy guilt, and consoles thee with the enlivening offer of mercy and pardon. Bound by the invincible chains of sin and death, wilt thou not celebrate, in triumphant strains, the grace and power of that Almighty Conqueror, who, by the shedding of his blood, hath purchased thy redemption from this degrading bondage. Doomed, through transgression, to sustain the oppressing cares, the painful changes of this vale of sorrow, and destitute of the consolatory assurance that beyond the gloomy mansions of the grave, a brighter day of rest and peace shall dawn upon thee,—Oh! shall not the exulting jubilee of adoration and praise be directed to that divine Saviour, who, having passed through the dark valley of the shadow of death, hath chased from it the fearful spectres that hold in it their reign, and opened to thee a joyful and triumphant passage to immortal glory and felicity.

That thankful remembrance of the death of Christ, with which it is thy duty always to commemorate his love in the holy supper, will be most strongly excited and cherished by frequently and seriously considering the

state of condemnation, of guilt, and misery from which the Saviour, by his death, redeemed thee, and the exalted and immortal blessings which through his mediation are conferred upon thee. Accustomed ever to consider the cross of Christ as the divine fountain whence flow all thy spiritual hopes and consolations, it will be endeared to thee as the sacred pledge of thy salvation; and at the altar thou wilt fix the eye of grateful and stedfast faith on the *Lamb of God*, who, by the sufferings and death there commemorated, hath *taken away the sins of the world*.

Let the awful exhibition of divine justice in that sacrifice which under lively symbols is set forth at the altar, impress thee, O my soul, with the inflexible and severe indignation of God against the impenitent transgressors of his laws. If God withheld not the sword of his justice, though it penetrated the bosom of his beloved Son clothed in the person of man with the sins of the world, will he spare the impenitent sinner, who defies the awful display of divine justice, and contemns the affecting manifestation of divine mercy, which the sacrifice of the cross affords.

But if thou art deeply penitent for thy offences, and sincerely disposed to renounce and forsake them, approach the altar; and while thou dost there contemplate the lively memorials of the sufferings and death of thy Lord, thankfully celebrate the triumphs of his cross by which thy redemption was effected. From the cross, where an all-sufficient victim satisfies the claims of divine justice, beams in illustrious splendour that eternal mercy, which diffuses unfailing and exalted peace and joy through the troubled spirit. There flows, as from a rich and exhaustless fountain, that precious blood which will wash away the foulest stains of sin. In the unutterable agonies of the Lord of life, the exactions of divine justice are fulfilled to

the uttermost—The righteous Judge of heaven and earth, beholding the authority of his laws which had been violated and insulted, fully and effectually vindicated and preserved, extends the sceptre of mercy to the penitent offender. Oh, then, my soul, let the altar, which conveys to thee the exalted merits and blessings of the cross, ever witness thy humble penitence, thy lively and grateful recollection of that painful and ignominious death, which was the price of thy pardon, peace, and everlasting salvation. And when the sacred elements, received by lively faith, convey to thee, the vivifying and strengthening virtue of the body and blood of Christ, let the ardent burst of gratitude ascend to that God, who on the eternal throne of mercy is reconciling the world unto himself—to that divine and immaculate Lamb, who was slain and offered an all-sufficient and glorious victim, to redeem thee by his blood.

The grateful contemplation of the sufferings and death of Christ should also impress on thee that spirit of *humility, patience and universal charity* which the Saviour eminently displayed, and which are the essential characteristics of his true disciples.

The sufferings of Christ afford a brilliant and powerful attestation of the truth of his *doctrines*.—They present a still higher claim to our gratitude, and become still more endeared to our grateful remembrance, by their infinite efficacy as an all-sufficient expiation of our sins and guilt.—And they farther demand our grateful recollection as impressing upon us, in the most powerful and affecting manner, the great and important virtues which will assimilate us to our divine master, *humility, patience, and universal love*. In order to behold a striking and affecting exhibition of the meek, the humble, and lowly spirit of the Christian calling;

in order to correct those false ideas of religion, so grateful to corrupt nature, and therefore so generally entertained, which represent its sacred claims as entirely compatible with the gratification of the proud, the revengeful, the aspiring passions of the heart; in order to contemplate a noble and affecting display of uniform resignation, perfect patience, and exalted love, under afflictions the most severe, injuries the most poignant, and persecutions the most implacable—we must contemplate the character of the blessed Jesus and follow him through his suffering life. “He grew up as a tender plant and as a root out of the dry ground. He had no form or comeliness; and when we saw him, there was no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. When he was reviled, he reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not.” Patient and holy lamb of God! bitter anguish and misery penetrated thy innocent bosom;—and shall we, whose aggravated sins and guilt loudly demand suffering and punishment, expect to pass along the easy path of pleasure and indulgence? Scorn and persecution, pouring their revengeful fires on thy holy head, awakened only thy blessings and thy prayers;—and shall we, whom the consciousness of imperfection and guilt should cover with deep humility, proudly cherish a resentful and implacable temper? Sustaining the accumulated sins of a guilty world, thy innocent spirit was pressed down by the vengeful arm of divine justice—thou wast stretched on the rack of divine wrath till the agony of thy soul burst forth in great drops of blood—Ah! when thou didst thus

exhaust the bitter dregs of that cup of trembling which the indignation of heaven had prepared as the punishment of our guilt, shall we impatiently murmur at those slight but salutary chastisements and afflictions which are mercifully designed to promote our spiritual and eternal health and perfection. O my soul, thy patient, meek, and humble Redeemer left thee an example that thou shouldst follow his steps.—The virtues of humility, patience, and universal love, he powerfully illustrated and enforced by his own humble, suffering, and benevolent life. Worthy of thy liveliest gratitude is the infinite condescension of thy blessed Lord, who, to animate and aid thy obedience, has himself performed every precept which he enjoins, has himself sustained sacrifices and sufferings infinitely greater than those to which thou art called. Behold then exhibited in his life the most glorious model of duty, the most animating incentives to cherish those humble, lowly, patient and benevolent virtues, which illustriously adorned the Saviour's character. Distinguished and exalted the privilege of the disciples of Christ, that they are called to walk in that path of suffering and trial which their divine Redeemer trod before them. Honourable those sorrows and afflictions which conform the believer to the image of his divine Lord, and prepare him for the fruition of those glories to which, as the reward of his patience, the Saviour is exalted. Murmur not, O my soul, under that cross with which thy Redeemer did patiently labour up the steep of Calvary. The path of suffering and trial which thy Saviour tracked out, thou must patiently follow, if thou wilt attain the celestial glories on which he has entered. It is the declaration which his own lips proclaimed and which his suffering life has sealed, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take

up his cross and follow me. Through much tribulation ye must enter into the kingdom of heaven." Animated by his glorious example, and cheered by the heavenly voice, which, from the throne of eternal majesty and power, he directs to thee, "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world"—resolve, to preserve thy allegiance to him amidst the most furious assaults of temptation and persecution,—resolve, to glorify his mercy and power in the most bitter agonies of suffering and death. At the altar, where the affecting representation of the sorrows and agonies of thy Lord, forcibly reminds thee that those, who would resemble him in the glories of his resurrection, must be conformed to him in the likeness of his humiliating sufferings and death, thankfully commemorate the animating aids and incentives to patience and resignation which his blessed life affords;—draw from the exhaustless fountain of his grace the strengthening succours which will exalt thee triumphant over the assaults of temptation and sorrow.

The suffering life of the Redeemer is calculated to impress on thee, O my soul, the humble, the lowly, the patient, and benevolent virtues which constitute the highest perfection of thy nature, which are productive of the highest joys and consolations, and which are indispensable qualifications for future blessedness. With the liveliest gratitude, therefore, should those sufferings be remembered, which are fraught with instruction so beneficial and exalted. There is no virtue however, which the contemplation of the sufferings and death of Christ more strongly inculcates than *charity or universal love*. Love is the celestial soul of his religion, it is the animating spring of every other grace and virtue, the eternal centre to which they all tend, and in which they will all finally become absorbed.

This virtue, the inseparable badge of the true disciples of Christ, attaches the soul with the most lively and vigorous ardour to God, the source of every excellence, the infinite author of every mercy,—in Christ Jesus, the God of everlasting compassion and grace. It inspires the soul with the most lively affection for man, who bears the image of that divine Being whom she adores,—who shares in the common wants and sorrows that oppress her,—who is redeemed by the blood of the same Saviour, and sanctified by the same Almighty Spirit,—and who looks forward to the same immortal destiny. Christians animated by the divine principle of love, will uniformly endeavour “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”—to preserve the harmony and order of that holy Church, through which the streams of mercy and grace from the divine Redeemer are conveyed to them, and by which they are to be trained for the united and immortal celebration of the praises of their God in the Church-triumphant. Regarding one another as partakers of these divine and celestial privileges, as destined for the same transcendent and eternal state of perfection and bliss, they will feel themselves united together by the most affecting and powerful ties. Yes—resting for pardon on the same precious blood, quickened and sanctified by the same Almighty Spirit, prepared for the inheritance of glory by the same course of suffering and trial, fellow-pilgrims through the same vale of tears to a blissful and eternal rest—united thus in the participation of the same wants and sorrows, in the possession of the same divine privileges, in the fruition of the same glorious and immortal promises, Christians should also be united by the most sacred and endearing emotions of tenderness and kindness—The Spirit of divine love shedding through their hearts its quickening power, should excite

them to endeavour to remove or alleviate, by every act of sympathy and affection, the obstacles and afflictions that assail them in their progress—to enliven their wearisome pilgrimage by celebrating, in holy concord, the glories of that heavenly city towards which they are advancing. Destined to unite in strains of everlasting love and joy before the throne of the Eternal, their spirits should be attuned on earth to the harmonious celebration of the praises of their God. Oh! what an exalted exhibition of holy joy and peace would the world present, did this spirit of divine love pervade and animate the souls of Christians. This vale of tears and misery, where discord, suspicion, envy and revenge, blast the few joys which lie scattered along the path of life, would be converted into a paradise of love and peace, fair and exalted as that in which man, at first, enjoyed the blissful smiles of his glorious Maker.

This spirit of universal charity, so sublime and noble in its origin and nature, so beneficial and exalted in its effects, is enjoined on thee, O my soul, by the most powerful and affecting considerations; and it is an indispensable qualification for that holy supper, where christians profess themselves to be connected by the holy ties of a Redeemer's merits and blood. From the altar, the sacred and tender voice of the Saviour implores his followers, by that precious blood which is their common and supreme affianced, by that quickening Spirit of love and consolation which he sheds through their hearts, by those blissful and immortal hopes which he hath purchased for them all—by that infinite and unutterable love which, through his suffering life and agonizing death, he displayed for them, he implores them—to "love one another." "This is my commandment, that ye love one another." Blessed Jesus! who shrunk from no sufferings to achieve our redemption—we

owe thee the supreme devotion of our souls which thou hast purchased. And didst thou require as the pledge of our gratitude the renunciation of our ease and enjoyment, cheerfully should the feeble and inadequate tribute be rendered. Base then and highly criminal the apathy which would lead us to disobey thy dying injunction to cherish the exalted virtue of charity and love, the ornament and perfection of our nature, the source of the purest and most refined joys.

Advance then to the altar, O my soul, cherishing the emotions of lively benevolence for *all mankind*. Embrace in thy benevolent regard the whole human race. Resolve to promote by ardent and persevering exertion the welfare and happiness of thy fellow men. The disciple of a Redeemer who went about doing good, let no opportunity be omitted of imitating thy blessed Lord in acts of beneficence and mercy. Following the steps of thy compassionate Master, seek out the gloomy abodes of poverty and wretchedness; and while thy beneficence pours gladness into the hearts of the children of sorrow, direct their humble trust and hope to that gracious Providence “without whose knowledge, not even a sparrow falleth to the ground”—direct their glowing desires to those abodes of undecaying peace and bliss, “where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.” The blessing of those who were ready to perish shall descend upon thee. Animated by that spirit of divine love which assimilates thee to thy blessed Redeemer, he will acknowledge thee, at his holy supper, as an acceptable and favoured guest. And when from the everlasting fountain of grace and mercy opened on the altar, the exhilarating streams of peace and joy are dispensed to thee, let thy ardent prayers be directed to heaven, that the bread of life may diffuse

its immortal and invigorating efficacy through the earth; that all the guilty and perishing sons of men may have access to that refreshing and purifying blood, which washes away the deepest stains of sin.

Advance to the altar, animated with peculiar and sacred affection *for those who as Christians are connected with thee by the endearing ties of the Redeemer's merits and grace.*

For those who are of the "household of faith;" who, admitted into the christian covenant, place their hopes of salvation on the merits and grace of that Redeemer who is thy only trust and refuge; the most sacred and lively emotions of tenderness and affection should be cherished. The sincere and real followers of Christ are connected together by the sacred ties of a Saviour's love, of his Almighty grace renewing and animating their souls. These ties are destined to be as exalted and eternal as those celestial exercises which will engage the spirits of the blest before the throne of God, in the unceasing strains of adoration and praise. Look upon those then, O my soul, who, united with thee to the Redeemer by a living faith, commemorate, at the altar, the rich displays of his grace and mercy, as thy destined companions in the celebration of the riches of redeeming love, which, through eternal ages, will constitute the glory and the bliss of the church triumphant. Oh! let the exalted consideration that the bands of christian fellowship and affection shall never be dissolved, excite thy warmest and most tender affection for those with whom thou art destined to drink ineffable bliss at those celestial streams which flow forever in the glorious city of the living God. Let the precious emblems of the Saviour's love, which with his humble followers thou dost receive at his holy supper, bind thee to them by the cords of friendship and affection, which no ungenerous selfishness or envy,

no unkind suspicions or resentments shall ever tarnish or dissolve. Ah! over the lively memorials of that infinite grace to which they are indebted for those immortal hopes which alone cheer and brighten the wearisome pilgrimage of life, let the members of Christ's mystical body vow to each other sacred fellowship and affection—let them ardently resolve “to put away all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour, and evil speaking with all malice—and to be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them.”

And as the perfection and consummation of Christian charity, the devout communicant should advance to the altar, heartily disposed to *forgive and to love his enemies*.

It was the pressing injunction of our dying master; it is made the indispensable condition of our receiving forgiveness at the hands of our Almighty Judge; it is constituted by our Lord, the sacred plea by which we are to supplicate forgiveness from heaven, *that we forgive others their trespasses against us*. The forgiveness of our enemies consists in exercising towards them those benevolent affections which, by the constitution of human nature and the command of God, we are bound to exercise towards all mankind; in the ready expression of our good will to them; in refraining from every act of unkindness or resentment towards them; and in a cordial desire and disposition to effect a reconciliation with them. As it is one of the most difficult virtues, so it is one of the most noble and exalted—in the highest degree perfective of human nature, and fruitful of the highest and the most sublime joys. It rescues us from those painful anxieties, from those intolerable convulsions which agitate the breast that is the seat of gloomy revenge—It sheds that ineffable and

delightful tranquility which is alone the portion of the bosom that is at peace with the world—It animates the soul with the elevated reflection that in overcoming the direful passion of revenge, she has gained the trophies of the most sublime and exalted victory—It assimilates man to that gracious and merciful Being, who doeth good to the unthankful and the evil—It advances him into an intimate and glorious resemblance to that divine Saviour, who, in the ardours of infinite love, supplicated the pardoning efficacy of his blood for the relentless enemies who, with insatiable and malignant fury, hunted him to the cross. Ah! the devout communicant whose heart is deeply penetrated with the display of unutterable mercy which the cross affords, will bury at the foot of the altar all his enmities, jealousies, and resentments. The blood of his Saviour penetrating through his heart, will extinguish, by its potent efficacy, every wrathful passion. Love to God and man, ardent, holy, and constant as the fire of the eternal altar at which it is kindled, will alone inflame and animate his soul.

AN ACT OF THANKSGIVING,
for the Humiliation and Sufferings of Christ.

Praises evermore be unto thee, Eternal Son of God, who didst take our nature upon thee, and for us didst become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

THAT, when by impious rebellion against our Sovereign God and merciful Father, we had fallen from our state of primeval rectitude and glory, had forfeited all title to the

light of God's countenance, and incurred his awful indignation and wrath—that, when justice inexorably urged our excision, and divine holiness inflexibly demanded the vindication of a violated law—that, when among the host of heaven “there was none to help,” among the innumerable orders of created beings “there was none to uphold,” none whose “arm could bring salvation” for us—that, in this our hopeless state of condemnation and misery, when the mercy of the Almighty Father prompted, thou didst willingly undertake the office of our Redeemer—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O Eternal Son of God.

That thou, who “wast with the Father before the world was,” “the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person”—thou, whom Cherubim and Seraphim adored, and to whom the exalted host of heaven bowed submissive—didst cheerfully stoop to veil thy unutterable glory in our frail and miserable nature—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O Eternal Son of God.

That thou didst relinquish the infinite felicity of the Godhead, to be born, in our nature, of a humble and obscure family; to be ushered into the world among the beasts of the stall; and to sustain the wants and pains of infancy and childhood,—when thou couldst have commanded the homage of the universe, and encircled thyself with celestial majesty and splendour—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That thou, whom angels and archangels counted it their glory submissively to serve, didst thyself become subject to thy parents, rendering them reverence and obedience;

and through the whole of thy benevolent life didst become the *servant* of mankind in administering to their necessities—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That, in the prosecution of the benevolent work of our redemption, thou didst sustain want, and suffering, and sorrow, and didst even wander without a place to lay thy head,—when thou wast entitled to the eternal throne of universal dominion—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That thou didst encounter shame, indignity and insult; didst associate with the refuse of mankind; and patiently didst submit to the charge of acting in concert with the Prince and powers of darkness—when thou couldst have commanded, for thy attendants, the brightest Seraphs that minister in the court of heaven—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That, in the day of thy humiliation as a suffering Saviour, thou didst become “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”; that, laden with the sins of a guilty world, thou didst appear “without form or comeliness,” “thy visage marred more than any man and thy form more than the sons of men”—that, in the garden of Gethsemane, uncheered by the watchful sympathy of thy disciples, thou didst, friendless and alone, “tread the wine-press” of thy Father’s wrath; and “drink the dregs of that cup

of trembling” which infused direful horrors through thy soul, and bathed thy convulsed body in a bloody sweat—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That thou didst submit to be betrayed by one of thy disciples, and “lead as a lamb to the slaughter” by thy implacable enemies; that, deserted by thy timid and faithless followers, thou didst patiently submit, in the hall of the High Priest, and at the tribunal of Pilate, to be unjustly arraigned and condemned, to be buffeted and spit upon, scourged and mocked—when thy omnipotent word could have struck to the earth thy vengeful adversaries—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That thou didst patiently labour under the heavy load of the ignominious cross on which thou wast to suffer—and, condemned as a malefactor, didst, amidst the cruel taunts of thy enemies, sustain the agonies of death made more dreadful to thy tender and susceptible spirit by the wrath of thy Father which, kindled by the sins of a guilty world, overwhelmed and consumed thee—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That for us men, and for our salvation, these painful sufferings, this ignominious and cruel death were patiently sustained—that thou wast “wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, that the chastisement of our peace was upon thee, and that by thy stripes we are healed”—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, Eternal Son of God.

That, by thy sufferings and death thou hast sealed the truth of thy doctrines, and exhibited a bright and affecting example of those graces of humility, meekness and love which thou dost call us to practice; that, by thy suffering life and agonizing death, thou hast powerfully enforced thy instructions, rendered an all-sufficient atonement for sin, and shed divine and affecting lustre on that path of humble and holy obedience by which we are to ascend to the glorious and eternal bliss of thy celestial kingdom—

Praises evermore be unto thee, O Eternal Son of God, who didst take our nature upon thee, and for us didst become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

THE PRAYER.

“ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast given thine only Son to be both a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life; give me grace that I may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour myself to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life.” O most blessed and merciful Jesus, Eternal Son of God, who didst suffer for iniquities not thine own, and by the shedding of thy most precious blood didst pay the infinite price of our redemption; may the contemplation of thy bitter sufferings penetrate my heart with the emotions of lively gratitude to thee, my gracious Redeemer, who couldst stoop from the glory and felicity of the Godhead, and encounter shame, sorrow, persecution and death to achieve my deliverance and salvation.

Contemplating, with frequent and holy admiration, thy infinite condescension and love, may I regard no sacrifices too dear, no service too exalted to testify my ardent sensibility and gratitude. Let me not incur the awful guilt of contemning the penetrating and affecting motives to repentance exhibited by thy precious blood shed to atone for my sins. Beholding in the agonies of thy cross both the fearful display of the justice of God and the attractive lustre of his infinite mercy, may the emotions of holy apprehension and love combine to excite in my heart the sacred resolution of serving thee. O let me not sink under the awful condemnation of having contemned thy bitter agonies, of having trampled thee under foot, of having put thee to an open shame, of having crucified thee afresh, by my transgressions. Over the affecting emblems of thy sufferings displayed on the altar, may I fervently resolve to renounce all my sins; and may I offer thee a heart deeply penetrated with the emotions of contrition, gratitude and love. And O thou compassionate Redeemer, in whose suffering life the virtues of humility, patience, and divine charity shone forth with the most exalted lustre; may the hallowed example thou hast set me, be the subject of my constant and devout meditations; and warmed with the glorious view, may I resolve to imitate thy divine humility, patience, and love. May the contemplation of thy cross, on which, in the agonies of a cruel and ignominious death, thou didst pour forth the earnest prayer for pardon on thy relentless enemies, disarm in my soul every unhallowed purpose of resentment, and quicken the exalted emotions of forgiveness and kindness. Eternal Spirit! quickening fountain of divine love! descend, and shed abroad in my heart that sacred charity for all mankind, that tender affection and sympathy for the members of Christ's mystical body, by which I shall be conformed to the likeness of my blessed Redeemer, and made meet for his eternal kingdom of peace and joy.

Sacred Spirit! when I approach that heavenly banquet, where christians commemorate their Saviour's mercy, and testify that they are partakers of the same blessed privileges and hopes, may thy powerful grace subdue every resentful and angry passion, and enkindle the holy flame of divine charity. May my soul, softened and melted into tenderness and kindness, embrace in its ardent and sacred affection the holy company of the redeemed, who meet at the altar to celebrate the immortal triumphs and blessings of their Saviour's mercy. May thy quickening grace unite me to them in the indissoluble bands of sympathy and friendship, and excite me uniformly to exercise towards them the endearing virtues of gentleness, forbearance and love. Thus, O my Saviour! by sacredly fulfilling that law of celestial kindness, which thou didst so earnestly and repeatedly enjoin, may I exhibit to the world the engaging and endearing lustre of thy blessed religion. Thus cherishing the spirit of divine love in the exercise of kindness, forbearance and forgiveness, may I ever be acknowledged by thee as an acceptable guest at thy holy table; and finally be admitted to the celestial supper of the Lamb, to the participation of the everlasting festival of love in thy heavenly kingdom; to the hallowed chorus of angels and archangels and the spirits of the just, celebrating in unceasing strains the majesty and glory of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, forever and ever.
Amen.

[Then add your usual Evening Devotions.]

CHAPTER 14

SATURDAY MORNING

MEDITATION

The devout participation of the Ordinances of the Church, the appointed method of Salvation.

NO truth can be more evident to reason than that God has a right to prescribe what method he pleases for the salvation of mankind. Originally dependent upon him as their Creator and their Judge, deriving from him life and all its enjoyments, which they hold by the dependent tenure of his sovereign will, they are bound by every tie of duty, interest and gratitude implicitly to fulfil his sacred injunctions. By obedience to his commands, they acknowledge his supreme authority over them, and attain that perfection and happiness for which they were destined. By resistance to his will, they forfeit that purity and bliss which are only to be found in the enjoyment of his favour. When we farther consider man as a fallen creature subject to the avenging punishment

of his offended Judge, we shall be compelled to acknowledge that he can have no hope of forgiveness but on those terms and conditions which God in his just and sovereign pleasure may prescribe. If then God hath seen fit to dispense his mercy and grace through the ordinances of a church by communion with which guilty and condemned man is to be restored to virtue and happiness—who is he that will resist his will? To dispute the propriety of his institutions, to doubt the efficacy of the means which he hath established, would be a presumptuous contempt of his mercy and power, a wilful rejection of his proffered grace. Contemning the means which he hath instituted for our salvation, we should aggravate to the deepest dye the guilt of rebellion against our Almighty Sovereign and Judge; and without any plea to extenuate our guilt, we should sink under the avenging arm of his justice.

That, in order to our deliverance from the condemnation and wrath which our sins have incurred, and to our restoration to the favour of God, we must humbly and devoutly participate of the ordinances of the church, is a truth, therefore, which rests on the simple fact whether God hath instituted these ordinances as the means of salvation, the channels of mercy and grace. To be fully satisfied of this fact, and to be rightly informed in the necessity, the nature and efficacy of the ordinances of the church, deeply concerns us. Our eternal happiness depends on our humble submission to the means and conditions of salvation which God hath prescribed. And the ordinances of the church will appear unnecessary and useless—they will exhibit no claim to our reverence, attention, or obedience, unless we regard them as instituted by God himself, and accompanied, when duly administered and received, by his efficacious grace and mercy.

It must be evident, therefore, that a deep conviction of the sacred necessity and inestimable benefits of the ordinances of the church, is necessary to an humble, enlightened, and submissive participation of them. It will, therefore, be highly useful and proper, that the christian who is engaged in preparing for the reception of the Holy Eucharist, the highest and most sublime act of christian worship, should be deeply impressed with the important truth that the ordinances of the church are appointed by God, and that they are the instituted pledges of his mercy and grace. He should be deeply impressed with the important truth that, by the devout participation of them, we preserve our communion with the church, for which the Redeemer shed his blood; and thus become interested in the inestimable and eternal blessings of that covenant of mercy which God hath promulgated to a guilty world. When we firmly believe that the power of God accompanies the due administration of his ordinances; that through them alone we can become united to the Redeemer, and interested in the renovating and saving efficacy of his atonement and grace, the devout participation of the Holy Eucharist will appear indispensably necessary to our salvation. Its high and awful import, as a channel of divine mercy and grace, powerfully impressed upon our minds, will tend to quicken and exalt our reverence, our penitence, our faith, our gratitude and love. Turn then, O my soul, to the consideration of the humble, but, through the grace and blessing of God, powerful means which he hath instituted for thy salvation!

That the truths of religion should be commemorated, and its blessings conveyed by external rites, is perfectly agreeable to the nature of man. His senses are the principal inlets of his knowledge; and through them the most

powerful, lively, and permanent impressions are made on his mind. There is no truth which the consideration of human nature, and the testimony of daily experience more strongly establishes, than that man is swayed infinitely more by his *passions* than by his *reason*. By the impressive power of external rites and emblems, you gain access to his passions; you awaken, you rouse, you guide and control them. So powerful is the influence of external rites on the mind, that men in all ages have had recourse to them to perpetuate the memory of great achievements, and to convey, impress, and preserve the sentiments of religion. The nature of man, therefore, required that the important truths of religion should be impressed on the mind by external emblems and rites. By these figurative institutions, spiritual and abstract truths, which are so difficult of apprehension, are clearly and powerfully conveyed; the understanding is enlightened; the imagination and the feelings, those powerful springs of human action, are quickened and roused. Ordinances and rites, instituted by God himself, as memorials of those exalted displays of mercy by which our redemption was effected, powerfully serve to confirm our faith, to enliven our gratitude, to excite and cherish our ardent love. They keep up the constant and lively remembrance of the wonderful mercy and grace of God, and exhibit in the most strong and affecting manner, the glorious achievements by which our blessed Redeemer triumphed over the adversaries of our salvation.

Wonder not then, O my soul, that the infinitely wise Creator of the universe should condescend in all his dispensations to the world to consult the nature of man, and to institute ordinances as memorials of his love, and *channels of his mercy and grace!* Even in that exalted state of

primitive purity and perfection, where the ever blessed Jehovah vouchsafed to hold immediate converse with the favoured parents of our race, figurative emblems were instituted to remind them of their duty, to convey and recal to them their glorious privileges and hopes. The *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* constantly recalled to them the obligation of obedience to the infinite and sovereign Author of their being, and of all their mercies; and powerfully impressed on their awakened remembrance the awful penalty of contemning the commands of their almighty Lawgiver and Judge. The *tree of life*, to which they had constant access, was the seal and pledge of that immortality which was to be the glorious reward of their obedience. After the fall had involved them in the lamentable curse of transgression, had stripped them of their exalted purity and glory, and rendered them obnoxious to the wrath of God, the hope of mercy was lighted up in their minds by the institution of *sacrifices*, which their offended God made the channels to his favour. While the shedding of the blood of beasts on the altar awakened in the soul of fallen man the recollection of his guilt which required expiation, it carried forward his joyful view to the promised victim, the infinite efficacy of whose blood would wash away the foul stain of sin. When, in the farther unfolding of that plan of redemption which was to be finally consummated in the glorious promulgation of the gospel, God chose a particular family and nation to be the repositories of his will, and the heirs of his promises; the rite of *circumcision* was instituted to be both a lively memorial of duty and a pledge of the divine favour. Take a view of the Jewish law, and you will find that its numerous, significant, and splendid rites were the instituted means by which the people of Israel maintained their communion with God, grate-

fully commemorated the deliverances which his Almighty arm wrought for them, and laid their claim to his blessing and everlasting favour. When He, the glorious seed of the woman, whose promised appearance kindled the first gleam of hope which illumined the souls of the wretched parents of our race after their rebellion against God—He, whose joyful day the fathers beheld and were glad—when He, to whom all the prophets and the law bore witness, appeared, to complete the work of redemption, by the shedding of his blood; the same plan of Divine Providence which had distinguished the preceding dispensations was still preserved. Through the channel of *rites and ordinances* were the mercy and grace of God to be conveyed; by them were the glorious achievements to be commemorated by which our redemption was effected. A church was instituted, which was to be the repository of the laws, of the mercy and grace of God. Destined to be everlasting in its duration, it was the promise of the Divine Founder of the church that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. Officers were appointed to rule it; to administer its ordinances; to conduct its worship; to enact its laws; to execute its discipline—and, with them, successively deriving their power from him, the Redeemer promised to be “alway, even to the end of the world.” Into this church, the “body” which derives life, strength, and salvation from Christ its head, *baptism* was instituted as the sacred rite of admission. In this regenerating ordinance, fallen man is born again from a state of condemnation into a state of grace; he obtains a title to the presence of the Holy Spirit, to the forgiveness of sins, to all those precious and immortal blessings which the blood of Christ purchased. The humble christian, who, by actual repentance, by lively faith, and holy obedience, fulfils his baptismal engagements, is

invested in the holy rite of *confirmation* with all those spiritual privileges and blessings which baptism conditionally conferred, with the manifold and strengthening gifts of the Holy Ghost.¹ In the hallowed *worship of the sanctuary*, he maintains that sacred intercourse with heaven by which his faith is confirmed, his love quickened, his resolutions of obedience strengthened, his soul prepared for the exalted and blissful services of the church and temple of God eternal in the heavens. By that powerful grace which accompanies the *preaching of the word*, the terrors of the law are fastened on the hearts of the secure and careless; the cheering promises of mercy applied to the trembling conscience of the penitent; divine light, consolation, and triumph poured upon the path which conducts the christian to immortal blessedness and glory. In that most sublime and exalted ordinance, the *Holy Eucharist*, are concentrated all the blessings of the Redeemer's mercy, and the almighty energies of his grace and love. In the participation of it, the humble and devout believer offers unto God the acceptable sacrifice of thanksgiving for the infinite mercies of redemption. He becomes united to his Saviour in the bonds of the everlasting covenant. The pardon of his sins, the renovating and consoling guidance of divine grace, the love and favour of his reconciled Father and God, a title to immortal felicity and glory, are conveyed and sealed to him by the body and blood of Christ, of which, under lively emblems, he gratefully and triumphantly partakes.

Behold then, O my soul, the same glorious plan distinguishing all the divine dispensations! It hath pleased the Sovereign Lord of the universe uniformly to dispense his mercy and grace through the channel of *ordinances*

¹*Acts* viii. 17.

and rites, instituted as the means and pledges of salvation. Humble and insignificant to the eye of sense, to the proud and presumptuous mind, may appear the rites which Jehovah makes the pledges of his mercy, the effectual means of redemption to his fallen creatures. But faith will discern in them the power of the most high God, whose ways are not as our ways; who, both in nature and in grace, accomplishes the most stupendous objects by the most humble instruments; and who more illustriously magnifies his power and confounds the pride of man, in proportion to the natural weakness and imperfection of the agents who carry on and effect the purposes of his sovereign will.

The holy sacraments of the church advance our salvation, not only by their natural tendency to cherish faith, gratitude, penitence, love, and every other divine virtue, but by the refreshing grace and mercy which they convey to those who receive them worthily. They are not merely lively and affecting memorials, calculated to impress on the mind the interesting truths of redemption, and to display, by significant emblems, the exalted glories and triumphs of redeeming love. But they are instituted by God as pledges of his grace and mercy, as channels to convey to degenerate man spiritual blessings and privileges, ordinarily to be obtained in no other way. The sprinkling of the body by water, is a significant emblem of our natural guilt and pollution, and of the spiritual purification which we must undergo. Bread broken and wine poured out, may be considered as lively symbols of the sufferings and death of the Saviour, in remembrance of whom we eat the bread and drink the wine. The Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, considered in this single point of view, as memorials or emblems of the most interesting spiritual truths, are calculated to pro-

duce the most important instruction and consolation. But their value and importance rise beyond all comparison, when we regard them further as the instituted means and pledges of all the blessings of salvation. Wherever the gospel is promulgated, the only mode through which we can be admitted into covenant with God, the only mode by which we can obtain a title to those blessings and privileges which Christ has purchased for his mystical body the church, is the sacrament of Baptism. The only mode by which we can become interested in the merits of the Saviour's death and passion, by which the guilt of sin can be removed, and its power subdued in our hearts; the only mode by which our perishing natures can derive the divine blessing of immortal glory, is the participation of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Repentance, faith, and obedience, will not, of themselves, be effectual to our salvation. The holy sacraments are the instituted means by which God conveys to the penitent and faithful those spiritual and immortal blessings, for which repentance, faith and obedience are indeed necessary qualifications. "Repent, and be baptised for the remission of sins." "Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." We may sincerely repent of our sins; we may heartily believe the gospel; we may walk in the paths of holy obedience; but until we enter into covenant with God by Baptism, and, ratifying our vows of allegiance and duty at the holy sacrament of the Supper, commemorate the meritorious sacrifice of Christ, we cannot assert any claim to salvation. We possess the necessary qualifications for it—but it is *solemnly and formally* conveyed to us only in Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are the only means by which we receive the inestimable blessings of redemption—the only

pledges by which they are assured to us.

THE PRAYER.

O ALMIGHTY GOD! who in thy wise Providence hast appointed ordinances to be the memorials of thy love, and the pledges and channels of thy grace and mercy to a fallen world; teach me humbly to adore thy sovereign will, and reverently to submit to thy institutions. Ever cherishing a profound sense of thy Almighty power, and of my own weakness, guilt, and dependence, may I repress the pride and arrogance which would lead me presumptuously to arraign thy dispensations, or to neglect and condemn the instituted means of salvation. Thy infinite condescension and goodness, O God, in setting forth and conveying by ordinances and rites the blessings of salvation, demand my sincere and lively acknowledgment and gratitude. May I devoutly bless and magnify thy name, that, by lively symbols addressing and engaging my senses, thou dost powerfully impress on my understanding the awful, sublime, and affecting mysteries of my redemption, and dost awaken my imagination and feelings, the ardent affections of my soul in thy love and service. Ever mindful that thy Almighty power can give efficacy to the most weak and humble instruments, may I discern, by the eye of faith, under the *outward and visible signs* of thy holy sacraments, the *inward and spiritual grace* which they signify and are designed to convey. Save me, O God, from the guilt and presumption of endeavouring to separate what thou hast inviolably connected; of presuming to claim thy grace and mercy, while I neglect or condemn the means and pledges by which alone they are conveyed and assured to me. To the holy sacraments and ordinances of thy church, may I ever have recourse, as the divine

seals by which thy mercy is conveyed to my soul—the hallowed channels by which quickening, purifying and refreshing streams flow from the eternal fountain of thy grace. And while I thus reverence thy holy ordinances, and by steadfastly and constantly partaking of them, keep up my communion with thee, my God; may I ever remember that their divine and inestimable blessings are effectually and fully conveyed only to the humble, the penitent, and the faithful. Teach me, therefore, O God, sedulously and earnestly to cherish those divine virtues of humility, of penitence, and of faith, by which alone I can be a worthy partaker of thy holy ordinances, and expect to receive in them the joyful and refreshing communications of thy grace and love. O be thou pleased ever to guide and aid me in my preparation for thy holy ordinances. Let thy preventing grace quicken my penitence, confirm my faith, and awaken my gratitude and love; that thus partaking of thy ordinances under a lively sense of my unworthiness, and with earnest desires for thy grace and mercy, they may seal to my soul the blessings of redemption, and reinstate me in thy everlasting love and favour. Hear me in these my humble supplications, O merciful God; and grant that the ordinances of thy church, quickening and establishing in my soul celestial graces and virtues, may prepare me for admission into thy heavenly kingdom, where my soul shall drink at the fountain of immortal pleasure, and be satisfied with the fulness of glory and bliss, through Jesus Christ my Mediator and Redeemer.
Amen.

[Then add your usual Morning Devotions.]

CHAPTER 15
SATURDAY EVENING

MEDITATION

The mode by which authority to administer the Sacraments is to be derived from Christ the Divine Head of the Church.

CONSIDERING the sacraments as means and pledges of divine grace and mercy, it must be evident, that their efficacy depends not on any inherent virtue, but on the power of God which accompanies them. Hence results the important truth, that, in order to be effectual, to be acknowledged by God, and accompanied by his power, they must be administered by those who have received a commission for the purpose from him. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to ascertain with whom God has vested authority to administer those sacraments, which derive all their efficacy from being administered according to his appointment.

The Son of God, as the redeemer of mankind, was constituted, by his Almighty Father, the “head of the church.”

To him, as the King and Ruler of this spiritual kingdom, "all power was given in heaven and in earth." From him, therefore, must emanate all authority in the church. The fanatic or enthusiast, who, invading any of the ministerial functions, impiously pretends that he has received immediately from God a divine commission, cannot surely claim the acknowledgment or confidence of mankind; unless, like the apostles, he proves, by the exercise of *miraculous power*, that God is indeed with him. Every claim to the ministerial function, in the present day, founded on an immediate commission from God, must be rejected as false and impious. There remains, therefore, no way in which spiritual authority can be derived from the Divine Head of the church, but through the agency of a set of men originally deriving their authority from Christ, and successively transmitting it "to the end of the world."

In inquiring concerning the constitution of the Christian priesthood, we would certainly be authorized in supposing that, in its orders, it would resemble the Jewish priesthood. The Christian dispensation was only the glorious development and consummation of that divine system of grace and mercy, the outlines of which had been traced out in the types and shadows of the Jewish ritual. As the types and shadows of the law were not abolished, but all gloriously fulfilled in the Saviour, and in the ordinances of his spiritual kingdom; the presumption surely is not unwarrantable, that the Christian priesthood would be the completion and perfection of the Jewish; and that, as the latter subsisted under the three orders of *High-priest, Priests, and Levites*, so the former would be constituted under three orders resembling these. Accordingly, the notion was universally prevalent among the primitive Fathers, that the orders of *Bishops, Priests, and Deacons* in the Chris-

tian church, were instituted in conformity to the three orders of the priesthood in the Jewish church.

That Christ transferred all spiritual power in the church to the apostles, is evident from the commission which he gave them. "As my Father sent me, even so send I you." The Father sent him the Prophet, the Priest, and Ruler of the church. The apostles, therefore, were commissioned to be the Prophets, the Priests, and the Governors of the church. That this commission was not temporary, and to die with the apostles; but, on the contrary, was to be perpetuated in the church, is evident from the concluding words of the commission: "Lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." The apostles and their successors, therefore, were commissioned to promulgate the terms of salvation, to teach and enforce its doctrines and duties. They were also commissioned to intercede for and bless the people, and to present in the Holy Eucharist the commemorative sacrifice of the death of Christ. They were further commissioned to govern the church, to admit into and to exclude from its communion, to enact its laws, and to administer its discipline. And this authority was to be transmitted in the church "alway even to the end of the world." Whether the priesthood vested with these high and spiritual powers was to subsist under only *one* order, or under several orders, with powers in some respects distinct and appropriate, is a question which the practice of the apostles, who were appointed by Christ to constitute the church, can certainly best determine. That the apostles ordained Elders and Deacons in the different churches, and vested them with certain ministerial powers, will readily be admitted. And that there was an order constituted superior to these, with the exclusive power of ordaining to the ministry, is a fact equally unde-

niable. In Ephesus certainly, and most probably in Crete, Elders were at an early period appointed.¹ Afterwards Paul commissioned Timothy and Titus, and sent them to those places for the express purpose of ordaining elders in every city.² Was not this commission an absurd and useless one, if the elders in those places possessed the power of ordination? Even allowing that the *concurrence* of the elders was necessary in ordaining to the ministry and governing the church, the commission given to Timothy and Titus certainly proves that the supreme power was vested in them; and that, without them, power in the church could not be legitimately exercised. That the priesthood, therefore, was constituted under *three* orders; and that to the *first* order belonged the power of ordaining to the ministry, and of thus perpetuating the priesthood through all ages of the church, are facts established by the testimony of Scripture. That these orders are not now distinguished by the same names by which they were designated during the age of the apostles; that the name of *Bishop*, now applied to the *first* order, is frequently, in the sacred writings, applied to the second order, are points unworthy of a moment's attention in this important inquiry. By the clear evidence of Scripture fact, the division of the christian priesthood into *three* orders; the appropriation of the power of ordination to the *first* order, thus constituted the only legitimate channel of conveying the Divine Commission necessary to the exercise of the ministry, may be satisfactorily proved.—The changes which may have taken place in the names by which these orders have been designated, cannot affect the distinction of office and power among them.

¹ Acts xx. 17, 28.

² 1 Tim. v. 23. Titus i. 5.

But if it should be conceived, that the Scripture testimony on this important subject is in any respect dubious or equivocal, where may we seek for satisfactory light and information? Certainly in the *faith and practice of the primitive church*. These, undoubtedly, afford the clearest and best light by which to elucidate and establish the meaning of Scripture in parts which admit of doubt and controversy. Founded, as the primitive church was, by the inspired apostles; and drinking, as its venerable fathers did, at the sacred source of divine truth and knowledge, it is scarcely possible that we can err, if we take its universal faith and usage as the standard by which to interpret the sacred writings. To trust, indeed, to the single testimony of any one father of the church; or to embrace his speculative opinions or interpretations of Scripture, would be blindly and indiscreetly to take as our guides imperfect and fallible men. But, though liable to error in judgment, the primitive fathers must be revered as men of exalted piety and integrity. As witnesses to matters of *fact*, to the doctrines which were universally received, and to the usages which universally prevailed in the church, their testimony is invaluable; and, in all controverted points, should be decisive. Whenever we find the primitive fathers concur in testifying that any doctrine or usage was universally received in the church as of Divine authority and institution—to doubt or reject their testimony would be at once to relinquish the very foundations of the christian faith. For their testimony is necessary to establish the canon of Scripture; to prove that the books which we now receive as inspired books, were revered and received as such in the apostolic and primitive age. To the primitive fathers, therefore, we may safely recur for information in regard to the government of the church, and the orders of

the priesthood. As these were matters of fact, it is not possible that the primitive fathers could err in regard to them; and since they were men of undoubted piety and integrity, they would not attempt to deceive. It may confidently be asserted, that the testimony of the primitive fathers is not more clear and decisive, in regard to the genuineness and authenticity of the books of the sacred volume, than in regard to the *facts*—that the priesthood was instituted by Christ and his apostles, under three distinct and subordinate orders; that these orders, retaining uniformly the same distinct ecclesiastical authority, were first stiled *Apostles—Bishops, Presbyters or Elders—and Deacons*; and afterwards *Bishops—Presbyters, Priests or Elders—and Deacons*; that no one could lawfully exercise the ministry, unless ordained by a Bishop; and that, through the order of Bishops, as successors to the apostles, the priesthood was to be perpetuated, and all power to be derived from Christ, the supreme head of the church. It is conceded by those who, within these few last centuries, have advanced the novel opinion of the original parity of the orders of the ministry, that bishops were universally considered in the fourth century as superior to presbyters and deacons. It is unfortunate for them, when they maintain, that the supremacy of bishops was an innovation on the apostolic constitution of the church, that no vestiges can be traced of a revolution which must have shaken the foundations of the church; that no record can be found of this daring usurpation of authority, by a few ambitious presbyters, over the rest of their brethren; and that there are scarcely any two of those who assert this usurpation, who agree as to the time when it took place. Is not the conclusion irresistible and irrefragable, that, if the church universal, from the third to the sixteenth century, was governed by

bishops, as superior to presbyters and deacons—and if no period can be ascertained when this government was introduced into the church, it must be traced to apostolic institution, and of course rest on Divine authority?

This discussion is of the highest importance to him who is preparing for receiving the Holy Eucharist. For the important truth results from it, that none can possess authority to administer the sacraments but those who have received a commission from the bishops of the church. It must be essential, therefore, to the efficacy of the Lord's Supper, as a means and pledge of Divine grace, that it be administered by those who have received lawful authority to administer it.

To this statement, which makes the blessings of the gospel to depend on communion with the church by the participation of its ordinances administered by duly authorized ministers, the formidable objection may be opposed, that it is narrowing the path of salvation. But if a solicitude be commendable to prevent the path of salvation from being unduly narrowed and confined; the solicitude to prevent it from being made more wide and easy than God has made it, is surely also commendable. To undervalue or remove those institutions which God hath rendered necessary to salvation, is to contemn his authority and power, and in the highest degree to endanger the souls of men. It is an unauthorized, a criminal, a cruel charity, which would present salvation to men, stripped of those conditions on which alone it is attainable. Real charity, the charity which most effectually promotes the welfare of men, would lead us faithfully to point out the conditions on which God will restore fallen man to his favour; and then earnestly and affectionately to enforce these conditions. In the inscrutable plan of Divine Provi-

dence as it has hitherto been unfolded, every dispensation of his grace has been confined to a part only of mankind. Did he not call Abraham and his family from a corrupt world to be the distinguished repositories of his will, his blessing, and favour? Were not the Jews separated from the rest of the world, to be his chosen people, to whom “pertained the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises?” Are not Christians now called from the rest of the world to be “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people,” blessed with the glorious light of the gospel, with the consoling and renovating efficacy of the Redeemer’s merits and grace, with the resplendent hopes of immortality? In thus distinguishing particular portions of the human race with his peculiar favours, God “acts according to the counsel of his own will;” “he giveth not to man an account of his doings;” he asserts the power of the potter over his clay, “to create one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour.” As the Almighty Creator of the world, God may distribute his favours to mankind according to his sovereign pleasure. And when he finally determines the destinies of men, according to the improvement which they have made of the privileges conferred upon them, it can be no imputation on his justice or goodness that he distinguishes with peculiar favours particular portions of the human race, and renders them capable of higher bliss in a future state of existence. To suppose that the Patriarchs on whom shone the peculiar blessings of heaven; that the favoured nation of the Israelites, to whom the law was given in its divine majesty and lustre; and that Christians under the luminous and glorious dispensation of the gospel, were not rendered capable of higher degrees of virtue and happiness than the rest of mankind,

would be to strip the favour and grace of God of their value and efficacy; and to render futile and contemptible the ordinances which he has appointed as the means of communion with him.

The Judge of the whole earth indeed will do right. The grace of God quickens and animates all the degenerate children of Adam. The mercy of the Saviour is co-extensive with the ruin into which sin has plunged mankind. And "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." But where the gospel is proclaimed, communion with the church by the participation of its ordinances at the hands of the duly authorized priesthood, is the indispensable condition of salvation. Separation from the prescribed government and regular priesthood of the church, when it proceeds from involuntary and unavoidable ignorance or error, we have reason to trust, will not intercept, from the humble, the penitent, and obedient, the blessings of God's favour. But when we humbly submit to that priesthood which Christ and his apostles constituted; when, in the lively exercise of penitence and faith, we partake of the ordinances administered by them, we maintain our communion with that church which the Redeemer purifies by his blood, which he quickens by his spirit, and whose faithful members he will finally crown with the most exalted glories of his heavenly kingdom. The important truth which the universal church has uniformly maintained, that, to experience the full and exalted efficacy of the sacraments, we must receive them from a valid authority, is not inconsistent with that charity which extends mercy to all who labour under involuntary error. But great is the guilt, and imminent the danger, of those, who, possessing the means of arriving at the knowledge of the truth, negli-

gently or wilfully continue in a state of separation from the authorized ministry of the church, and participate of ordinances administered by an irregular and invalid authority. Wilfully rending the peace and unity of the church, by separating from the ministrations of its authorized priesthood; obstinately contemning the means which God in his sovereign pleasure hath prescribed for their salvation, they are guilty of rebellion against their Almighty Lawgiver and Judge; they expose themselves to the awful displeasure of that Almighty Jehovah, who will not permit his institutions to be contemned, or his authority violated, with impunity.

Let it be, therefore, thy supreme care, O my soul, to receive the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of thy Saviour, only from the hands of those who derive their authority by regular transmission from Christ, the supreme and divine head of the church, the only legitimate source of power in it. Thou wilt then enjoy the assurance that this holy sacrament, which derives all its efficacy from the accompanying power of Christ, administered by those to whom he hath given his commission and authority, will be acknowledged and blessed by him to thy comfort and salvation; will, if humbly and devoutly received by thee, be the sacred mean and pledge of his pardoning mercy and strengthening grace. By preserving thy communion with the authorized priesthood; by revering that ministerial authority, and submitting to those sacred institutions which thy Saviour established, thou wilt maintain the *unity* of the church; and thus fulfil the high injunction of the Saviour and his apostles often repeated and earnestly enforced. The humble and obedient member of his church on earth, thou wilt finally be advanced to those glorious rewards which he hath prepared, in the church

triumphant, for all the devout and faithful members of his mystical body.

Deplorable, indeed, in this degenerate day, is the state of the church, where sect ariseth against sect, and altar against altar; where the apostolic government and priesthood are invaded and violated; ordinances administered by invalid authority, and thus stripped of their efficacy; and that sacred "body" which should be "one" with its divine "head" rent and divided by numberless schisms. Let it be the subject of thy earnest prayers to God, that, by shedding on the church the divine spirit of peace and concord, he would heal the divisions that now deface her glory. Let it be the object of thy earnest solicitude and exertions to restore all who profess themselves Christians to that apostolic government and priesthood, which were so long the inviolable glory of the universal church. The church would then shine forth, as she did in the primitive ages, in the splendid garments of glory and beauty; and, attracting the nations within her spiritual fold, would become a praise throughout the earth. "Jerusalem would be as a city that is at unity in itself. Thither the tribes would go up, even the tribes of the Lord, to testify unto Israel, and to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." Christians, communing with the authorized ministers of the church, by the participation of the sacraments and ordinances duly administered by them, would be united "as one fold under one shepherd;" from their divine head they would derive life, strength and salvation; partaking at the same hallowed altar of the sacred body and blood of their Saviour, they would be nourished and prepared for the transcendent and eternal bliss of the church triumphant in heaven.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD! who hast "built thy church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone"; teach me ever to bear in mind, that in thy wise and sovereign Providence thou hast made this church the only channel through which thy covenanted mercies are conveyed to a fallen world. Blessed be thy name, that thou hast called me into a state of salvation; and, through the sacrament of baptism, conferred on me a title to the spiritual and exalted privileges of thy holy church. Impress on me the awful guilt and danger of forfeiting, by disobedience, by impenitence, or by neglect of thy holy ordinances, my title to the inestimable privileges of my Christian vocation. In the exercise of lively penitence and faith, may I humbly and thankfully partake of the ordinances of thy church; and thus maintaining my communion with it, derive from Jesus, its divine head, pardon, grace, consolation, triumph, everlasting glory. May I ever value, above all worldly distinctions and pleasures, the inestimable privilege of being a member of thy church; and of thus having access to the infinite fountain of thy grace and mercy, thy everlasting love. Instead of vainly and presumptuously arraigning thy sovereign institutions, may I gratefully and humbly adore thee, that, by the ordinances of thy church, thou dost vouchsafe to confer upon me the immortal blessings which, by transgression, I had forfeited.

I bless thee, O God, that in the apostolic order which thou hast appointed as the only legitimate channel of conveying a divine commission for the exercise of spiritual powers, thou hast made full and effectual provision for the administration of her sacraments and discipline,

for her peace, her order, her unity and glory. Almighty God, "the giver of all good gifts, who, of thy divine Providence, hast appointed divers orders in thy church, give thy grace, I humbly beseech thee, to all those who are called to any office and administration in the same; and so replenish them with the truth of thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before thee to the glory of thy great name, and the benefit of thy holy church." Blessed Jesus! the Divine Head and Redeemer of thy mystical body the church; who dost possess "all power in heaven and in earth"; may "the course of this world be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy church may evermore serve thee in peace and quietness." "Clothe thy priests with salvation, that thy people may rejoice." Thy servants, the Bishops, in whom is vested, through thy mercy, the power of perpetuating in thy church, "to the end of the world," the divine authority of the priesthood, evermore guide and bless by thy heavenly grace; "that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of thy holy church." To them, as well as to all other ministers, the Presbyters and Deacons who serve in thy holy sanctuary, give thy "heavenly benediction; that, both by their life and doctrine, they may set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments." On me, also, thy unworthy servant, shed, O merciful God, thy heavenly grace; that, by devoutly attending on the ministrations of thy priesthood, I may continue in the unity of thy holy church, and become a partaker of the mercy and grace of its divine head; and being daily replenished by the ordinances of thy mercy and grace, may serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life, and finally be a partaker of the glory and felicity of thy heavenly kingdom.

Almighty God! have mercy upon thy holy church, the

spiritual Zion in which thou dost delight to dwell. "Inspire her continually with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord." Rebuild thou her waste places; restore her in the beauty of holiness; unite in her communion all those who call upon thy name; may they reverence thy power in the persons of the servants of thy sanctuary; and endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. May the lamp of truth in thy holy sanctuary ever burn clear and steady, and disperse the mists of heresy and error. May the altar of the sanctuary ever be pressed by devout and holy guests. May the whole of thy dispersed sheep, blessed Jesus, be brought home to thy flock, and united in one fold under thee, the Great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Evening Devotions.]

CHAPTER 16

SUNDAY MORNING

MEDITATION

*The dispositions with which the Communicant
should advance to the Altar.*

THOU hast now reviewed, O my soul! thy spiritual character, privileges, and hopes.—Thou hast sought to lay the foundation of thy preparation for the Holy Eucharist, where indeed the foundation of thy spiritual life should be laid, in a deep conviction of thy fallen and condemned state.—Awakened to a sense of thy guilt and unworthiness, thou hast humbled thyself before the throne of God in the deep exercises of repentance; and, having devoted thyself with renewed ardour to his service, hast implored the renovating and quickening succours of his grace, to enable thee to serve him in newness of life. Deeply sensible of thy need of the cleansing blood and renovating grace of a Saviour, thou hast sought to secure an interest in his merits and favour, by

lively faith in him; and hast acknowledged him, in all his gracious and exalted offices, as the Eternal Son of the Father, thy Prophet, thy Priest, and King. With the fervours of lively gratitude, thou hast traced the series of bitter sufferings which thy divine Saviour endured with heroic magnanimity and fortitude; which, while they excited thy exalted admiration, served to confirm thy faith. Thou hast reviewed the bitter sufferings by which the Saviour at once impressed the humble and forgiving spirit of his gospel, and made an all-sufficient expiation for thy sins. About to participate of an ordinance which derives all its efficacy from its divine institutor, thou hast attentively considered the important truth that God conveys his grace and favour through the channel of rites and ordinances administered by a priesthood deriving their authority from the divine head of the church. Happy art thou, O my soul, if, through divine grace, that holy and spiritual life, which the sacred exercises in which thou hast been engaged are calculated to form in thee, has been excited, quickened, or confirmed. If thou hast sincerely and humbly sought the mercy and favour of thy God, dismiss now every intimidating doubt or apprehension; and resolve to quicken thy repentance, to confirm thy faith, to animate thy zeal, to seal thy vows of duty in the Holy Eucharist. Resolve to seek those strengthening, enlivening, and immortal graces and consolations, which in this sacred ordinance are poured into the penitent and faithful soul.

Consider this sacred rite as a *lively and affecting memorial of the death of Christ*; and receive the symbols of his sufferings with humble penitence.

The altar presents an Almighty victim consumed as a sacrifice to divine justice. Call to mind then, at the altar, the penetrating and affecting truth, that thy wilful

rebellion against the righteous authority of God, rendered it necessary that the Eternal Son should descend from the throne of his glory, to vindicate and appease, by his death, the honour of the divine government, the inexorable claims of divine justice. Call to mind, that thy sins sharpened the sword of justice which quenched its fiery wrath in the bosom of the Saviour; that thy sins kindled the tremendous floods of divine indignation, which, with unsparing fury, were poured on the innocent representative of thy guilt. Behold him consumed on the cross, as on an altar where the holiness and justice of an offended God fully satisfied their indignant claims. See his blessed body, innocent and pure as the divine soul which animated it, smitten, scourged, and bruised. Behold issuing from his wounded side that precious blood which purchased the life of the world. Ah! shall I deliberately crucify afresh that sacred body which my sins at first fastened on the accursed tree? Shall I, with deliberate and cool impiety, tear open the wounds which the revengeful fury of a barbarous multitude at first inflicted on the sacred body of the redeemer of men? Oh! just and heavy will be my condemnation, if, with a heart unsubdued and impenitent, with cold and unhallowed affections, I approach the altar where the Saviour is exhibited, sustaining the inflictions of his Father's wrath, and expiating my enormous and aggravated guilt.

Tremble, lukewarm and impenitent soul! lest the symbols of the body and blood of that Redeemer, to whose astonishing love thou art insensible, instead of proving the endearing pledges of divine favour, seal the sentence of eternal condemnation on thy ingratitude and contempt. Tremble, impenitent and unmortified soul! lest the sacred memorials of the Saviour's love, which convey pardon

and peace to the penitent, invoke on thy guilt and presumption the avenging curse of heaven! Tremble, lest the body and blood of thy Redeemer designed to exalt thee to glory, should be made, through thy presumption and impenitence, the fatal seals of thy misery and condemnation. Yes! the altar displays only terror and wrath to the impenitent. But, to the contrite and humble spirit, who is oppressed by the anxious apprehension, that she does not yet possess that lively contrition and fervent affection, which would render her worthy to partake of the Supper of the Lord—to her, the altar breathes the persuasive and consoling accents of mercy and love. The very fears that oppress thee, timid and doubting penitent, are the strongest proofs of an exquisite sensibility to the claims of thy Saviour's love; they are the best evidence that thou dost possess that meek, humble, and contrite spirit, which it is the Saviour's office and delight to sooth and comfort.

Behold then, my soul, in the sufferings and death of Christ commemorated on the altar, both an exhibition of the inflexible indignation of God against sin, and of the infinite compassion of the Son of God in offering himself up an all-sufficient victim to turn from thee the wrath of heaven. Let this view enkindle a holy solicitude, to escape the penalties due to thy sins—a lively and ingenuous sorrow for their baseness and enormity. Humbled at the feet of the Saviour, confess, lament, and renounce the sins which occasioned his sufferings—lay them on the altar of his love—they shall be blotted out for ever by his precious blood, which taketh away the sins of the world.

Receive the symbols of the Saviour's suffering and death *with lively gratitude*.

This hallowed ordinance, by forcibly displaying the agonizing sufferings of the Saviour, serves to excite the

most lively sense of his infinite love. Sufferings and agony inconceivable the Son of God resolutely and cheerfully encountered, to redeem the wretched race of man. From the manger at Bethlehem to the hill of Calvary, poverty, contumely, scorn, persecution, like indignant waves, pressed upon him, till at length his soul sunk under the overwhelming floods of divine wrath. Ah! we shall not wonder at the bitter agonies which overwhelmed him, when we consider the tremendous conflict which he sustained with the King of Terrors, who, dreading the near dissolution of his reign, exerted his most vigorous efforts to crush under his sceptre the Almighty conqueror who threatened to bind him in chains. Oh! what pangs convulsed the Saviour, when on the cross he bowed under the ponderous load of human guilt. Forsaken in this dark hour by the cheering smiles of his Father's love, which had hitherto supported him; sinking in the shades of despair, he vented the piercing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In this direful moment, dismay seized the bosom of nature, which heaved in dreadful agitation, as if in unison with the awful groan that terminated the agonies of the Lord of life. O my soul! for thee, the Redeemer sunk under these accumulated and rending agonies. Shall not the sacred symbols of his sufferings excite the ardent emotions of gratitude to him, who displayed for thee this unutterable love? By this compassionate Saviour, thou hast been redeemed from the degrading dominion of sin and death—from everlasting misery and woe. By the sacrifice of his death, thou art restored to the favour of God, and to the glorious hope of the bliss of heaven. The inestimable blessings which he purchased for thee, thou art called to acknowledge in the affecting rite which he instituted, when the painful death awaited him that was

to consummate his sufferings. Oh! let the tears of devout gratitude be shed over the tender emblems of thy Saviour's dying love.

Offer to thy blessed redeemer, at the altar, *vows of ardent devotion to his service.*

Redeeming thee, O my soul, by the sacrifice of his cross, from the ignominious bondage of sin and satan, from the curse of eternal death; and purchasing for thee the inestimable blessings of pardon, peace, and everlasting life, he establishes a supreme claim to thy homage, thy love, and obedience. He becomes thy rightful sovereign, lord, and master. He can claim thy sincere and holy obedience as a right; thou art bound to render it to him as a just debt of gratitude and love. By ardent devotion to his service; by generous, tender, and active love to mankind, whom he died to redeem; thou must manifest thy sensibility to his infinite compassion, and discharge the obligations by which thou art bound to him. No period can be more proper to offer to the Saviour the ardent vows of love and duty, than the period when thou art commemorating the infinite sacrifice of his precious death, which was the price of thy redemption. Consider the state of guilt, of condemnation, and misery to which sin had reduced thee. Contemplate the exalted blessings of that spiritual redemption which the Saviour wrought for thee. The agonizing pangs of guilt he hath exchanged for the soothing comforts of a good conscience; the fearful apprehensions of the wrath of God, for the exalted joys of the divine favour; the curse of a mortal and perishing body, for a body incorruptible and glorious; the overwhelming sorrows and trials of this mortal life, for the unutterable bliss and glories of an immortal existence. The Almighty grace and love which achieved this glorious redemption, and

which still assure it to the humble and penitent, are set forth in the commemorative sacrifice of the Eucharist. Go then, my soul, to the sacred festival which celebrates this infinite love of the Saviour, adoring his infinite compassion; triumphing in the glorious victories of his Almighty grace; rendering to him who bought thee by his blood, the ardent vows of allegiance and duty. Let the precious symbols of the altar, the lively memorials of the victorious love of the Saviour, powerfully impress upon thee his claims to thy sincere and holy obedience. Over the emblems of his body and blood, offered for thy redemption, seal the grateful vows of duty, which shall bind thee for ever to thy Lord. Almighty Redeemer! purchased by thy blood, to thee I wholly surrender myself. All the powers of my soul, all its desires and hopes shall be engaged in thy service, and centre in thy love. To thy glory, O my Saviour! whose mercy and grace are the sources of all my hopes, am I bound to devote all the powers of my soul. Ah! shall I be reluctant in the service of a master, with whom I am connected by the most sacred and endearing ties! Shall I murmur at the sacrifices to which that Redeemer calls me, who, in effecting my redemption, was deterred by no difficulties, and shrunk from no pains! No, my Saviour! the constraining power of thy love shall render easy to me all thy commands; and even endear to me the self-denial and ignominy of thy cross.—Pressing to my heart, beating with lively gratitude, thy crucified body, the glorious pledge of my redemption, I will vow thee eternal allegiance.—Receiving into my soul, inflamed with ardent love, thy precious blood, the divine fountain of life and bliss, I will devote myself to thee in a course of uniform and holy obedience. O my Saviour! who knowest the weakness of my heart, and its proneness to forget

thee; strengthen me to perform the resolutions by which I now enlist under thy sacred banners, and attach myself for ever to thy service.

Advance to the altar, *relying supremely on the merits and grace of that Saviour*, whose all-sufficient sacrifice for sin thou art to commemorate.

There is no other name, but the name of Jesus, whereby the perishing race of man can be saved. His infinite sacrifice, the meritorious propitiation for sin, is commemorated in the Holy Eucharist, where he is set forth as the all-sufficient Saviour of his people. To set up any claim of forgiveness in opposition to the all-sufficient atonement which he made; to rely for acceptance at the throne of God on our own merits, when he offers his all-perfect righteousness to sanctify and save us—would be to contemn the infinite value and efficacy of his precious blood; to dishonour that all-perfect righteousness, which alone can answer the inexorable claims of divine holiness. Ah! when I contemplate the holy and avenging terrors which issue from the indignant throne of my offended Judge, I bless thee, O my Saviour! that I can flee for refuge to thy protecting bosom—I bless thee, that, in the holy sacrament of thy love, thou dost apply to me the saving merits of thy body, given for my sins; and dost sprinkle my guilty soul with the precious blood that was shed for my redemption.

Go then, O my soul! to the altar where the emblems of the body and blood of the Saviour are set forth as the enlivening pledges of mercy and spiritual life; renouncing every dependence but the merits and grace of thy Redeemer. Unworthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under his table, go, and derive pardon, comfort, strength, and salvation at the sacred banquet of his precious body and blood.—Go—earnestly desiring his mercy, and ador-

ing him as thy all-sufficient Saviour; and he will confer on thee the everlasting riches of his grace and love. However great the attainments which, through his grace, thou hast made in virtue, rely not on them as the pledges of thy peace with heaven, when thou dost behold the perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice of his cross. In the blood of Jesus set forth in this holy sacrament, thou wilt find the only expiation of thy guilt.—From the fountain of grace opened in this hallowed ordinance, are the streams of spiritual life and consolation dispensed. Seated on the altar, as an almighty and compassionate Saviour, he presents to the faithful, through his authorized ministers, the sacred symbols of his broken body and shed blood. *Take, eat, this is my body, which was given for you*—let it be the pledge of your salvation, of your vital union with me, your Redeemer.—*Drink—this is my blood, which was shed for you*—let it be the fountain of pardon, of peace, of comfort, of everlasting joys. Wonder, O my soul, at the riches of the Saviour's mercy! Wonder, O my soul, at the fulness of his grace! Go, ye faithful! to the altar where Jesus is waiting to receive you, triumphing in his mercy, his power, and his love. Wounded with a sense of guilt, go, and receive the balm of divine mercy, with which the Saviour pacifies the awakened conscience. Labouring under the grievous thralldom of sinful passions, go, and receive grace to overcome their dominion. Desponding and sorrowing under the trials of your pilgrimage, go, and receive from your Saviour celestial and enlivening comfort. Humble, weak, and perishing, go, and receive strength, support, everlasting life—go, and receive into your souls that blessed Redeemer, who hath promised to visit his people with his salvation; to dwell in them as their guide, their comforter, their everlasting portion and reward.

Yes, my Saviour! encouraged by the gracious and powerful solicitations of thy love, I will go to thy holy altar, and commemorate, with the faithful, the riches of thy mercy; with them implore the enlivening manifestations of thy grace. When I receive the sacred emblems of thy body and blood, O do thou manifest thyself to my impatient soul! Come, and reign in me for ever, my Saviour, my Lord, my Almighty King!

THE PRAYER.

BLESSED JESUS! who hast given thyself to be the life of the world; and hast graciously instituted the sacrament of thy holy Supper, to be a lively memorial of thy infinite love, and pledge of thy powerful grace and mercy; behold me, thy unworthy servant, waiting upon thee for pardon, for strength, and salvation.—Lead me, O my Saviour! to thy altar, and there display thyself to my soul, in the glorious fulness of thy mercy and power.

“I do not presume to come to this thy table, O Lord! trusting in my own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies.” Sin has defiled my soul; has laden with guilt my conscience; has rendered me utterly unworthy of thy favour; has exposed me to thy just and everlasting wrath. Blessed be thy name, O Lord! that in thee there is mercy and plenteous redemption. Humbly confessing my unworthiness and guilt, and casting myself on thy infinite compassion, O do thou convey to me, in thy holy Supper, the forgiveness of my sins, my title to thy love and everlasting favour. To thy service I desire to devote myself: to thee, O my God! I vow steadfast obedience and homage. O accept me at thy holy table as thy devoted servant and subject. Seal to my soul the blessings of the everlasting covenant. Thee,

O my Saviour, I adore as my Lord and my God. To thy celestial instructions I will evermore hearken; to thy all-sufficient atonement I will evermore flee; to the sceptre of thy grace I will evermore willingly bow. Receive and acknowledge me, blessed Jesus, at thy holy table, among the number of thy redeemed people. I bless thee for the infinite love thou hast displayed in my redemption—for the unutterable sufferings and agonizing death which were the price of my ransom from guilt and condemnation. Glory be to thee, O thou Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world.—May my grateful sense of thy infinite compassion be manifested by sincere devotion to thy commands; by lively and active charity to all mankind, for whom thou didst shed thy blood. Thus confessing my sins; steadfastly purposing to lead a new life; relying supremely on thy merits and grace; thankfully celebrating thy meritorious sufferings and death; and cherishing the sentiments of lively and ardent love—may I approach thy holy altar, and experience the quickening and reviving efficacy of thy body and blood. May they shed through my soul their consoling, renovating, and strengthening power, and nourish me to everlasting life. May these symbols of thy love afford my soul a rich foretaste of the exalted bliss which the fruition of thy glorious presence will afford.

O most gracious God! measure thy blessings to me, not by my deserts, but by thy infinite mercies. Shed now the full power of thy Holy Spirit through my heart, that all my affections and desires may be in lively exercise when I approach thy holy altar. There may I enjoy the manifestations of thy mercy—there may I experience that thou art infinitely gracious—that truly blessed are they who put their trust in thee. And oh! may the exalted joys of thy love shed through my soul at thy holy table, awaken my ardent desires for the glorious consummation of bliss in thy heavenly kingdom, where

there is fulness of joy; where there are pleasures forevermore. Even so, O my God! for the sake of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[Then add your usual Morning Devotions.]

THE ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, OR HOLY COMMUNION

The excellent and affecting office for the Holy Communion prescribed by the Church is the best guide to his devotions at the altar that the communicant can possibly have; and renders almost unnecessary all other aid. It should be the business of the communicant seriously to attend to this service, and heartily and sincerely to join in it. As he goes up towards the chancel, let him secretly use the following ejaculations:

IN THE MULTITUDE of thy mercies, O Lord, do I now approach thine altar.

I will pay thee my vows now in the presence of all thy people.

Thou art my God, and I will bless thee; thou art my God, and I will exalt thee.

God is the Lord, by whom we receive light; bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar.

When the minister reads the sentences of the Offertory, let the communicant offer up after each sentence, the short ejaculation annexed:

THE OFFERTORY.

When there is a Communion, the minister shall return to the Lord's Table, and begin the Offertory, saying one or more of these sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient.

LET YOUR LIGHT so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.—*St. Matthew* v. 16.

[O Almighty God, give me grace to honour thee by a life of holiness and active charity; and may those who are the objects of my beneficence, render their praise to thee, the Gracious Father and benefactor of mankind.]

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.—*St. Matth.* vi. 19, 20.

[Free my soul, O God, from the inordinate love of riches; and dispose me earnestly to seek the satisfying treasures of thy heavenly kingdom.]

Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do to them: For this is the law and the prophets.—*St. Matth.* vii. 12.

[Give me grace, O God, ever sacredly to observe this rule of eternal justice.]

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.—*St. Matth.* vii. 21.

[Grant, O God, that I may never build my hope of salvation upon an outward profession only, without a life of holiness]

and virtue. May my faith in thy name produce the fruit of good living.]

Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore four-fold.—*St. Luke* xix. 8.

[If thou, O Lord, hast given me ability, give me a disposition also to be both just and charitable, that thou mayest say to me, as thou didst to this publican, Salvation is come to thy house.]

Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own cost? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?—*1 Cor.* ix. 7.

[O God, may I cheerfully and readily give a portion of my worldly substance to the support of the servants of thy sanctuary who labour in spiritual things.]

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your worldly things?—*1 Cor.* ix. 11.

[May I evermore endeavour, by every mean in my power, to promote the temporal comfort and happiness of those who devote their time and their talents to ministering to my spiritual necessities.]

Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things, live of the sacrifice; and they who wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.—*1 Cor.* ix. 13, 14.

[Since thou, O Lord, hast thus ordained, far be it from me to withhold from thy ministers the maintenance which is their just and inviolable due.]

He that soweth little, shall reap little; and he that soweth plenteously, shall reap plenteously. Let every man do according as he is disposed in his heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.

[May I ever proportion my alms to my ability, lest I provoke God to proportion his blessings to my alms!]

Let him that is taught in the word, minister unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap.—Gal. vi. 6, 7.

[There is no return, O God, which we can make to thy ministers, equal to the blessings which they bestow upon us; For they minister unto us the means of grace and salvation.]

While we have time, let us do good unto all men; and especially unto them that are of the household of faith.—Gal. vi. 10.

[Blessed be God, that I have yet time! Lord, give me a heart to do good before the night cometh, when no man can work.]

Godliness is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath: For we brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry any thing out.—1 Tim. vi. 6, 7.

[Grant me, O God, a pious and contented mind; and for the rest thy will be done!]

Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute; laying up in store for

themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life.—1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18, 19.

[If thou hast given me riches, O God, grant me grace to employ them in works of beneficence and mercy, that thus they may be instrumental in advancing my eternal felicity.]

God is not unrighteous, that he will forget your works, and labour that proceedeth of love; which love ye have showed for his name's sake, who have ministered unto the saints, and yet do minister.—*Heb.* vi. 10.

[O blessed Lord, how great is thy goodness! All that I have is thine: and yet thou dost condescend to receive every act of charity to thy saints and servants, as if it were done unto thyself!]

To do good and to distribute, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.—*Heb.* xiii. 16.

[May our prayers and our alms ascend unto thee, O God! and do thou graciously accept them for Jesus Christ's sake.]

Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?—1 *St. John* iii. 17.

[O my God and Saviour! may I ever manifest my love and gratitude to thee, by acts of beneficence and kindness to my fellow men.]

Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man: and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee.—*Tob.* iv. 17.

[Grant me, O Lord, a lively compassion for the miseries of others, that thou mayest finally have compassion on me.]

Be merciful after thy power. If thou hast much, give plentifully. If thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give

of that little: for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward, in the day of necessity.—*Tob.* iv. 8, 9.

[I thank thee, O God, that thou dost not judge or reward according to the greatness of the gift, but according to the disposition and ability of the giver. And after all, thy rewards infinitely exceed the merit of our most exalted acts of virtue.]

He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord: and look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again.—*Prov.* xix. 17.

[Blessed be thy name, O God, that thou dost vouchsafe to regard my beneficence to the poor as a favour rendered unto thyself; and dost graciously promise to repay me from the exhaustless treasure of thine infinite mercies.]

Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy: the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble.—*Psal.* xli. 1.

[O Lord, may I carefully avoid all idle and vain expenses, that I may thus be always able to administer to the consolation and support of the sick and needy. May a principle of divine charity and love evermore animate and inspire me; that thus, in the time of trouble, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, I may with confidence flee to thee as my refuge and my portion.]

Ejaculation to be used at offering our Alms.

O Lord! from the bounties of thy Providence with which thou hast crowned my lot, I cheerfully and humbly devote a portion to the service of thy altar—to the relief and comfort of the distressed members of Christ's mystical body. To thee be all the glory and all the praise, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Whilst these Sentences are in reading, the Deacons, Churchwardens, or other fit persons appointed for that purpose, shall receive the Alms for the Poor, and other Devotions of the People, in a decent Bason to be provided by the Parish for that purpose; and reverently bring it to the Priest, who shall humbly present and place it upon the Holy Table.

[Before the prayer for Christ's church militant, if any opportunity offer, use the following prayer:]

Saviour of the world! I come to thy altar to commemorate thy dying love; to plead the merits of thy cross and baptism; to testify my unshaken faith in thee; my communion with thy holy church; my charity with all mankind. Blessed Jesus! who hast called me to the participation of the sacred mysteries of thy altar, guide and aid me in my devotions; quicken my repentance; animate my faith and gratitude; fix my ardent contemplations on the eternal glories of thy mercy and grace. Nourished and strengthened by the sacred symbols of thy body and blood, may both my soul and body be prepared for that everlasting life which thou hast purchased by thy merits; and which thou dost bestow on all those who believe in thy saving name, and rely alone on thy mercy and power. Even so, blessed Jesus. *Amen.*

PRAYER FOR THE WHOLE STATE OF CHRIST'S CHURCH.

And the Priest shall then place upon the Table so much Bread and Wine, as he shall think sufficient. After which done, he shall say:

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant.

ALMIGHTY AND EVERLIVING GOD, who, by thy holy Apostle, hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks for all men: We humbly beseech thee most mercifully [**to accept our alms and oblations, and*] to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy divine Majesty; beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: And grant, that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech thee also, so to direct and dispose the hearts of all Christian Rulers, that they may truly and impartially administer justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and other Ministers: that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments. And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this Congregation here present: that with meek heart, and due reverence, they may hear, and receive thy holy Word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless thy holy Name, for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear; beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom: Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate.—*Amen.*

**If there be no alms or oblations, then shall the words [of accepting our alms and oblations,] be left unsaid.*

THE EXHORTATION, INVITATION, AND CONFESSION.

At the time of the celebration of the Communion, the Priest shall say this Exhortation.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye who mind to come to the holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy Sacrament; so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent ye truly for your sins past; have a lively and steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men: so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy Mysteries. And above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man; who did humble himself, even to the death upon the cross, for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death; that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained for us, he hath instituted and ordained holy Mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort. To him, therefore, with

the Father, and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks; submitting ourselves wholly to his holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve him in true holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life.—*Amen.*

Then shall the Priest say to those who come to receive the holy Communion.

Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

Then shall this general Confession be made, by the Priest and all those who are minded to receive the holy Communion, humbly kneeling:

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty; provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burthen of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant, that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

Then shall the Priest (the Bishop, if he be present) stand up, and turning to the people, say.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, Have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.—
Amen.

[After the Absolution is pronounced, to which you should attentively and devoutly listen, as the declaration of God through his authorized servant, use the following short ejaculation:]

May this absolution, O God, seal to my soul the forgiveness of my sins.

THE COMFORTABLE WORDS.

Then shall the Priest say.

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to him.

After each of the following sentences use the short ejaculations annexed.

Come unto me, all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.—*St. Matth. xi. 28.*

[Make me, O Jesus, truly sensible of my guilt and unworthiness; that, oppressed with the burden of my sins, I may go to thee for rest and deliverance.]

So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—*St. John iii. 16.*

[O Lord, I believe—increase and establish my faith; that, ever loving and serving thee, I may finally, through thy mercy, be made partaker of everlasting glory.]

Hear also what St. Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. —1 *Tim.* i. 15.

[I bless thee, O Jesus, who, moved by infinite compassion, didst come into the world to save sinners.]

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.—1 *St. John* ii. 1, 2.

[O blessed Jesus, by thy blood and merits, by thy powerful intercession, procure my pardon and deliverance from the guilt and condemnation of sin.]

THE SURSUM CORDA AND SANCTUS.

After which the Priest shall proceed, saying,

Lift up your hearts.

Answer. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Answer. It is meet and right so to do.

Then shall the Priest turn to the Lord's Table and say,

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and at all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, [*Holy Father,*] Almighty Everlasting God.

These words [Holy Father] must be omitted on Trinity Sunday.

Here shall follow the proper Preface, according to the time, if there be any specially appointed; or else immediately shall be said or sung by the Priest and People:

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.—*Amen.*

THE PROPER PREFACES.

Upon Christmas Day, and seven Days after.

Because thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born as at this time for us; who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very man, of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin: Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon Easter Day, and seven Days after.

But chiefly are we bound to praise thee for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord: For he is the very Paschal Lamb, which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by his death hath destroyed death, and, by his rising to life again, hath restored to us everlasting life: Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon Ascension Day, and seven Days after.

Through thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who, after his most glorious Resurrection, manifestly appeared to all his Apostles, and, in their sight, ascended up into heaven, to prepare a place for us; that

where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory: Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon Whitsunday, and six Days after.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; according to whose most true promise, the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven, with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the Apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth; giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness with fervent zeal, constantly to preach the gospel unto all nations; whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error, into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ: Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon the Feast of Trinity only, may be said,

Who art one God, one Lord; not only one person, but three persons in one substance: For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality: Therefore with Angels, &c.

Or else this may be said, the words [Holy Father] being retained in the introductory Address.

For the precious death and merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and for the sending to us of the Holy Ghost the Comforter; who are one with thee in thy eternal Godhead: Therefore with Angels, &c.

Then shall the Priest, kneeling down at the Lord's Table, say, in the name of all those who shall receive the Communion, this Prayer following:

[In this most affecting and solemn form of humiliation, the Communicants acknowledge, through the Minister, their great unworthiness, and the unmerited mercy of God in admitting them to his Holy Table. In this act of humiliation, every communicant should secretly join with lively fervour and devotion.]

WE DO NOT PRESUME to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.—*Amen.*

THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION.

[The Prayer of Consecration now follows; and while the Priest is engaged in the solemn act of consecrating the bread and wine, the communicant should fix his devout affections on his Saviour, whose blood is an all-sufficient propitiation for the sins of the world. When the bread is broken, call to mind the grief and agony of him who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. When the cup of wine is blessed, think of him who, under the weight of our sins, sweat great drops of blood, and on the cross made his soul an offering for sin. When the consecrated bread and wine are offered to God, as a sacrifice commemorative of the one great

sacrifice of Christ, bless the Almighty Father who gave his Son for the sins of offending man, and who, through Christ, is reconciling the world unto himself. When the power of Divine Grace is invoked on the holy elements, devoutly adore and bless the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who applies to the soul the mercies of redemption. And let the surrender which you make of yourself to the service of God, your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, be sincere, ardent, and universal.]

When the Priest, standing before the Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the Bread before the people, and take the Cup into his hand; he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth:

ALL GLORY BE TO THEE, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice until his coming again: For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, [Drink ye all of this; for This is my Blood, of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins: Do this as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

The Oblation.—Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son

our Saviour Jesus Christ, we thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks, for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

The Invocation.—And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his Death and Passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood. And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant, that by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in them, and they in him. And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences; through Jesus Christ

our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end.—*Amen.*

DEVOTIONS BEFORE AND DURING THE RECEPTION.

Immediately before going up to the Altar use the following Prayer.

O gracious and merciful God! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! look down from heaven, the throne of thy eternal glory, upon me thy unworthy servant, with the eyes of mercy and compassion. O Lord my God, I disclaim all merit; I renounce all righteousness of my own; and I fly for refuge, for pardon, and sanctification, to the righteousness of Jesus, thy anointed. For thy tender mercies' sake, for the sake of the blessed Jesus, the Son of thy love, in whom thou art ever well pleased, have mercy upon me; receive my prayers; pardon my infirmities; strengthen my weak resolutions; guide my steps to thy holy altar, and there feed me with the meat that perisheth not, but endureth to everlasting life.—*Amen.*

Then advancing to the Altar, and humbly kneeling down, use the following ejaculatory Prayer before receiving the consecrated Bread.

O my Lord and my God! may I receive this sacred symbol of thy crucified body in remembrance of the sacrifice of thy cross, trusting alone in thy infinite merits. By the power of thy grace, may I be delivered from condemnation and death.

When the minister repeats the words, The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life, seal this affecting petition by saying, secretly

*and fervently, Amen; and then reverently receive the consecrated Bread with the right hand.*¹

Then shall the Priest first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner, (if any be present) and, after that, to the People also in order, into their hands, all devoutly kneeling: And when he delivereth the bread, he shall say,

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life: Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.

[Use the following ejaculation, after receiving the consecrated Bread:]

Almighty is thy power; infinite thy mercy, blessed Jesus. Be it unto thy servant according unto thy word. O let thy body nourish and strengthen me unto everlasting life. Glory evermore be unto thee, Holy Jesus, the Author and Finisher of my salvation.

[Use the following ejaculation, before receiving the consecrated Cup:]

I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will ratify my vows with this blood of the everlasting covenant; and devote myself for ever to thy service, O my God. Saviour of the world, evermore help and deliver me.

When the minister repeats the words, The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto

¹The receiving of the consecrated Bread with the glove on the hand, should be avoided, as familiar and irreverent. Perhaps the most decent and proper manner of receiving the consecrated Bread, is in the palm of the right hand crossed over the left, and then lifted to the mouth.

everlasting life, seal this affecting petition by saying, secretly and fervently, Amen.

And the Minister who delivereth the Cup, shall say,

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life: Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

[Use the following ejaculation, after receiving the Cup:]

All powerful is the efficacy of thy precious blood, O my Saviour. May it purify my soul from sin, and be a fountain of pardon, peace, life eternal. Glory be unto thee, O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world. Blessed is he who receiveth by faith the symbols of thy love in thy church on earth. He shall celebrate the everlasting festival of love in thy heavenly kingdom. Amen and Amen.

[Then returning to your seat, use the following Prayer:]

Blessed Jesus! relying on thy mercy, I have bowed myself at thy Table, to receive the precious pledges of thy dying love. O may thy presence go with me from thy holy altar; that, when I return to the necessary labours and duties of this miserable world, I may be enabled, by thy grace, to obey thy commandments, and to rejoice in the smiles of thy love. Guided by thy mercy through all the dangers and trials of my pilgrimage, may I at length depart out of this world in peace, in a steadfast reliance on thy merits, in the joyful hope of the fruition of the glories of thy kingdom, O blessed Jesus, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, I render all the praise of my redemption. Amen.

On Christmas Day, Easter Day, &c. add to your other devotions at the Communion, the following:

Upon Christmas Day, and seven days after.

I desire, O God, evermore to bless and praise thee for thy infinite love. For thou didst take compassion on mankind in his state of condemnation and misery, and didst send thy only Son into the world to instruct and guide us by his holy doctrine and example; to redeem us from sin, and to purchase for us everlasting happiness, by the sacrifice of his death. Grant, O Lord, that, through the power of thy grace and heavenly benediction, I may fulfil the design of my Saviour's coming. "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, may I live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world," and thus be prepared to dwell for ever with thee, Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, in those mansions of bliss and glory, which thou hast prepared for them that love thee.—*Amen.*

Upon Easter Day, and seven days after.

Blessed Jesus! who, by thy glorious resurrection from the dead, hast proved thyself to be the Son of God, hast triumphed over the power of darkness, and conquered death and the grave; keep me steadfast in the faith of thy holy name. Grant, O Lord, that, by the power of thy grace, I may rise from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; may daily proceed in all virtue and godliness of living; and departing this life in thy faith and fear, may finally have my perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting kingdom.—*Amen.*

Upon Ascension Day, and seven days after.

O blessed Jesus! who, after thy conquest over death and hell, didst ascend in triumph to heaven, that thou

mightest prepare for us mansions of eternal glory; grant that the desires and affections of my soul may ascend after thee, and be supremely engaged with the contemplation of the glories of thy power and love. For "whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."—*Amen.*

Upon Whitsunday, and six days after.

O blessed Jesus! who hast sent thy Holy Ghost to sanctify and comfort us. May my thoughts and desires, my ways and actions, evermore be directed by his divine guidance. Let him be unto me a spirit of sanctification, to purify my corrupt nature; a spirit of counsel in all my difficulties; of direction in all my doubts, fears, and scruples; of courage in all my dangers; of constancy and consolation to me under all my persecutions and sufferings, especially in time of sickness, and at the hour of death; that, being governed and guided by his divine influence and direction, I may pass through all the changes and chances of this mortal life, and finally attain thy heavenly kingdom, there to reign with thee, blessed Jesus, world without end.—*Amen.*

Upon Trinity Sunday.

Glory be to thee, O God the Father, for creating me after thine own image, and for recovering me from a state of guilt and misery. Glory be to thee, O God the Son, for undertaking the wonderful work of man's redemption, by assuming our miserable nature; for the merits of thy suffering life; and the redeeming efficacy of thy death. Glory be to thee, O God, the Holy Ghost, for thy miraculous gifts bestowed upon the Apostles; and for thy preventing, restraining, enlightening, consoling, and sanctifying grace. Blessing and honour, thanksgiving and praise, be unto thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever.—*Amen.*

MEDITATIONS DURING THE COMMUNION.

[At this most solemn and affecting ordinance the Communicant should be constantly engaged in acts of devotion. After he has received the elements, let him read the following meditations until the minister is ready to go on with the concluding portion of the service.]

Rom. viii. 32.—He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

O God! the gift of thy only begotten and beloved Son, for the sins of a guilty world, is a sure pledge of thy infinite love. Thy mercy in Christ Jesus is my only hope, when my heart is in heaviness. This is my only refuge, when dismayed by the view of my guilt, and the terrors of thy justice. Grant me, O Lord, all those graces and virtues which will qualify me for knowing and enjoying thee for ever, for Jesus Christ's sake, the Son of thy love.

2 Cor. v. 15.—Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them.

To thee, O my Saviour, I consecrate that life which thou hast redeemed by thy precious blood, from the slavery of sin and satan. Fortify my soul, I beseech thee, against all the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, that with sincerity and devotion of heart, I may evermore serve thee.

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

O my Saviour! who didst take upon thee the form of a Servant, and to redeem sinful man didst bear his grief

and carry his sorrows; let me not profess to follow thee, without endeavouring to follow the blessed steps of thy most holy life; to imitate thy patience, meekness, and humility; thy great disregard for the world, its pleasures, emoluments, and honours; thy lively compassion for the miseries of men; thy unwearied perseverance in doing good; thy constancy and fervour in prayer; thy supreme resignation to the will of thy Father. Being thus conformed in all things to thee, my redeemer and head, may I finally participate of the everlasting glories on which thou hast entered.

Matthew vi. 24.—No man can serve two masters—you cannot serve God and Mammon.

May I never set up any rival to thee, O God, in the possession of my heart. May I never attempt to reconcile thy service with the service of the world, *which is enmity with thee*. May I use it so as not to abuse it. May I ever make all its concerns subordinate to the concerns of my salvation. And, convinced of the unsatisfying nature of its best enjoyments, may I ardently and supremely seek the enduring and satisfying joys of thy glorious presence.

2 Cor. vi. 16.—Ye are the Temple of the living God.

Make me, O God, truly sensible of the great honour and blessing of being the habitation of thy good Spirit—of the great danger of profaning, by unholy passions, a temple consecrated to thee. Make me worthy of thy continual abode and presence. Take possession of my soul—bring all its powers into obedience to thy laws; and enable me to abound in all the fruits of the spirit, that I may enjoy the exalted assurance that thou indeed dwellest in me.

Luke xv. 6.—I have found my sheep which was lost.

O thou good Shepherd! I bless thee for thy tender care and compassion of thy lost sheep. I had indeed been for ever lost, had not thy love sought and found me when I was astray. For thy goodness sake, keep me from wandering from thy fold; and exalt me in thy good time to that celestial fold, into which sin and sorrow never enter.

THE POST-COMMUNION.

If the consecrated Bread and Wine be spent before all have communicated, the Priest is to consecrate more, according to the Form before prescribed; beginning at—All glory be to Thee, Almighty God—and ending with these words—Partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

When all have communicated, the Minister shall return to the Lord's Table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated Elements, covering the same with a fair Linen Cloth.

Then shall the Minister say the Lord's Prayer, the People repeating after him every petition.

OUR FATHER, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory, For ever and ever.—*Amen.*

After shall be said as followeth.

ALMIGHTY AND EVERLIVING GOD, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us who have duly received these holy Mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end.—*Amen.*

Then shall be said or sung, all standing, GLORIA IN EXCELSIS, or some proper Hymn from the Selection.

GLORY BE TO GOD on high, and in earth peace, goodwill towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most High in the glory of God the Father.—*Amen.*

Then the Priest (the Bishop, if he be present) shall let them depart with this blessing.

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be amongst you, and remain with you always.—*Amen.*

[After the blessing, use the following Prayer:]

I bless thee, O God, for the spiritual nourishment with which thou hast strengthened and refreshed my soul. I bless thee, that through the crucified body and blood of thy Son, I am restored to thy favour. Pardon the many imperfections of my services; and grant me grace to fulfil the sacred vows of love and obedience which I have made to thee, my God and Father, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.

COLLECTS AFTER THE COMMUNION.

Collects that may be said after the Collects of Morning or Evening Prayer, or Communion, at the discretion of the Minister.

Assist us mercifully, O Lord, in these our supplications and prayers; and dispose the way of thy servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; that among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears may, through thy grace, be so grafted inwardly in our

hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living; to the honour and praise of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name; and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking; we beseech thee to have compassion upon our infirmities; and those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us, for the worthiness of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

Almighty God, who hast promised to hear the petitions of those who ask in thy Son's name; we beseech thee mercifully to incline thine ears to us who have now made our prayers and supplications unto thee; and grant, that those things which we have faithfully asked according to thy will, may effectually be obtained; to the relief of our necessity, and to the setting forth of thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

Upon the Sundays and other Holy-days (if there be no Sermon or Communion) shall be said all that is appointed at the Communion, unto the end of the Gospel, concluding with the blessing. And if any of the consecrated Bread and Wine remain after the Communion, it shall not be carried out of the Church; but the Minister and other Communicants shall, immediately after the blessing, reverently eat and drink the same.

PRAYER FOR USE UPON RETURNING HOME.

[Upon your return home, retire to your closet to praise God for his mercies, and to supplicate his blessing in the following Prayer:]

I adore and praise thee, O God, for the rich blessings of thy covenant of mercy, through Jesus Christ, which thou hast sealed to my soul in that hallowed ordinance of which I have participated. I bless thee, O Lord, that having humbly and sincerely devoted myself to thee, and sealed my vows over the sacred symbols of the body and blood of thy son, I can enjoy the exalted hope that thy mercy will be my constant solace; thy grace my sure protection and reward. O how great is thy love, in thus providing for my perishing soul divine and celestial succours and consolations. May the obligations of my holy vows, the sacred claims of thy love, be ever present to my remembrance, and excite me diligently and earnestly to aim at serving and obeying thee. O may I not, by transgression, crucify afresh that Saviour whose sufferings I have commemorated, whose mercy I have experienced. Almighty God! thou knowest the weakness of my nature, and the numberless temptations that encompass me. Evermore strengthen me by thy grace. Without thee I shall not be able to stand—lead me by thy Almighty arm—refresh my soul with the consolations of thy love—guide me to the end in thy service—and when my strength and my heart faileth, when my soul is sinking in the shades of death, be thou, O Lord, the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. O my Saviour, visit me with thy salvation; let me see the felicity of thy chosen, and rejoice evermore in the gladness of thy people. *Amen.*

Let the Communicant devote all the rest of the day which is not occupied with the public service of the church, to private acts of devotion; to meditating on the infinite mercy

and love of his God and Saviour; to recalling to mind the sacred obligations to grateful and holy obedience which this hallowed ordinance has imposed upon him; and to earnestly and humbly imploring the succours of divine grace, that he may be sanctified both in soul and body, and may be so conducted "through things temporal, that he finally lose not the things that are eternal."

FORMS OF DAILY DEVOTION

[from Bishop Taylor.]

A FORM OF PRAYER FOR THE MORNING.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. — Our Father, &c.

I. MOST GLORIOUS and eternal God, Father of Mercy and God of all comfort, I worship and adore thee with the lowest humility of my soul and body, and give thee all thanks and praise for thy infinite and eternal glories and perfections: and for the continual demonstration of thy mercies upon me, upon all mine, and upon thy holy Catholic Church.

II. I acknowledge, O God, that I have deserved thy wrath and indignation. But thy mercy triumphing over thy justice and my sins, thou hast still continued to me life and time of repentance; thou hast opened to me the gates of grace and mercy; and perpetually called upon me to enter in, and to walk in the paths of a holy life, that I might glorify thee, and be glorified by thee eternally.

III. Behold, O God, for this thy great and unspeakable goodness, for the preservation of me this night, and for all thy graces and blessings, I offer up my Soul and Body, all that I am, and all that I have, as a sacrifice to thee and thy service; humbly begging of thee to pardon all my sins, to defend me from all evil, to lead me into all good; and let my portion be amongst thy redeemed ones in the gathering together of the Saints, in the kingdom of grace and glory.

IV. Guide me, O Lord, in all the changes and varieties of the world; that in all things that shall happen, I may have an evenness and tranquillity of spirit; that my soul may be wholly resigned to thy divine Will and Pleasure; never murmuring at thy gentle chastisements and fatherly correction, never waxing proud and insolent, though I feel a torrent of comforts and prosperous successes.

V. Fix my thoughts, my hopes and my desires upon heaven and heavenly things; teach me to despise the world, to repent me deeply for my sins; give me holy purposes of amendment, and divine strength and assistance to perform faithfully whatsoever I shall intend piously. Enrich my understanding with an internal treasure of Divine Truths, that I may know thy Will; and thou who workest in us to will and to do of thy good Pleasure, teach me to obey all thy Commandments, to believe all thy Revelations, and make me partaker of thy gracious Promises.

VI. Teach me to watch over all my ways, that I may never be surprised by sudden temptations, or a careless spirit, nor ever return to folly and vanity. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips, that I offend not in my tongue neither against piety nor

charity. Teach me to think of nothing but thee, and what is in order to thy glory and service; to speak of nothing but thee and thy glories; and to do nothing but what becomes thy Servant, whom thy infinite Mercy, by the Graces of thy Holy Spirit, hath sealed up to the day of Redemption.

VII. Let all my passions and affections be so mortified and brought under the dominion of grace, that I may never by deliberation and purpose, nor yet by levity, rashness or inconsideration, offend thy Divine Majesty. Make me such as thou wouldst have me to be; strengthen my faith, confirm my hope, and give me daily increase of charity; that this day and ever I may serve thee according to all my opportunities and capacities, growing from grace to grace; till at last by thy mercies I shall receive the consummation and perfection of grace, even the glories of thy kingdom in the full fruition of the Face and Excellencies of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to whom be glory and praise, honour and adoration given by all Angels, and all Men, and all Creatures, now and to all eternity. *Amen.*

After which conclude with this Ejaculation.

Now in all tribulation and anguish of Spirit, in all dangers of Soul and Body, in prosperity and adversity, in the hour of Death and in the day of judgment, holy and most blessed Saviour, Jesus, have mercy upon me, save me and deliver me. *Amen.*

A FORM OF PRAYER FOR NOON.

I. O ETERNAL GOD, merciful and gracious, vouchsafe thy Favour and thy Blessing to thy servant: let the love of

thy mercies and the dread and fear of thy Majesty, make me careful and inquisitive to search thy Will, and diligently to perform it, and to persevere in the practices of a holy life, even till the last of my days.

II. Keep me, O Lord, for I am thine by creation; guide me, for I am thine by purchase; thou hast redeemed me by the blood of thy Son, and loved me with the love of a Father; for I am thy child by adoption and grace. Let thy mercy pardon my sins, thy providence secure me from the punishments and evils I have deserved, and thy care watch over me, that I may never any more offend thee. Make me in malice to be a child; but in understanding, piety, and the fear of God, let me be a perfect man in Christ, innocent and prudent, readily furnished and instructed to every good work.

III. Keep me, O Lord, from the destroying Angel, and from the wrath of God. Let thy anger never rise against me; but thy rod gently correct my follies, and guide me in thy ways; and thy staff support me in all sufferings and changes. Keep all my senses entire till the day of my death; and let my death be neither sudden, untimely, nor unprovided; let it be after the common manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary, but an extraordinary piety, and the manifestation of thy great and miraculous mercy.

IV. Let no riches make me ever forget myself, no poverty ever make me forget thee. Let no hope or fear, no pleasure or pain, no accident without, no weakness within, hinder or discompose my duty, or turn me from the ways of thy Commandments. O let thy Spirit dwell with me for ever, and make my soul just and charitable, full of honesty, full of religion, resolute and constant in holy purposes,

but inflexible to evil. Make me humble and obedient, peaceable and pious. Let me never envy any man's good, nor deserve to be despised myself; and if I be, teach me to bear it with meekness and charity.

V. Give me a tender conscience; a conversation discreet and affable, modest and patient, liberal and obliging; a body chaste and healthful; competency of living according to my condition; contentedness in all estates; a resigned will and mortified affections; that I may be as thou wouldst have me, and that my portion may be in the lot of the Righteous, in the brightness of thy Countenance, and the Glories of Eternity.

Holy is our God. Holy is the Almighty. Holy is the Immortal. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, have mercy upon me.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, &c.

A FORM OF PRAYER FOR EVENING.

I. O ETERNAL GOD, Great Father of Men and Angels, who hast established the heavens and the earth in a wonderful order, making day and night to succeed each other; I make my humble address to thy Divine Majesty, begging of thee mercy and protection this night and ever. O Lord, pardon all my sins, my light and rash words, the vanity and impiety of my thoughts, my unjust and uncharitable actions, and whatsoever sins I have committed against thee this day, or any time before. Behold, O God, my soul is troubled in the remembrance of my sins, in the frailty and sinfulness of my flesh exposed to every temptation,

and of itself not able to resist any. Lord God of Mercy, I earnestly beg of thee to give me a great portion of thy Grace, such as may be sufficient and effectual for the mortification of all my sins, and vanities, and disorders: that as I have formerly served my lust and unworthy desires, so now I may give myself up wholly to thy service and the studies of a holy Life.

II. Blessed Lord, teach me frequently and sadly to remember my sins; and be thou pleased for Jesus my Redeemer's sake to remember them no more. Let me never forget thy Mercies, and do thou still remember to do me good. Teach me to walk always as in thy presence. Ennoble my soul with great degrees of love to thee; and impress on my spirit a great fear, and veneration of thy holy Name and Laws; that it may become the great employment of my whole life to serve thee, to advance thy Glory, to root out all the habits of sin, that in holiness of life, in humility, in charity, in chastity, and in all the ornaments of Grace, I may by patience wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus. *Amen.*

III. Teach me, O Lord, to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom; ever to remember my last end, that I may not dare to sin against thee. Let thy holy Angels be ever present with me to keep me in all my ways from the malice and violence of the spirits of darkness, from evil company, and the occasions and opportunities of evil, from all the ways of sinful shame, from the hands of all mine enemies, from a sinful life, and from despair in the hour of my death. Then, O blessed Jesus, shine gloriously upon me; let thy Mercies and the Light of thy Countenance sustain me in my agonies, weaknesses and temptations; give me opportunity of a prudent and spiri-

tual Guide, and of receiving the holy Sacrament; and let thy loving Spirit so guide me in the ways of peace and safety, that with the testimony of a good conscience and the sense of thy Mercies and grace, I may depart this life in the unity of the Church, in the love of God, and a certain hope of Salvation through thee my Lord and blessed Saviour.—*Amen.*

IV. Into thy hands, most blessed Jesus, I commend my soul and body, for thou hast redeemed both with thy most precious Blood. So bless and sanctify my sleep unto me, that it may be temperate, holy and safe, a refreshment to my wearied body, to enable it so to serve my soul, that both may serve thee with a never-failing duty. O let me never sleep in sin or death eternal, but give me a watchful and a prudent spirit, that I may omit no opportunity of serving thee; that whether I sleep or wake, live or die, I may be thy servant and thy child; that when the work of my life is done, I may rest in the bosom of my Lord; till by the voice of the Archangel, the trump of God, I shall be awakened and called to sit down and feast at the eternal Supper of the Lamb. Grant this, O Lamb of God, for the honour of thy Mercies, and the glory of thy Name, O most merciful Saviour and Redeemer Jesus.—*Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

Psal. cxxi. 1, &c.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills: from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh of the Lord: which made Heaven and Earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel: shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy Keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The Sun shall not smite thee by day: neither the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in: from this time forth for evermore.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

AN ACT OF INTERCESSION.

To be added to your Evening Devotions.

O GOD OF INFINITE MERCY, who hast compassion on all men, and relievest the necessities of all that call to thee for help; hear the prayers of thy servant, who is unworthy to ask any petition for himself, yet, in humility and duty, is bound to pray for others.

O let thy mercy descend upon the whole church; preserve her in truth and peace, in unity and safety; that offering to thy glory the never-ceasing sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, she may advance the honour of her Lord, and be filled with his spirit, and partake of his glory. *Amen.*

Bless all Christian rulers, and grant them grace, wisdom, and understanding, to execute justice, and to maintain truth. *Amen.*

Bless those who minister in holy things. Clothe them with salvation, that the people may rejoice. *Amen.*

Let all my family and kindred, my neighbours and friends, receive the benefit of my prayers, and the blessings of thy favour; the comforts and supports of thy Providence, and the sanctification of thy Spirit. *Amen.*

Relieve and comfort all the persecuted and afflicted; speak peace to troubled consciences; strengthen the weak; confirm the strong; instruct the ignorant; deliver the oppressed from him that spoileth him, and relieve the needy that hath no helper: and bring us all, by the waters of comfort, and in the ways of righteousness, to the kingdom of rest and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A SUNDAY DEVOTION.

[From Bishop Andrewes.]

Through the tender mercy of our God, the day-spring from on high hath visited us.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, for that light which no darkness ever overspreads, that sun which never goes down.

O thou who, on this day, didst rise again, raise up my soul to newness of life; grant me repentance from dead works, and plant me in the likeness of thy resurrection.

And thou, O Father and God of peace, who didst bring again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant; make me perfect in every good work to do thy will, working in me that which is well pleasing in thy sight, through Jesus Christ.

O thou, who didst also on this day of the week, send down on thy Apostles thy most holy Spirit; take not the

same Spirit away from us: but grant to all thy servants who ask it of thee, that they may be daily renewed, and more plentifully enriched with the same.

O Lord, who, by choosing this day for these most important, most beneficial events, didst direct thy Apostles to call it, and to make it thy holy day; grant, that, by imploring thy grace, and celebrating thy praise on this holy day; by praising and reading thy word; and by attending on the public assemblies of thy Saints in the house where thy honour dwelleth; I may be prepared for that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God, of which the sacred rest of this day is a figure and a pledge; and for joining in the eternal hymns of angels and blessed spirits in the life to come; ascribing unto God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, honour and praise, for ever and ever.

SHORT EJACULATIONS.

In the Morning, when you first awake and see the light.

I bless thee, O Lord, for watching over me this night, and for bringing me to enjoy the comforts of another day. Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.

When you get up.

I laid me down and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord sustained me. O let me awake unto righteousness, and arise from the dead, that Christ may give me light.

When you lie down at night.

I will lay me down in peace to take my rest. O my God, under the shadow of thy wings make me to dwell in safety.

In the Church, before Divine Service.

O Lord, pardon my sins, and receive my prayers; and may the truths of salvation here proclaimed make me wise unto salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

After Divine Service.

O Lord, pardon the imperfections both of my prayers and praises, and incline me not only to hear thy word, but to obey the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Grace before Meat.

Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, this refreshment to our use, and us to thy service, for Christ's sake.—*Amen.*

Grace after Meat.

For this and every other mercy, O God, thy holy name be praised, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*

DIRECTIONS TO COLLECTS AND PSALMS

Proper to be used by the Communicant in his private Devotions.

The reader's attention is directed to the following selection of Collects from the BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, and Psalms, suited to particular subjects and occasions, that he may readily find devotional aids appropriate to his spiritual state.

For God's Assistance in the Performance of our Duty:

1st Sunday after Epiphany; 9th after Trinity.

Under Afflictions: 5th in Lent; 5th Sunday after Epiphany; St. John Evangelist.

For the Universal Church: 2d for Good Friday; 16th and 22d after Trinity.

For Communion of Saints with the Church: 5th Sunday after Trinity; St. Simeon and Jude.

For Contrition: On Ash-Wednesday.

Against Covetousness: St. Matthew's Day.

For Conversion from Sin: 1st Sunday in Advent; 1st after Easter; St. Andrew's Day; St. James's Day; St. Matthew's Day.

For the Benefit of Christ's Death: For the Annunciation.

For a right and firm Faith: Collects for Trinity Sunday; for St. Thomas and St. Mark.

For Faith, Hope, and Charity: 14th Sunday after Trinity.

For Grace and assistance in our Spiritual Course: 2d Sunday in Lent; 4th in Advent; Easter Day; 1st, 3d, and 13th after Trinity.

For Eternal Happiness: 1st Sunday in Advent; 1st Sunday after Epiphany; 6th Sunday after Epiphany; Sunday after Ascension Day.

For Humility and Patience: See the Sunday before Easter.

For Imitation of Christ: 2d Sunday after Easter.

For our Imitation of the Saints: St. Stephen's Day; St. John Baptist's Day; All Saints' Day.

For Deliverance from Judgments: 4th Sunday in Lent.

For the Love of God and his Laws: 4th Sunday after Easter; 1st, 6th, 7th, and 14th after Trinity.

For Love and Charity: Quinquagesima Sunday.

For the Ministers of God's Word and Sacraments: St. Matthias's Day; St. Peter's Day; 3d Sunday in Advent.

For Mortification: On the Circumcision and Easter Day.

For the Protection of God's Providence: 2d, 3d, 4th, and 20th Sunday after Trinity.

For Purity of Heart: For the Purification.

For Pardon of Sin: 12th, 21st, and 24th Sunday after Trinity.

For Acceptance of our Prayers: 10th Sunday after Trinity.

For Renovation: For Christmas-Day.

To be truly Religious: 7th Sunday after Trinity.

For Christian Resolution: St. John Baptist's Day.

For Sincerity: 3d Sunday after Easter.

Before Reading the Scriptures: 2d Sunday in Advent.

Against Evil Thoughts: 5th after Easter.

For Deliverance from, and Support under Temptations: 4th after Epiphany; 2d in Lent.

For Fruitfulness in Good Works: 5th after Easter; 1st, 9th, 11th, 13th, 16th, and 25th after Trinity.

DIRECTIONS TO PSALMS.

For God's Assistance in our Sacramental Preparation: Ps. 23, 26, 111.

For the Gift and Grace of Repentance: Ps. 6, 25, 32, 38, 51.

Before Self-Examination: Ps. 139.

For Confession of Sins, and for Forgiveness: Ps. 32, 38, 51, 6.

An Act of Contrition: Ps. 25.

On a Resolution to lead a new Life: Ps. 1, 23, 24, 25, 126.

For Faith in God's Mercy, through Christ's Death: Ps. 19, 57.

For a Thankful Remembrance of Christ's Death: Ps. 103, 2, 3, 4.

For the Grace of Charity: Ps. 15, 41, 112, 133.

For Grace to love God's Law: Ps. 19, 119.

For a Holy Life: Ps. 85.

For Salvation and Eternal Happiness: Ps. 16, 24.

For God's Care and Protection: Ps. 37.

For the Comfort of God's Holy Spirit: Ps. 34.

For Humility: Ps. 131.

Thanksgivings for God's Mercies: Ps. 103, 136, 138.

For Pardon of Sins: Ps. 85, 106, 116.

For Redemption by Christ: Ps. 98, 118.

Against evil and perplexing Thoughts: Ps. 6, 102, 34, 42, 43.

On Christmas Day, and seven days after: Ps. 19, 89, 45.

Easter Day, and seven days after: Ps. 2, 57, 111.

Whitsunday, and seven days after: Ps. 34, 42, 43, 51.

Trinity Sunday: Ps. 2, 47, 72, 110.

For the Grace of Perseverance: Ps. 86, 119.

For the Morning: Ps. 4, 16, 17, 23, 85.

For the Evening: Ps. 138, 130, 119.

THE WHOLE BOOK OF PSALMS DIGESTED

*Digested into Prayers, Meditations, Thanksgivings, &c.
To be added to our other Devotions as occasion may require.*

PRAYERS.

For grace to love God's law: Ps. 19, 119. For preservation from sin: Ps. 19, 40. For preservation from the punishment of sin, and God's Judgments: Ps. 25, 28, 75, 76. For pardon of our sins: Ps. 6, 25, 32, 38, 40, 41, 51, 65, 130, 143. For propagation of the gospel: Ps. 47, 68, 72, 145. For God's providence and protection: Ps. 4, 16, 17, 23, 86, 91, 121. For protection against malicious and wicked persons: Ps. 5, 70, 94, 109, 140. For the church, and all faithful people: Ps. 5, 10, 45, 48, 53, 68, 70, 74, 79, 80, 93, 94, 114, 132, 137. For defence against all enemies, ghostly and bodily, public and private: Ps. 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 18, 27, 31, 35, 40, 54, 55, 59, 70, 108, 109, 135, 141. For a holy life, sanctity, and innocence: Ps. 1, 15, 23, 24, 25, 50, 84, 85, 101, 119, 126. For salvation and eternal joys: Ps. 16, 24, 28, 36, 50, 75, 84, 87, 97, 126. For defence of our innocence: Ps. 7. For a blessed and holy death: Ps. 1, 33, 36, 50, 88, 90, 102, 142.

For deliverance from treason, and private conspiracies: Ps. 41, 55, 109. For deliverance from death and damnation: Ps. 28, 30, 102, 125. For health: Ps. 90, 102. For all christian rulers and judges: Ps. 82. For advancement of religion: Ps. 45, 48, 72, 74. For deliverance from the power of the devil: Ps. 57. For peace: Ps. 46, 122, 123, 133, 144. For comfort in sadness: Ps. 101, 102, 142. For spiritual blessings: Ps. 65, 73. For competency of living: Ps. 127. For tranquillity of spirit: Ps. 141. For victory: Ps. 144. For comfort of God's Spirit: Ps. 34, 42, 43, 51, 61, 102, 142.

PRAYERS FOR SEVERAL TIMES AND OCCASIONS.

In the time of sadness: Ps. 61, 102, 142. In the time of persecution and oppression: Ps. 7, 9, 10, 52, 53, 58, 64, 69, 73, 137, 142. In time of war: Ps. 18, 44, 46, 60, 89, 103. In the time of slander: Ps. 37, 52, 64, 120. In time of temptation: Ps. 13, 19, 90. In time of sickness: Ps. 30, 31, 88, 90, 102, 142. In time of public calamity and distraction: Ps. 46, 89, 91. In time of spiritual desertion: Ps. 34, 42, 43, 51, 61, 102. In time of relapse into sin: Ps. 51. In time of solemn devotion: Ps. 20, 81. On Good-Friday: Ps. 22. On Ascension-day: Ps. 24.

PRAYERS FOR PARTICULAR GRACES.

For repentance: Ps. 102. For mortification: Ps. 131. For humility: Ps. 131. For patience: Ps. 94. For perseverance: Ps. 19, 85. For devotion and religion: Ps. 27, 33, 42, 43, 99, 119, 111. For charity: Ps. 41, 112. For liberality and contempt of riches: Ps. 4, 49, 73. For hope and trust in God: Ps. 33, 37, 46, 49, 57, 77, 92, 115, 125, 146. For reverence and fear of God: Ps. 2, 33, 112, 128. For watchfulness

over our ways: Ps. 56. For zeal: Ps. 119. For health and newness of life: Ps. 50, 84.

PRAYERS PREPARATORY.

To the sacrament: Ps. 23, 26, 111. To death: Ps. 26, 30, 31, 39, 71, 88, 90, 142; *viz. to be said in sickness or old age.*

DEPRECATIONS.

Against Atheism and Irreligion: Ps. 14. Against Idolatry: Ps. 115. Against heretics and heresy: Ps. 59. Against danger of evil company: Ps. 1, 12, 120. Against sacrilege, and sacrilegious persons: Ps. 74, 83. Against fearfulness and doubting: Ps. 77. Against covetousness: Ps. 4, 37. Against the enemies of the church: Ps. 59, 68, 74, 83, 102, 120. Against death: Ps. 88.

MEDITATIONS.

On the day of judgment: Ps. 50, 97. On the passion of Christ: Ps. 22. On the joys of heaven: Ps. 126, 142. On the perfections and excellencies of God manifested in his creatures: Ps. 8, 104. On God's providence over his people, and mercy to the penitent: Ps. 74, 93, 105, 106, 147. On God's justice and judgments on sinners: Ps. 73, 92. On his omnipotence and omnipresence: Ps. 139.

ACTS OF VIRTUE.

Adoration of God: Ps. 8, 26, 65, 95, 96, 145. Adoration of the second Person in the Trinity: Ps. 47. Acts of hope in God: Ps. 4, 11, 18. Acts of religion: Ps. 134. Acts of praise to God: Ps. 17, 135, 148, 150. Acts of love to God: Ps. 116. Desire after God and heavenly things: Ps. 63, 84, 87.

THANKSGIVINGS.

For all God's mercies: Ps. 103, 136, 138. For his mercy and truth: Ps. 100. For delivering us from enemies and all other dangers: Ps. 40, 103, 114, 116. For delivering us from sickness and all other troubles: Ps. 81, 107, 124, 144. For pardon of our sins: Ps. 85, 106, 116. For redemption by Christ: Ps. 98, 118. For the blessings of the gospel: Ps. 111. For acts of God's providence, and particular care over us: Ps. 113, 121. For victory: Ps. 144.

 THE SEVEN PENITENTIAL PSALMS.

The 6th, 32d, 38th, 51st, 102d, 130th, 143d.

OUR SAVIOUR'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

The 5th, 6th, and 7th Chapters of St. Matthew.

THE EIGHT BEATITUDES.

St. Matth. Chap. v. Verse 3, &c.

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

7. Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

8. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



NOTE FOR PAGE 199

It may not be amiss to present to the reader the following passages from the writings of the Fathers, which, with many others that might be produced, decisively prove that the primitive Church was episcopal.

FIRST CENTURY.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, in his Epistle to the Trallians.

“Continue inseparable from Jesus Christ our God, from your Bishop; and from the commands of the Apostles. He that is within the altar is pure; but he that is *without*, that is, does any thing without the Bishops, and Presbyters, and Deacons, is not pure in his conscience.”

In his Epistle to the Smyrnians.

“Let no man do any thing of what belongs to the Church without the Bishop. It is not lawful, *without the Bishop*, neither to baptise, nor to celebrate the holy Communion.”

SECOND CENTURY.

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons.

“We can reckon up those whom the Apostles ordained to be *Bishops* in the several Churches, and who they were that succeeded them down to our times.”²

Clemens of Alexandria.

“There are other precepts without number; some which relate to Presbyters; others which belong to Bishops; others respecting Deacons.”³

THIRD CENTURY.

Origen of Alexandria.

“There is a debt due to Deacons; another to Presbyters; another to Bishops; which is the greatest of all, and exacted by the Saviour of the whole Church.”⁴

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage.

“The Church is built on Bishops, and every act of the church is governed and directed by them its Presidents.”⁵

The testimony of St. Jerome, in the 4th century, has been supposed by some to militate against Episcopacy. In his comment on the first chapter of Titus, he advances only as a conjecture, “that the Churches were at first governed by a college of Presbyters, equal in rank and dignity. Afterwards, divisions being occasioned by this parity among Presbyters, when every Presbyter began to claim, as his own particular subjects, those whom he had baptised; and it was said by the people, *I am of Paul, and I of Apostles,*

²Irenæus, lib. iii. cap. 5.

³Pædag. lib. iii. cap. 12.

⁴Origen, lib. *de oratione*.

⁵Cyprianus, principio Epist. 33.

and I of Cephas; to remedy this evil, it was ordered, all the world over, that one of the Presbyters in every Church should be set over the rest, and peculiarly called Bishop." But it is evident that, in this passage, St. Jerome plainly refers the decree by which *Bishops* were established over *Presbyters*, to the time of the Apostles. He not only assigns, as the occasion of it, the adherence of some to Paul, of others to Apostles, of others to Cephas, which is reprov'd by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians; but in his Epistle to Evagrius, he expressly calls the distinction of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, an *apostolic institution*, and taken by the Apostles from the Old Testament, where Aaron, his sons the Priests, and the Levites, correspond to the three orders of the Christian Church. In his catalogue of ecclesiastical writers, he affirms, "that James was ordained Bishop of Jerusalem by the Apostles; that Timothy was made Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus of Crete by St. Paul; and Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna by St. John," &c. Even in St. Jerome's opinion, therefore, the primacy of Bishops over Presbyters was an apostolic institution. Yet, were the opinion of St. Jerome otherwise, the opinion of a single Father, in the 4th century, ought not certainly to be adduced against the concurring testimony of all the earlier Fathers.

The primitive Church, beyond all doubt, was episcopal. The Bishops alone possessed the power of ordination, of transmitting from Christ, the Head of the Church, that spiritual power which can be derived from him alone. If, then, Presbyters who never received authority to ordain, were to exercise this power; the ministerial commission which they would confer would not be derived in the appointed channel from Christ, and of course would not be sanctioned by him. The mode established by *Christ and*

his Apostles, of conveying ministerial power in the Church to "the end of the world," cannot be altered by any human authority.

The reader who is in doubt on this subject, certainly one of the most important that can engage his attention, is earnestly requested candidly and seriously to peruse *Potter on Church Government*, and *Law's Three Letters to the Bishop of Bangor*, which last are published in the *Scholar Armed*. The former of these writers, by a luminous series of testimony from Scripture and the primitive Fathers, proves that the original constitution of the Church was episcopal; and the latter, in a masterly strain of argument, defends this truth against all the objections with which it can be assailed. United, they place the Episcopal Constitution of the Church on the firm foundation of Scripture, antiquity, and sound reason.

The opinion advanced by St. Peter King, and since by others, that a Bishop was originally the head of only one congregation, and possessed no diocesan authority, is entirely refuted and exposed by Slater, in his *Original Draught of the Primitive Church*. And much valuable information on this subject may be found in a late work re-published in this city, entitled, *A Guide to the Church*, by Charles Daubeny, LL.B., a Presbyter of the Church of England.

Soli Deo Gloria.