

following to live in the love and fear of thee our God, and in peace and charity one with another.

Teach us to set thee always before us, and wherever we are, and whatever we are doing, to consider that thou art about our path, and about our bed, and spiest out all our ways.

O possess us with such a strong, and such a lively sense of thee, and of our obligations to thee, and let the thoughts and certain expectation of death and judgment be so constantly, so powerfully present to our souls, that we may, every day, earnestly and heartily serve thee, in all the actions of Christian piety; and be unwearied in well doing, to the end of our lives.

And forasmuch as in all our ways we acknowledge thee, do not thou, O God, ever leave us, or forsake us: But conduct us safely by thy counsel and grace, through all the business and enjoyments, through all the troubles and temptations of this life, to that happy place, where our Lord Jesus lives and reigns with thee in the unity of the blessed Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O Everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order; mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels always do thee service in heaven; so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

† On Festivals or Fasts use the Collect for the Day

DIALOGUE VII.

THE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTED HOW TO OBSERVE
THE ORDINANCES OF RELIGION; *in a Dialogue between a Minister and his Parishioner.*

Minister. I THANK you, neighbour, for this visit. How go on matters in your family?

Parishioner. O, Sir, you have set me a great deal of work, which my conscience tells me is good and necessary, and better than any thing else in which I can spend my time. But my heart is backward, and what you have taught me is not so soon learnt as heard, nor so soon done as learnt; and yet I come to you again; and what I desire of you now is, to instruct me about the right observation of the Lord's day; and first to tell me our obligation to observe it.

M. In the first place, Christ gave his Apostles a commission to acquaint the world with his will, and to settle the order of the Church. To this end he promised and gave them the infallible conduct of the Holy Ghost; who was the author of what they did in obedience to their commission. As Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, so he often on that day appeared to his disciples, and on that day of the week he sent down the Holy Ghost; so that the

new world may be said to have been begun on that day. And on that day the Apostles constantly celebrated the holy assemblies, and appointed the churches to do the like, separating that day to the holy worship of God. All the churches in the world, from the Apostle's times, kept the Lord's day as holy, or separated to holy worship; no one church, no one person, not even a heretic, who confessed Christ's resurrection, ever once excepting against it. This day is improperly styled *the Sabbath*; that being the title of the seventh day, or the Jewish day of rest or worship. The scriptural title of the Christian day of rest and worship is the *Lord's Day*. And the church, from the first, has called it Sunday, in commemoration of that Sun of Righteousness who this day rose upon the world.

P. I know that one day in seven is as due a proportion now as when Moses's law was made. And I am sure it is a great mercy and benefit to man, to be obliged every seventh day to lay aside his care and labour, and learn the way to everlasting life. Alas! what would servants and poor men do without it? It is a great engagement to the holy employment of the soul, when every seventh day is separated to that use alone. And I feel by experience the great benefit of it to myself. I see also that religion prospers most where the Lord's day is most conscientiously kept, and fails where it is neglected. But I pray you to give me directions for the right spending of the day, both general and particular.

M. The general instructions then which I would give you are these:

That the chief use of the day is for the public

worshipping of God, our Creator and Redeemer, and therefore the church-worship is to be preferred before private; that the chief work in which it is to be spent, is learning the doctrine of the Gospel, and praising, and giving thanks to our Heavenly Father, our Redeemer and Sanctifier; that our hearts should be framed to holy joy, and gratitude, and love, stirred up by the exercise of faith and hope: and it should be spent as a day of thanksgiving for the greatest mercies.

The Order of the Duties of the Lord's Day.

P. Now, if you please, Sir, descend to particulars.

M. Make due preparation for the day before it comes. Let your six days labour be so despatched, that it may not hinder you. Cast off worldly thoughts, and remember both the sins and the abuses of the week past; and go in good time to your rest.

Let your first thoughts be suitable to the day. Remember with joy the resurrection of your Saviour, when you awake to the beginning of this holy day; and let your heart be glad to think that another Lord's day is come.

Rise full as early on that day as on your labouring days; and think not that sloth is holy rest.

Let your dressing time be short; and let it be spent, if possible, in hearing another read, or in good thoughts, or suitable conversation to those about you.

Begin with secret prayer, and let your ser-

vants despatch their necessary business, that it stand not afterwards in their way.

Then call your children and servants to family worship, and call on God with joyful thanksgiving for the redemption and the hopes of glory; but do all with seriousness and alacrity; and tell your servants and children for what purpose it is that they go to church.

Go early to the beginning of public worship. Let none be absent that can be spared to go. It is an affront to God, and a disturbance to the congregation, when you come in after the service has commenced; and you lose the opportunity of joining in the confession, and the benefit of the authoritative sentence of absolution.

After your return, while dinner is preparing, meditate on the great business of the day, and consider what you have heard in the Church, and endeavour to imprint it on your mind and memory.

If company allow you opportunity, let your time at meals be seasoned with some cheerful and pious conversation, suitable to the hearers and the day.

After dinner take them again to church, and after your return betake yourself to devout meditation on what has passed in the day.

At supper, as at dinner, remember that though it be a day of thanksgiving, yet it is not a day of sensuality and excess.

But before supper examine your children and servants what they have learned that day; and catechize them: this duty must not be neglected.

When you go to rest, review briefly the special occurrences of the day; repent of your failings

and imperfections in divine worship. Give thanks for mercies, and compose yourself to rest, trusting in the protection of your gracious God; and let your last thoughts be such as are proper for the close of this holy day.

Of Joining in Public Worship.

P. I pray you next instruct me how to worship God in public: you have before told me what church I must join with. Have you more to say on that?

M. Yes: I advise you to hear the teacher whom God hath set over you, and feel not yourself justified in following teachers of no authority. If schism be sinful, how can you hope for God's blessing; when the first step which you take is displeasing to him? Be thankful if the Providence of God hath set over you a zealous, prudent, pious, and faithful pastor. But if your minister unfortunately be not such, then public order and your soul's edification require you to do as well as you can. No congregations may lawfully be communicated with, which causelessly separate themselves from the apostolic ministry, for they violate the unity of the church, and rend the body of Christ. Nor should you, under the vain pretence of greater edification, forsake the ministry, derived through the order of bishops from Christ and his Apostles; for then you will be guilty of the sin of schism.

When you join in public prayer, and praises, and thanksgiving, do it earnestly with the desires of your heart: and be not a bare hearer, nor seem to pray when indeed you do not; for that is to be an hypocrite.

Be not inclined to find fault with the prayers of the church, nor come to them with idle and ill-natured prejudices. You will join with no church in the world, if you will join in nothing that is absolutely faultless. Be thankful that you enjoy a form of sound words, and of scriptural, primitive, and evangelical worship.

In your gesture and manner of behaviour in God's worship, affect not to differ from the rest, but conform yourself to the directions of the church; for in a church, singularity is discord. Do not be gazing about you during the service, nor indulge in whispering and talking. Remember that you are in the presence of God, who is jealous of his honour. Attend to your prayer book; and look steadily at it, even though you may know the prayers; for this indicates reverence, and will serve to fix your attention. Repeat audibly the responses yourself, and encourage others to do so, especially your own family; but carefully avoid repeating audibly, or even in a low tone of voice, the prayers and other parts of the service performed by the minister. You should join in these with your heart, and repeat them mentally. Be sure that you kneel at prayer; but do not lay down your head, as if you were asleep; but keep open your prayer book, and attend to it. Above all, seek to worship God with your heart, as well as with your lips.

Take heed also how you hear, that you may hear with profit: endeavour to understand what you hear; be duly affected with it, and remember it, that you may practise it.

Go to church as one who is going to hear a message from the God of Heaven, concerning your everlasting salvation. Remember that you

have but a little time to hear, and then you must be laid with those who lately sat where you now sit. Observe how nearly the matter concern you; and rouse up your mind from sloth and wandering. Remember that God who sends the message, waits for your resolution and your answer, whether you will yield to him or reject him; whether you will improve his grace or not. Secretly implore of God his quickening Spirit; and afterwards pray that his grace may make his word successful.

The best help for your memory will be a thorough understanding of the truths and duties inculcated, and a deep affection for them. We easily remember that which we well understand, and with which we are much affected.

If the word be carefully imprinted on your heart, the practice will more easily follow. Resolve to obey whatever God makes known to be his will; and when you come home, consider what you heard which concerns your practice, and let your conscience closely apply it; and revive your resolutions. Especially labour that your graces may be strengthened, and that your belief of the life to come, and your hope of glory, and your love of God may be confirmed. Take heed of those preachers, who under pretence of extolling Christ and free grace, destroy the principles of practice.

How to Communicate in the Lord's Supper.

Learn what is the end and design of the Lord's Supper, and what are the parts and nature of it.

Now the end of this Sacrament is, to be a solemn commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ

by his death, until he come; that the Church may, as it were, see his body broken and his blood shed, and behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

And it is also designed to be a solemn renewing of the covenant of Grace, on Christ's part and on ours; even the same which you made in Baptism, and in your Confirmation. In the Communion man consecrates himself anew to Christ, and Christ accepteth him.

Lastly. It is designed to be a powerful mean to stir up faith, desire, love, thankfulness, hope, joy, and new obedience, to engage us in communion with God and Jesus Christ, in the exercise of all these graces; and to confer on us additional grace through the merits of our Redeemer.

The special parts of the holy Sacrament are, the Consecration, the Commemoration, the Communion, and Communication, or Participation.

The *Consecration* is the separation of the bread and wine to the Sacramental use, as the fittest representation of the body and blood of Christ. This bread and wine are offered to God, for his acceptance and benediction.

The *Communion* is the visible representation under the symbols of bread and wine, of the Sacrificing of Christ upon the Cross to the Father, for the sins of man; designed to keep up the remembrance of it, that the Church may be duly affected thereby; and to profess our confidence in a crucified Christ, for the acceptance of our persons and all our performances with God, as well as for the pardon of our sins.

The *Communication* and *Participation* is the giving of Christ himself, with his spiritual

benefits, to the believing receiver, by the Sacrament of the bread and wine ministerially delivered in Christ's name; together with the acceptance of the receiver.

The *particular* Preparation which is necessary for the Sacrament is, To renew our meditations on the nature and use of the Sacrament, and to consider how holy a work it is to enter into communion and covenant with God and our Redeemer, before the congregation; that so we may come with pious and reverent, and not with indifferent and careless minds.

To examine ourselves, both whether we continue our unfeigned consent to the covenant of God, and also whether we live according to the terms of that covenant, in a godly, sober, righteous, and charitable life, not habitually committing any sin; and to humble ourselves before God by true repentance. To ask forgiveness of those whom we have wronged, and to forgive them that have wronged us; that we may be capable of receiving forgiveness from God.

On this solemn occasion you must renew your covenant with God in Christ, and pray that ye may receive renewed mercies from him.

In this holy ordinance you must maintain a firm belief in the doctrine of the Gospel, and in the truth of the world to come; a lively sense of your sin and misery, and your need of Christ; a hatred of sin, and a high esteem of Divine Grace; a thankful sense of the wonderful love of God in our redemption: you must exercise lively love to him who hath thus loved us, and rejoice in the sense of so great salvation. Love and joy are the life of our Sacramental Communion.

When you are going up to the altar, remember with humble thankfulness to what a feast God's mercy freely inviteth such an unworthy sinner.

When the Confession of sin is made, join heartily and audibly in it.

When you see the bread and wine set upon the table, remember that God is the Creator of all things, by whom we live, and whom we have offended.

When the words of the Institution are read, remember that love which prepared and gave us a Redeemer.

When you look on the consecrated bread and wine, discern and reverence the representation of the body and blood of Christ, and take it not profanely as common bread and wine.

When you see the bread broken, and the wine poured out, remember the sacrificed Lamb of God, who loved us unto death, and taketh away the sins of the world.

When the minister prayeth to God for the efficacy of the Sacrament, join heartily with him, and beg for that pardon and peace which are here offered.

When the minister delivereth you the bread and wine, look on him as the messenger of Christ, appointed to deliver you the most significant representation of Christ's body and blood broken and shed to be your Saviour; and with him the sealed covenant of Grace, pardoning all your sins, and giving you the blessed hope of justification, sanctification, and glory. And accordingly with thankful faith receive him.

When you see the communicants receiving the same Sacrament with you, let your heart be

united in love to all believers, and think how perfectly we shall be one in Christ in the heavenly glory.

When the minister returneth thanks and praise to God, lift up your soul to love and joy, and reflect on the heavenly society of saints and angels who are saved by Christ and who continually thank and praise him, that you may endeavour in some degree to imitate them.

When you are going away, remember that you are hastening to the place where we shall see, and enjoy the things now signified, and know face to face as we are known, and have higher joys than faith can raise. In the mean time, continue to love and praise him who hath instituted such means of salvation; and keep up a life of thankfulness and joy. Continue in the use of all other means to maintain the holy life and resolution which you have here obtained; and see that you live agreeably to the resolutions which you have made.

Communicate as frequently as the Church does to which you belong. In old time the communion was administered at least every Lord's day. You cannot receive it too often; you cannot turn away from it with innocence or safety, or without irreverence to its divine Author.

Of the Duty of Private Prayer.

Think not that you have prayed, when your tongue hath gone without your heart. Labour after a deep sense of your sins, wants and mercies, and labour more with your heart than with

your tongue; for out of the abundance of a feeling, fervent heart, the tongue will be able so to speak as that God will accept it.

Present yourself before God only in the name of Christ, trusting in his merits and intercession; and expect every mercy from God, through Christ.

Live as you pray: and think not that confessing sin to God will excuse you for continuing in it. Labour for what you pray for; and think not that praying is all that you have to do, to obtain God's grace, any more than to procure your food and raiment: But you must labour, and beg for God's blessing.

As to your religious Conversation.

When you are with those that can teach you, be much more forward to hear than to speak.

If they be silent who can teach you, induce them to speak by some seasonable question; for the best are too backward: and many are silent for want of occasion, opportunity, or invitation. But avoid all ostentation of piety; and take heed not to introduce religious conversation at unseasonable times.

When you speak to the ignorant and sinful, do it not in a contemptuous, proud, magisterial way; but with clear, convincing reason, and with great kindness and gentleness. Let instruction and friendly exhortation be instead of reproof, for the most part: and when you mean to reprove, do it usually in secret, and not before others; for disgrace will provoke them, and hinder them from repentance.

Let your conversation be directed to some

practical issue, so to affect the hearts of your hearers, as to bring them to resolve on that which is their duty.

Of Days of Humiliation and Thanksgiving.

The manner of humiliation is by due abstinence, and confession, and prayer, to humble your soul penitently for sin, and beg the mercy which you want: and the manner of thanksgiving, to rejoice soberly and spiritually, with moderate feasting when that is convenient; and give God thanks for his mercy, and beg the grace to improve it, and renew your devotion and resolutions of obedience.

The outward parts (fasting and feasting) must not be made a mere form or ceremony, nor judged to be pleasing to God merely in and for themselves; but must be chosen only as means which help us to their proper ends. As to the duties of humiliation and thanksgiving; these may be varied as men's cases and bodies differ. The weak may be humbled without fasting, or with less; and the poor and the sickly may give thanks without feasting, or with little. And all must take heed of offering God a sacrifice of the sin of sensuality and excess.

The Church requires, on days of fasting, "such a measure of abstinence as is suited to extraordinary acts and exercises of devotion."

True repentance in humiliation, and increased love to God in thanksgiving, and true reformation of life by both, is the great end to be aimed at; and whatsoever attaineth not, or truly intendeth not that end, is vain.

A Prayer for the right Use of the Means of Grace.

(In the Language of the Offices of the Church.)

O God, who has appointed the means of grace, that by them I may be fitted for partaking of the hope of glory; may I thankfully receive them, and devoutly and faithfully use them to the relief of my spiritual necessities, to the setting forth of thy glory, and to the furtherance of my happiness, both temporal and spiritual. Give me grace, O heavenly Father, to worship and serve thee, on thy holy days, with reverence and godly fear. Affect me with an awful apprehension of thy divine Majesty, and a deep sense of my own unworthiness; that so approaching thy sanctuary with lowliness and devotion, and coming before thee with clean thoughts and a pure heart, with a body undefiled, and a mind sanctified, I may perform a service acceptable to thee. May I with meek heart and due reverence hear and receive thy holy word. May I come to the blessed Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, with faith, charity, and true repentance; and being filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, obtain to my great and endless comfort, remission of my sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And grant, O Lord, that with the blessed company of all faithful people, I may be so joined in unity of spirit by the doctrine of thy Apostles and Prophets, that we may be made an holy temple, acceptable unto thee, and finally be inheritors of thy everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DIALOGUE VIII.

THE CHRISTIAN DIRECTED AS TO A SAFE AND COMFORTABLE DEATH; in a Dialogue between a Minister and his Parishioner.

Parishioner. SIR, I have been since I saw you with several of my neighbours at their death; and I see that weakness and pain of body, and the terrors of death and the attendance of friends and physicians, are so great impediments to men's preparation then, that I earnestly entreat you to help me to prepare myself while I am in health; for I am unwilling to leave so great a work to so weak a state, and so sad and short uncertain time.

Minister. God shows his great mercy to you in making you so wise. There is nothing in which the folly of ungodly men more appears than in delaying their serious preparations for death. No man is so brutish as not to know that he must die; and there is no man, most certainly no Christian, who believeth not that death will remove him into another state of life. There is no man can doubt but this change is sure, and may be very near. And how great a change takes place! The body, which is now indulged and gratified, must become a loathsome corpse. The pleasant cup, the delicious food, the adorned room, the gay attire, the soft bed, the delightful garden, walks and fields, the honour and precedence, the power and command, are all at an

