

as to forget that one thing is necessary; but choose for yourselves and them the better part ^k.

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

Direct. vi. 'As much as is possible, settle a constant order of all your businesses that every ordinary work may know its time, and confusion may not shut out godliness.' It is a great assistance in every calling to do all in a set and constant order: it maketh it easy: it removeth impediments; and promoteth success: distraction in your business causeth a distraction in your minds in holy duty. Some callings I know can hardly be cast into any order or method; but others may, if prudence and diligence be used. God's service will thus be better done, and your work will be better done, to the ease of your servants, and quiet of your own minds. Foresight and skilfulness would save you abundance of labour and vexation.

CHAPTER V.

Special Motives to persuade Men to the holy Governing of their Families.

If it were but well understood what benefits come by the holy governing of families, and what mischiefs come by its neglect, there would few that walk the streets among us, appear so odious as those careless, ungodly governors that know not nor mind a duty of such exceeding weight. While we lie all as overwhelmed with the calamitous fruits

^k Luke x. 42.

^l 1 Tim. vi. 10.

of this neglect, I think meet to try, if with some, the cause may be removed; by awakening sluggish souls, to do their undertaken work.

Motive 1. 'Consider that the holy government of families, is a considerable part of God's own government of the world, and the contrary is a great part of the devil's government.' It hath pleased God to settle as a natural, so a political order in the world and to honour his creatures to be the instruments of his own operations: and though he could have produced all effects without any inferior causes, and could have governed the world by himself alone without any instruments (he being not as kings, constrained to make use of deputies and officers, because of their own natural confinement and insufficiency), yet is he pleased to make inferior causes partakers in such excellent effects, and taketh delight in the frame and order of causes, by which his will among his creatures is accomplished. So that as the several justices in the countries do govern as officers of the king, so every magistrate and master of a family, doth govern as an officer of God. And if his government by his officers be put down or neglected, it is a contempt of God himself, or a rebellion against him. What is all the practical atheism, and rebellion, and ungodliness of the world, but a rejecting of the government of God? It is not against the being of God in itself considered, that his enemies rise up with malignant, rebellious opposition: but it is against God as the holy and righteous governor of the world, and especially of themselves. And as in an army, if the corporals, sergeants, and lieutenants, do all neglect their offices, the government of the general or colonels is defeated and of little force; so if the rulers of families and other officers of God will corrupt or neglect their part of government, they do their worst to corrupt or cast out God's government from the earth. And if God shall not govern in your families, who shall? The devil is always the governor where God's government is refused; the world and the flesh are the instruments of his government; worldliness and fleshly living are his service: undoubtedly he is the ruler of the family where these prevail, and where faith and godliness do not take place. And what can you expect from such a master?

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

Motive III. 'A holy, well-governed family tendeth not only to the safety of the members, but also to the ease and pleasure of their lives.' To live where God's law is the principal rule, and where you may be daily taught the mysteries of his kingdom, and have the Scriptures opened to

you, and be led as by the hand in the paths of life; where the praises of God are daily celebrated, and his name is called upon; and where all do speak the heavenly language, and where God, and Christ, and heaven are both their daily work and recreation; where it is the greatest honour to be most holy and heavenly, and the greatest contention is, who shall be most humble, and godly, and obedient to God and their superiors, and where there is no reviling scorns at godliness, nor any profane and scurrilous talk; what a sweet and happy life is this! Is it not likest to heaven of any thing upon earth? But to live where worldliness, and profaneness, and wantonness, and sensuality bear all the sway, and where God is unknown, and holiness and all religious exercises are matter of contempt and scorn, and where he that will not swear and live profanely doth make himself the hatred and derision of the rest, and where men are known but by their shape and speaking-faculty to be men, nay where men take not themselves for men but for brutes, and live as if they had no rational souls, nor any expectations of another life, nor any higher employments or delights than the transitory concernments of the flesh, what a sordid, loathsome, filthy, miserable life is this! made up by a mixture of beastly and devilish. To live where there is no communion with God, where the marks of death and damnation are written, as it were, upon the doors, in the face of their impious, worldly lives, and where no man understandeth the holy language; and where there is not the least foretaste of the heavenly, everlasting joys; what is this but to live as the serpent's seed, to feed on dust, and to be excommunicated from the face and favour of God, and to be chained up in the prison of concupiscence and malignity, among his enemies, till the judgment come that is making haste, and will render to all men according to their works.

Motive iv. 'A holy and well-governed family, doth tend to make a holy posterity, and so to propagate the fear of God from generation to generation.' It is more comfortable to have no children, than to beget and breed up children for the devil. Their natural corruption is advantage enough to satan, to engage them to himself, and use them for his service: but when parents shall also take the devil's

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

Motive v. 'A holy, well-governed family, is the preparative to a holy and well-governed church.' If masters of families did their parts, and sent such polished materials to the churches, as they ought to do, the work and life of the pastors of the church would be unspeakably more easy and delightful: it would do one good to preach to such an auditory, and to catechise them, and instruct them, and examine them, and watch over them, who are prepared by a wise and holy education, and understand and love the doctrine which they hear. To lay such polished stones in the

building is an easy and delightful work ; how teachable and tractable will such be ! and how prosperously will the labours of their pastors be laid out upon them ! and how comely and beautiful the churches be, which are composed of such persons ! and how pure and comfortable will their communion be ! But if the churches be sties of unclean beasts ; if they are made up of ignorant and ungodly persons, that savour nothing but the things of the flesh, and use to worship they know not what, we may thank ill-governed families for all this. It is long of them that ministers preach as to idiots or barbarians that cannot understand them ; and that they must be always feeding their auditors with milk, and teaching them the principles, and catechising them in the church, which should have been done at home : yea, it is long of them that there are so many wolves and swine among the sheep of Christ, and that holy things are administered to the enemies of holiness, and the godly live in communion with the haters of God and godliness ; and that the Christian religion is dishonoured before the heathen world, by the worse than heathenish lives of the professors ; and the pollutions of the churches do hinder the conversion of the unbelieving world ; whilst they that can judge of our religion no way but by the people that profess it, do judge of it by the lives of them that are in heart the enemies of it ; when the haters of Christianity and godliness are the Christians by whose conversations the infidel world must judge of Christianity, you may easily conjecture what judgment they are like to make. Thus pastors are discouraged, the churches defiled, religion disgraced, and infidels hardened, through the impious disorder and negligence of families ! What Universities were we like to have, if all the grammar-schools should neglect their duties, and send up their scholars untaught as they received them ? and if all tutors must teach their pupils first to spell and read ? Even such churches we are like to have, when every pastor must first do the work which all the masters of families should have done, and the part of many score, or hundreds, or thousands, must be performed by one.

Motive VI. Well-governed families tend to make a happy state and commonwealth ; a good education is the first and greatest work to make good magistrates and good

subjects, because it tends to make good men.' Though a good man may be a bad magistrate, yet a bad man cannot be a very good magistrate. The ignorance, or worldliness, or sensuality, or enmity to godliness, which grew up with them in their youth, will shew itself in all the places and relations that ever they shall come into. When an ungodly family hath once confirmed them in wickedness, they will do wickedly in every state of life: when a perfidious parent hath betrayed his children into the power and service of the devil, they will serve him in all relations and conditions. This is the school from whence come all the injustice, and cruelties, and persecutions, and impieties of magistrates, and all the murmurings and rebellions of subjects: this is the soil and seminary where the seed of the devil is first sown, and where he nurseth up the plants of covetousness, and pride, and ambition, and revenge, malignity, and sensuality, till he transplant them for his service into several offices in church and state, and into all places of inferiority, where they may disperse their venom, and resist all that is good, and contend for the interest of the flesh and hell, against the interest of the Spirit and of Christ. But O! what a blessing to the world would they be, that shall come prepared by a holy education to places of government and subjection! And how happy is that land that is ruled by such superiors, and consisteth of such prepared subjects, as have first learnt to be subject to God, and to their parents!

Motive VII. 'If the governors of families did faithfully perform their duties, it would be a great supply as to any defects in the pastor's part, and a singular means to propagate and preserve religion in times of public negligence or persecution.' Therefore Christian families are called churches, because they consist of holy persons, that worship God, and learn, and love, and obey his Word. If you lived among the enemies of religion, that forbad Christ's ministers to preach his Gospel, and forbad God's servants to meet in church-assemblies for his worship; the support of religion, and the comfort and edification of believers, would then lie almost all upon the right performance of family duties. There masters might teach the same truth to their households, which ministers are forbidden to preach in the assemblies: there you might pray together as fervently and

spiritually as you can : there you may keep up as holy converse and communion, and as strict a discipline as you please : there you may celebrate the praises of your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; and observe the Lord's day in as exact and spiritual a manner as you are able : you may there provoke one another to love and to good works, and rebuke every sin, and mind each other to prepare for death, and live together as passengers to eternal life. Thus holy families may keep up religion, and keep up the life and comfort of believers, and supply the want of public preaching, in those countries where persecutors prohibit and restrain it, or where unable or unfaithful pastors do neglect it.

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

Motive IX. 'Well-governed families are honourable and exemplary unto others.' Even the worldly and ungodly use to bear a certain reverence to them; for holiness and order have some witness that commendeth them, in the consciences of many that never practised them. A worldly, ungodly, disordered family, is a den of snakes, a place of hissing, railing, folly and confusion: it is like a wilderness overgrown with briars and weeds; but a holy family is a garden of God: it is beautified with his graces, and ordered by his government, and fruitful by the showers of his heavenly blessing. And as the very sluggard, that will not be at the cost and pains to make a garden of his thorny wilderness, may yet confess that a garden is more beautiful, and fruit-

ful, and delightful, and if wishing would do it, his wilderness should be such; even so the ungodly, that will not be at the cost and pains to order their souls and families in holiness, may yet see a beauty in those that are so ordered, and wish for the happiness of such, if they could have it without the labour and cost of self-denial. And, no doubt, the beauty of such holy and well-governed families hath convinced many, and drawn them to a great approbation of religion, and occasioned them at last to imitate them.

Motive x. 'Lastly, consider, 'That holy, well-governed families are blessed with the special presence and favour of God.' They are his churches where he is worshipped; his houses where he dwelleth: he is engaged both by love and promise to bless, protect, and prosper them. It is safe to sail in that ship which is bound for heaven, and where Christ is the pilot. But when you reject his government, you refuse his company, and contemn his favour, and forfeit his blessing, by despising his presence, his interest, and his commands.

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

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

CHAPTER VI.

More special Motives for a Holy and Careful Education of Children.

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

Motive 1. 'Consider how deeply nature itself doth engage you to the greatest care and diligence for the holy education of your children.' They are, as it were, parts of