

such a calling and way as will not stand with family worship.
 2. Take heed of growing in customariness and dead formality, which may too easily befall you, even under extemporate prayers.

S. Have you any more counsel for me, for the good and order of my family?

P. At this time I will add no more but these. 1. Watch, against your worldly business; that it eat not out the life and seriousness of holy duties. Alas! in most families the world is all that they have any sense of: though yet your calling must be followed.

S. Truly, landlords are so hard, and people so very poor, that necessity is a constraint and great temptation to them.

P. I know it is. But if landlords be cruel, shall men be more cruel to themselves? If they keep you poor, will you therefore keep your soul ungodly and miserable? The less comfort you have here, and the harder this world useth you, the more careful should you be, in reason, to make sure of a better world. Poor men have souls to save, and a heaven to win, and a hell to escape, and a Christ to believe in, and a God to love and serve, as well as the rich. And I tell you that your temptations are less than theirs.

2. Do all you can to keep up, in yourself and family, the joy of believing, and a delight in God and all his service; therefore, let your daily duty have much in it of thanksgiving and praise.

3. You, that are a farmer, and sit by your servants in the long winter nights, get a good book, and read to them while they are with you. I will not discourage your own exhortations; but few husbandmen can discourse so profitably, so closely, soundly, and searchingly, as many such books will do, if you choose aright. But more of this, in the next day's conference.

THE EIGHTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

How to spend the Lord's Day in Christian Families, in the Church, and in secret Duties.

Speakers.—Paul, a Teacher; and Saul, a Learner.

PAUL. Welcome, neighbour. How go matters between you and your family; yea, and your God?

• Deut. xvii. 19; Acts viii. 28, 30.

SAUL. O, sir, you have set me a great deal of work, which my conscience telleth me is good and necessary, and better than any else that I can spend my time in. But my heart is bad and backward; and it is not so soon learned as heard, nor so soon done as learned; and yet I come to you for more. For I am resolved to take God and heaven for my all, and, therefore, to be true to the covenant I have made. I desire you, now, to instruct me about the right observation of the Lord's day; and, first, tell me our obligation to it.

P. I have published a treatise only on that subject, to which I must now refer you, as to the obligation and the disputing part; only giving you this brief intimation: 1. Christ gave his apostles commission to acquaint the world with his will, and to settle the orders of the gospel churches. 2. To this end he promised and gave them the infallible conduct of the Holy Ghost; who is now the Author of what they did in obedience to their commission. 3. As Christ rose from the dead on the^{*} first day of the week, so he oft on that day appeared to his disciples, and, on that day, (Whitsunday) he sent down the Holy Ghost; so that the new world was 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. 4. All the churches in the world from the apostles' times, till a few years ago, did unanimously keep the Lord's day as holy, or separated to holy worship; no one church, no one person, no, not a heretic, that I remember, who confessed Christ's resurrection, ever once excepting against it, or dissenting: and this is as ordained by the apostles in their times.

S. You need say no more: he that will contradict such proof as this, hath an evil spirit of contradiction. But that which is questioned is, whether it be a Sabbath, and come in the place of the seventh day Sabbath?

P. Trouble not your brains about mere names: it is enough for you that it is a day separated by Christ and the Holy Ghost to holy worship, and called the Lord's day. If by a Sabbath be not meant a day of Jewish ceremonial rest (which is the Scripture sense of that word) then we confess that it is no Sabbath, but that all such Sabbaths are abolished, as types of better things.

^{*} John xx. 1, 19, 26, and xvi. 13—15; Acts ii. 1, and x. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; Rev. i. 10; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; 2 Theas. ii. 15.

S. I am the more easily satisfied by reason and experience for the holy keeping of the day : for, 1. I know that one day in seven is as due a proportion now as when Moses's law was made. 2. I am sure it is a great mercy and benefit to man, to be obliged every seventh day to rejoice in God, and lay by our care and labour, and learn the way to everlasting life. Alas ! what would servants and poor men do without it ! 3. It is a hedge, and great engagement to the holy employments of the soul, when every seventh day is separated to that use alone. 4. And I feel by experience the great benefit of it to myself. 5. And I see that religion most prospereth where the Lord's day is most conscionably kept, and falls where it is neglected. But I pray you set me down directions for the right spending of the day both general and particular.

P. I. The general instructions which you must take are these.

1. That the chiefest use of the day is for the ⁷ public worshipping of God, our Creator and Redeemer ; and therefore the church worship is to be preferred before all that is more private.

2. That the chief work which it is to be spent in, is learning the doctrine of the gospel, and praising, and giving thanks to our Heavenly Father, our Redeemer, and Sanctifier : the rest cometh under this.

3. Therefore the manner of it, and the frame of our hearts, should be 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 mercy.

4. Therefore the positive part of duty is the main, viz. that heart and tongue be thus employed towards God. And the negative part (our abstaining from other thoughts and words, and labours and sports) is so far our duty, as they are any hinderance to this holy work ; and not on a mere ceremonial account.

S. Now set me down all my duty in its order.

P. Make due preparation for the day beforehand. Let your six days' labour be so dispatched, that it may not hinder you : cast off worldly thoughts, and remember the last Lord's day instructions ; and repent of all the sins of the week past : and go in season to your rest.

2. Let your first thoughts be suitable to the day. Remem-

⁷ Acts ii. 4, 5 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

ber with joy the resurrection of your Saviour, which begun the triumphant, glorious state, as you awake in the beginning of this holy day : and let your heart be glad to think that a day of the Lord is come.

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

4. Let your dressing time be short, and spent as aforesaid, in hearing a chapter read, or in good thoughts, or suitable speech in those about you.

5. If you can, go first to secret prayer ; and let servants dispatch their necessary business about cattle, that it stand not after in their way.

6. Then call your servants to family worship, and if you can have time, without coming too late to the assembly, read the Scripture, sing a Psalm of praise, and call on God with joyful thanksgiving, for our redemption and the hopes of glory : or so much of this as you can do. But do all with seriousness and alacrity : and tell your servants and children what it is that they go to do at the church.

7. Go to the beginning of public worship ; and let none be absent that can be spared to go. Your duty there I must show you by itself, anon.

8. After your return, while dinner is preparing, is a seasonable time for secret prayer, or meditation on the great business of the day, and to consider of what you heard in public.

9. If company allow you opportunity, let your time at meat be seasoned with some cheerful mention of the mercies of our Redeemer, or what is suitable to the hearers and the day.

10. After dinner, if there be time, call your family together, and sing a Psalm of praise, and help them to remember what was taught them.

11. Then take them again (in time) to the assembly.

12. When you come home, call them all together, and after craving God's assistance, and acceptance through Christ, sing a Psalm of praise, and repeat the sermon, or cause it to be repeated, not tediously, but so much as the time may bear. Or if there were no sermon, or one unsuitable to your family, read near an hour to them in some suitable and lively book. (Of which anon.) And conclude with prayer and praise to God ; and all with seriousness, alacrity, and joy.

13. Between that and supper, both you, and such children and servants as can possibly be spared, betake yourselves to secret prayer and meditation.

14. At supper do as beforesaid at dinner. (Still remember that though it be a day of thanksgiving, yet not of sensuality, gluttony, or excess.)

15. When they have supped, examine your children and servants what they have learned that day, unless you appoint an hour on the week-day for it: and so for catechising them. Then sing a Psalm of praise, and so conclude with prayer and thanksgiving. Catechising must not be neglected; but if you can do most of it on week-days or holidays, it will be best, that it take not up the Lord's day, which is for holy praise.

16. When you go to rest, review briefly the special occurrences of the day: repent of failings: give thanks for mercies; and comfortably compose yourself to rest, as trusting in the protection of your gracious God, and so let your thoughts be such as are meet to shut up such a holy day.

These directions are soon given and heard; but, O happy you, if you sincerely practise them!

S. You talk of reading to my family at nights, and on holidays, and the Lord's days: what books be they which you would have me read?

P. Were you not a poor man, I would name many to you: because you are one of my charge, I will bestow some of my own upon you. 1. Here are, 'The Call to the Unconverted,' 'Directions for a Sound Conversion,' 'A Treatise of Conversion,' 'A Sermon against making light of Christ,' 'A Treatise of Judgment,' 'A Saint or a Brute,' and 'Now or Never,' with this present book. Read these to them in the order that I have named, as much at a time as you have leisure. And here is the 'Saints Rest;' on the Lord's days read oft in that: and when you have done those, here is 'A Treatise of Self-denial,' and one of 'Crucifying the World,' and one of 'Self-ignorance:' I will trouble you with no more. But if you have my 'Christian Directory,' you may choose still what subject you think most seasonable.

For other men's works, I would you had Mr. Joseph Allen's book of Conversion, and his Life, and all Mr. Richard Allen's books; and Mr. Dod on the Commandments, and Mr. Perkins on the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, that you might read, as an exposition of the catechism, one article, one petition, one commandment, expounded at a time; which will be a great help to yourself and them. And the 'Practice of Piety,' and Mr. Scudder's 'Daily Walk,' and Mr. Reyner, and Mr. Pinke's sermons, are very good books. But I dare name you no more, lest I overset you.

S. What catechism would you have me use ?

P. There are so many that I know not which to prefer : at present I commend you to Mr. Gouge's, or Mr. Rawlet's ; the lesser of the assemblies first, and the larger after. But because you are one of my charge, I will here write you two in the end, a shorter for beginners, and a longer for proficients.

S. 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 of that ?

P. Yes : 1. I advise you to hear the best teacher that you can have : for experience telleth us that the bare office worketh not without meet abilities ; and that there is a very great difference to the hearer, ^a between man and man : therefore be not indifferent herein.

S. Whom am I to account the best teacher ?

P. Not he that is most ^a learned, elegant, and rhetorical, nor he that speaketh the loudest and most earnestly ; but he that hath all the three necessary abilities conjunct ; 1. A clear explication of the gospel, to make the judgments of the hearers ^b sound. 2. He that hath the most convincing and persuading reasons to resolve the will. 3. He that doth this in the most serious, affectionate, lively manner, together with practical directions, to quicken up the soul to practice, and direct it therein. But when you cannot have one that is excellent in all these, you must take the best that you can have.

S. But what if the minister of the parish be not such ?

P. If he be intolerable, through ignorance, heresy, disability, or malignity, forsake him utterly : but if he be tolerable, though weak and cold, and if you cannot remove your dwelling, then public order and your soul's edification must both be joined as well as you can. In London, or other cities where it is usual, you may go ordinarily to another parish church : but in the country, and where it would be a great offence, you may one part of the day hear in your own parish, and the other at the next, if there be a man much fitter within your reach : but communicating with the church you dwell with.

2. I advise you, that if there be parish churches orderly settled under the magistrates' countenance, whose teachers are sound, and promote the power of godliness in concord, though an abler minister should gather a separated church in the same

^a Matt. vii. 29 ; 2 Cor. iii. 6 ; 2 Tim. i. 12 ; Rom. xv. 14.

^b 1 Cor. i. ; ii. ; iii., and iv.

^b 2 Tim. i. 7.

place, out of that and other neighbour parishes, and should have stricter communicants and discipline, be not too forward to join yourself to that separated church; till you can prove that the hurt that will follow by discord, offence, division, encouraging schism and pride, is not like to be greater than your benefit can compensate. But where liberty is such as these mischiefs are not like to follow, take your liberty, if your benefit require it.

3. But if this separated church be a^c factious anti-church, set up contentiously against the concordant churches, though on pretence of greater purity; and if their meetings be employed in contention and reviling others, and making them odious that are not of their mind, and in killing the love of Christians to each other, and in condemning other churches as no churches, or such as may not lawfully be communicated with, and, in puffing up themselves with pride, as if they were the only churches of Christ; avoid such separated churches, as the enemies of love and peace.

4. If a church, in other respects sound, shall^d require of you any false subscriptions, promises, or oaths, or require you to do any unlawful thing, you must not do it: but hold communion with them in other lawful things, if they will allow you. If not, be content to have spiritual communion with them at a distance, in the same faith and love, and kind of worship, and join with others.

5. Though your ordinary communion should be with the best minister and church that you can have without scandal and public hurt, yet sometimes, if it be expected, communicate with more^e imperfect churches, so far as they force you not to sin, that you may keep up love, and show that you are for universal peace.

S. Will you instruct me how to hear with profit?

P. You must have distinct helps for four particular uses:

1. To understand what you hear. 2. To be duly affected with it. 3. To remember it. 4. To practise it.

S. 1. What are the helps for^f understanding?

P. 1. A plain, clear, convincing teacher. 2. Reading the Scripture and good books to prepare you; especially catechisms. 3. Careful attending. 4. Specially marking the doctrine, de-

Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. i. 10; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Tit. lii. 10; Acts xx. 30.

^d Gal. ii. 3-5, 14; iii., and iv.

^e Luke iv. 16, and v. 14; Johu xviii. 20; Matt. xxiii. 2.

^f Matt. xiii. 14, 15; iv. 3; vii. 14, 16, and xv. 10; Rev. i. 3; ii. 7, 11, 17, 29, and lii. 6.

sign, and drift of the preacher: 5. Laying the severa parts together. 6. Meditating after, and asking the meaning of what you doubt of. 7. Prayer, and conscionable practice of what you know.

S. II. What are the helps for the will and affections ?

P. A lively preacher. 2. Remember with whom you ^ε have to do, and of how great importance the business is which you are upon. Go to church as one that is going to hear a message from the God of heaven, concerning your everlasting salvation. 3. Remember that you have but a little time to hear, and then you must be laid in the dark: with those that are under your feet, who lately sat where you now sit; and your soul must speed as sermons did speed with you in hearing. 4. Observe how nearly the matter doth concern you; and stir up your minds from sloth and wandering. 5. Remember that God, who sends the message, doth wait for your resolution and your answer; whether you will yield to him or reject him; whether you will have his grace or not? And remember how you will shortly cry to him for mercy in your extremity, and wait for his answer to your cries. Resolve now as you would speed then; and answer God as you would be answered by him. If you would have mercy then, receive it and obey it now. If you deny God but this once, you know not but he may leave you to yourself, and never make you such an offer more. 6. Bethink you how the ^h miserable souls in hell were like to hear such offers of mercy, if they might be tried here again, and sit in your places. 7. Lift up a secret request to Christ for his quickening Spirit. 8. When you come home, preach over the doctrine again to your own heart, and urge it on yourself. 9. And pray it all over to God, by begging his grace to make it powerful. 10. And pressing it on your family will quicken yourself.

S. III. What are the helps for memory?

P. 1. A thorough understanding. 2. And a deep affection: we easily remember that which we well understand, and are much affected with. 3. Method is a great help to memory; therefore observe the preacher's method, at least the doctrine, or subject, and somewhat of the explication, proof, and use. 4. Number much helpeth memory. Mark how many the several heads are. 5. Fasten upon some one significant word of every head, which will bring in all the rest. 6. Grasp not at more than you can hold, lest you lose all; but choose out so

^ε Heb. iv. 13.

^h Luke xvi. 24, 26, 27.

much of the chief matter, which concerneth you, as you find your memory can bear. 7. In the time of hearing, you may oft run over that one significant word of each head which you heard first, to settle it in your memory, without turning your attention from that which followeth, which is a singular help. 8. Writing is the easiest help for memory. 9. If you forget the words, yet remember the main drift and matter. 10. Review it, or hear it repeated by others, when you come home.

S. 4. What are the helps for practice ?

P. 1. If you speed well in the three first, especially if the word take hold upon your heart, the practice will the more easily follow. 2. Be acquainted with the corruptions of your heart, which need a cure, and the wants that need supply, and go with a desire to get that cure and that supply; as you go to the market to buy what you want, or to the physician to be healed. An intent of practice prepareth for practice. 3. Mark the uses and the practical directions, and let conscience urge them on yourself as you are hearing them; resolve to obey whatever God maketh known to be his will. 4. When you come home consider what you heard which doth concern your practice, and there let conscience drive it home, and revive your resolutions. 5. Especially labour to get your radical graces strengthened, the belief of the life to come, the hope of glory, and the love of God; and these will carry you on to practice. 6. Take heed of those preachers that stifle practice. I mean, 1. Libertines, called antinomians, who, under pretence of extolling Christ and free grace, destroy the principles of practice. 2. ¹ Fictious disputers, who fill men's heads with little but controversy. 3. Wordy orators, who, like sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, make but a lifeless noise of words. 4. Malignants, who jeer at holy practice as hypocrisy. 5. Pharisees, that set up the practice of their own ceremonies, ^k traditions, and superstitious, instead of the practice of the commands of God. 6. Live, if you can, with practising Christians. 7. Lastly, keep a daily account how you practise what you know.

S. How must I hear and read the Scriptures themselves ?

P. 1. Be sure you come to them with a ¹ believing; reverent,

¹ Phil. i. 15, and ii. 3; 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4; 2 Tim. ii. 14, 24; Tit. iii. 9.

^k Matt. xv.; Col. ii. 22, 23.

¹ Heb. iv. 2; Matt. xii. 3, 5; xxi. 16, and xxiv. 15; 1 Tim. iv. 13; Neh. viii. 8; Eph. iii. 4.

spiritual mind, as to the word of the living God, by which you must be ruled and judged, and which you must fully resolve to obey; as a humble learner of heavenly mysteries from the Son and Spirit of God, and not as a proud and arrogant ^m caviller, or judge; nor as expecting philosophy, or curious words, instead of the laws of God for our salvation. 2. Read most the New Testament, and the most suitable parts of Scripture. 3. Expound the dark and rarer passages by the plain and frequent ones. 4. Read some commentary, or annotations, as you go, if you can. 5. ⁿ Ask your pastor of that which you understand not.

S. What must I do in public prayer, praises, and thanksgiving?

P. 1. ^o Join in them earnestly with the desires and praises of your heart; and be not a bare hearer, for that is to be an hypocrite, and to seem to pray when indeed you do not.

2. Do not peevishly pick quarrels with the prayers of the church, nor come to them with humoursome prejudice. Think not that you must ^p stay away, or go out of the church, for every passage that is disorderly, unmeet, yea, or unsound, or untrue; for the words of prayer are the work of man; and while all men are fallible, imperfect, and sinful, their prayers, and praises, and preaching will be like themselves. And he that is the highest pretender, and the most peevish quarreller, hath his own failings. If I heard him pray, it is ten to one I could tell you of much immethodicalness, at least, and sometimes falsehoods, in his words. We must join with no church in the world if we will join with nothing that is faulty. Nor is every fault made mine by my presence: I profess to come thither to worship God according to the gospel, and to own all that the pastor saith which is agreeable thereto; but not to own all that he saith, whether in preaching or in prayer, in God's name, or his own, or ours.

Yet I would not have you indifferent with what words you join: for if the words, or actions, be such as so corrupt the worship of God as that he himself will not accept it, you must not offer it.

3. In all the lawful orders, gestures, and manner of behaviour in God's worship, affect not to differ from the rest, but

^m Matt. xviii. 3.

ⁿ Acts viii. 28—31.

^o 1 Chron. xvi. 36; Neh. v. 13, and viii. 6; Psalm cvi. 48.

^p Luke iv. 16; John xviii. 29; 1 Cor. xiv.; xi. 16, 25, &c., and xiv. 23, &c.; Rev. ii. and iii.

conform yourself to the use of the church which you join with; for in a church singularity is a discord.

S. How must I receive the sacrament of Christ's body and blood?

P. You must, 1. Have a due preparation; 2. A due performance.

S. I. What is the due preparation?

P. 1. To understand what you do: and, 2. To be what you must be, viz. a true Christian; and 3. To do what you must do, in particular preparation.

S. I. What is it that I must understand?

P. What the ends of the sacrament are, and what are the parts and nature of it.

S. What are the ends of it?

P. Not really to ^a sacrifice Christ again; nor to turn ^r bread into no bread, and wine into no wine; which, if every priest can do, he might consecrate all the bread and wine in the baker's shop, and vintner's, or any other cellar, and so furnish men. But the Papists themselves say, without his intention it is not done; but no man knoweth the priest's intention, therefore no man knoweth whether he take bread or the body of Christ. And if all the sound men's senses in the world be not to be trusted whether bread be bread, and wine be wine, then we can know nothing; no, not that there is a Bible, or that ever God revealed his will to man, or that there is a man in the world, and therefore cannot possibly be believers. Nor is the use of the sacrament to confirm men's wicked confederacies, nor to flatter wicked men in their presumption, nor to save them by the outward act alone.

But the end of the Sacrament is, 1. To be a solemn ^a 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, who taketh away the sins of the world.

2. 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 at conversion, but with some addition: the one being the sacrament of our new birth and entrance; the other of feeding, nourishment, continuance, and growth. Here Christ for life is delivered to us, and we accept him; and man delivereth up himself to Christ, and Christ accepteth him.

^a Heb. x. 12; ix. 16, and vii. 27.

^r 1 Cor. xi. 26—29.

^a 1 Cor. xi. 24—26, 28—30, and x. 16, 24; Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 20; Heb. ix. 15—18; John vi. 32, 35, 51, 58.

3. To be a lively means for Christ's Spirit and our souls to work by, to stir up faith, desire, love, thankfulness, hope, joy, and new obedience, besides repentance. By showing us the doleful fruits of sin, the wonderful love of God in Christ, the firmness of the promise or covenant, the greatness of the gift, and our grateful obligations. Thus we must here have communion with God and Jesus Christ, in the exercise of all these graces; and receive more grace through our sacrificed Redeemer.

4. It is a symbol or badge of the church, and a public profession of our continued faith, hope, thankfulness, and obedience.

5. It is a sign and means of the union, love, and communion of the saints, and their readiness to communicate to one another.

S. What are the parts of the sacrament, and their nature?

P. I. It hath three general parts: I. The parties covenanting; which are, 1. Christ, or God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as the principal Giver; 2. His minister as his agent; 3. The receivers.

II. The signs; that is, I. The signifying matter: 1. Bread, 2. Wine. II. The manner: 1. Broken bread; 2. Wine poured out; 3. Both delivered, or given. III. The signifying actions: 1. Taking and breaking the bread; 2. Pouring out the wine; 3. Giving both; 4. Receiving both; 5. Eating and drinking both.

III. The things signified. I. As the means: 1. The sacrificing of Christ's body and blood on the cross for our sins; 2. The giving of them to believers; 3. The receiving of them by the believers, and improving them unto life.

II. As the ends. 1. The contracted union, and mutual relation between God and Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, and the Receiver. 2. The souls receiving from Christ: 1. Pardon, reconciliation, and adoption of right to the heavenly inheritance; 2. More of the Holy Ghost to sanctify, seal, and comfort us; 3. The soul's dedication of itself to God in Christ, for future love and obedience; 4. And God's acceptance of him.

S. What are the special parts of the whole sacrament?

P. II. They are three: I. The consecration. II. The commemoration. III. The communion, or communication and participation.

S. I. What is the consecration?

P. Not the bare pronouncing of the words, as the papists

think : nor the turning of the bread into Christ's natural body ; but it is the ' separation of the bread and wine to the sacramental use, and making it to be no longer mere or common bread and wine, but the very body and blood of Christ representative. This is done by the dedicating or offering this bread and wine to God, and by God's acceptance and benediction, of which the minister is his agent ; which is most fitly consummate, and declared by Christ's words, " This is my body, and this is my blood ; " though it is so by the separation and benediction, before it is so called and pronounced.

As Christ was the true Messiah, incarnate before he was sacrificed to God, and was sacrificed to God before that sacrifice was given to man for life and nourishment, so here consecration first maketh the bread and wine to be the body and blood of Christ representative ; and then the sacrificing of Christ to God must be represented and commemorated ; and lastly, a sacrificed Christ communicated to the receivers, and accepted by them.

S. II. What is the commemoration ?

P. It is the " visible representation of the sacrificing of Christ upon the cross to the Father, for the sins of man ; to keep up the remembrance of it, and lively affect the church 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.

S. III. What is the communication and participation ?

P. It is the * giving of Christ himself really for life, or with his covenant benefits, to the believing receiver, by the investing sacrament of the bread and wine ministerially delivered by the pastor in Christ's name, together with the acceptance of the receiver.

S. You hint to me that which seemeth to reconcile the controversy, about the real presence ; but I would entreat you to make it plainer to me : What is the gift and the donation ?

P. Suppose that a king should, under his hand and seal, make a grant of his son, and the son of himself, to a poor woman beyond sea, to be her husband, and send an ambassador with this instrument, and with the espousing signals, his effigies, the ring, or the like, as his proxy or agent, to marry her

' Luke xxii. 16—19 ; 1 Cor. xi. 23—26.

* John i. 29, 36 ; 1 Pet. i. 19 ; 1 Cor. v. 7, and xi. 23—25 ; Heb. ix. 26, and x. 8, 12.

* 1 John v. 9—12, and vi. 33, 35, 41, 50, 51 ; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

to the prince in his name; the words of the instrument run thus: "I do give thee my son, to be thy husband, and he thereby giveth himself to thee, with thy due interest in his estate, if thou consent and give thyself to him as a wife, and have sent this my ambassador with the signals of matrimony to espouse thee in my son's name." Hereupon she consenteth, and the agent in the celebration delivereth to her the effigies or image of the prince as the signal, and saith, "This is the prince, who thereby giveth himself to thee as a husband." And he delivereth her a key, and saith, "This is such a house, which he endoweth thee with."

Now you can easily expound all this: 1. It is the very prince himself in person, and not only the effigies, that is now given her, but how? Not into present, sensible, physical possession, or contact; but in the true right of relation as a husband. 2. The image is the prince representative, not real, physically considered; and is physically an image of him still. 3. The image, which is the prince representative, or signal, is a means or instrument of conveying right and relation to the prince real. But it is only the secondary instrument, viz. of investiture. 4. Another instrument, and in part a representer, is the agent or ambassador. 5. The chief instrument is the written donation, which he is to read at the marriage.

Just so, 1. It is very Christ himself, and not only the signs, that is given to the believer by means of the signs; that is, he is given, not to contract, but in right and relation as a Head and Saviour, by contract. But, 2. The signs are physically but signs still, though representatively they are the very body and blood of Christ; that is, it is the very body and blood which is represented and given by him. 3. And the Gospel covenant on God's part is his chief instrument of this right and relation as conveyed. 4. And the minister and the Sacrament are the two subservient instruments. All this is not only plain in itself, but that doctrine which Christ's church hath ever held. And Paul (1 Cor. xi.) calleth it bread three times after the consecration.

So that the minister is the ministerial instrument; the promise, or covenant, is the donative or entitling instrument; the sacramental signs and actions are the investing instruments, by

That this is the true sense, see these texts: 1 Cor. xi. 23—28, and x. 4, 15, 16; Matt. xxvi. 29, and v. 13, 14; Mark xiv. 25; Luke xxii. 20; Compared with Exod. xii. 11, 27; John vi. 53, 63, and xv. 1; Isa. xl. 17; Psalm xxii. 6; Acts xx. 7, 11, and ii. 42, 46.

which Christ himself, with all his covenant benefits, are given and delivered to the believing receiver, in relation and true right; and by which Christ's Spirit confirmeth the soul. This is the true and plain doctrine of that sacrament, study it till you understand it.

S. II. You have told me what I must understand: now tell me what I must be, that I may be prepared to receive.

P. You must be a true Christian; that is, a penitent believer already in covenant with God, by consent.

S. May every Christian come, how weak soever?

P. Yes; if there be nothing to hinder him but weakness, and not some particular let, or unpreparedness, which I am next to speak to you of.

S. But what if he be in doubt whether he be sincere?

P. He must do his best to be satisfied, and, when he hath done, must do according to the best judgment that he is able to make of himself. As now I tell you that your consent to the covenant is your Christianity, I ask you whether you consent unfeignedly? If you do, you may somewhat perceive that you do; and if you say, 'I am not sure that I consent sincerely, but as far as I can know my heart I think I do,' you must then communicate; for it is the being of sincerity, and not the assurance of it, which is necessary. And we are all so unacquainted with our own hearts, that if we must not speak according to our best discerning of them without assurance, we must lay by our thanksgiving, and a great part of our other duty.

S. But what if I prove mistaken, and be not sincere?

P. If you are not ^r sincere, and yet think you are, it is your great sin that you are not so, and will not consent to the covenant and mercy offered you; and it is your sin to think that you consent when you do not. And there is a greater weight lieth upon this than your respect to the sacrament; for you are an heir of hell till you truly consent, whether you receive the sacrament or not.

S. But what if I find it a work too hard for me, to try myself?

P. Go to your pastor, or to some other able divine, or friend, and ^a open your case fully to them, and take their help.

S. Can any one else tell what is in me, if I cannot tell myself?

P. You can best tell what you feel; but another may better tell you what that signifieth, and also by what rules and signs you

^a Josh. ii. 4, 15; Matt. xvi. 15, 16; 1 John v. 10—12; Rev. xxii. 17.

^r Acts ii. 37; John iii. 20, 21.

must proceed in judging. The patient knoweth better than the physician what he feeleth, and must first tell that to the physician ; but the physician, then, can better tell him what cause it cometh from, and what is the nature of the disease, and what is like to come of it, and how it must be cured. Many know not that covenant consent is that Christianity and faith which they are to try, but think that godliness is some other thing than indeed it is : what wonder, then, if they lie in doubtings ?

S. But may not an unregenerate man come, that thinketh he is sincere, and doth mistake ?

P. He may not lawfully come ; for, 1. He is a refuser of Christ and his benefits ; and the work there to be done is to profess that he accepteth him, and truly consenteth to his covenant ; and should he falsely come and profess acceptance and consent, who doth it not indeed, nor will not be persuaded to it ? The question is, whether it be lawful solemnly to lie ? He that is truly willing to have God for his God, and Christ for his Saviour, Teacher, and Lord, and the Spirit for his Sanctifier, is a true Christian, and may come ; and he that ^b will not, must not lie, by taking Christ in representation, when he refuseth him in heart and deed ; nor may he outwardly take the signs of those benefits, pardon and life, which, indeed, he is incapable of.

S. Then, it seems, the pastor must not receive such.

P. The pastor must receive ^c hypocrites that are unknown to him to be such ; for it is only God and conscience that know the heart. It may be my duty to receive an hypocrite when it is his sin to come and claim it.

S. But what if the open profane shall come ?

P. The ^d pastors have the church keys, and are its guides ; and they are to keep out all that are not baptised and professed covenanters with Christ, and to cast out all who are obstinate and impenitent in a wicked life, which is contrary to the essence of the covenant ; but they must do this in a regular course of church justice, upon due proof and trial, after due admonition, and exhortation, and patience with the impenitent ; and not upon common report, without this proceeding.

S. But what if either by bad men's intrusion, or the pastor's negligence, many such come in, may I join with such ?

P. If you do not your part, by wise advice, to bring them to repentance, and after, by accusation and proof, to cast out the

^b 1 Cor. xi. 28—30.

^c Acts viii. 13.

^d 1 Cor. v. ; Matt. xviii. 15—18 ; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13 ; Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

impenitent, this will be your sin ; but the fault of the sinner or of the pastor shall not be imputed to you if you be innocent. It is the church's duty to cast out the incapable ; but it is a sin to go from the church and God's ordinance because they are there, if they be not cast out. You must do your best to promote true church discipline ; but must not separate from the church because it is neglected. But yet, for your own edification and comfort, you may remove to a better church and pastor, if some greater reason, as public hurt, &c., hinder it not.

S. III. What is the particular preparation which is necessary ?

P. 1. To renew our meditations of the nature and use of the sacrament, and how holy a work it is to transact so great a business with God and our Redeemer, before the congregation, that so we may come with holy and reverent, and not with common and regardless, minds.

2. To^d examine ourselves, both whether we continue our unfeigned consent to the covenant of God, and also whether we live according to our covenant, in a godly, sober, righteous, and charitable life, and live not in any wilful sin ; and what falls we have been guilty of ; and, accordingly, to humble ourselves to God, and to man where the case requireth it, by true repentance ; and to ask them forgiveness whom we have wronged, and to forgive them that have wronged us, that we may be fit to receive forgiveness from God, and for loving communion with him and his church.

3. To consider beforehand what we are to do when we come to the sacrament, and what we are to receive.

S. II. You have told me what the preparation must be ; will you now tell me what I must do at the sacrament ?

P. In general, you must renew your covenant with God in Christ, and receive renewed mercies from him.

In particular, I. You must stir up and exercise, 1. A firm belief of the doctrine of the Gospel, the truth of Christ, and the world to come. 2. A lively sense of your sin and misery, your need of Christ, his blood, and Spirit ; a loathing of yourself and sins, and a high esteem of him and of his Grace. 3. A hungering and thirsting after him and his grace, and communion with God. 4. A thankful sense of the wonderful love of God in our redemption. 5. The exercise of love to him that hath thus loved us, and of joy in the sense of so great salvation, Love and joy are the life of our sacramental communion. 6.

^d 1 Cor. v. ; Matt. xviii. 15—18 ; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13 ; Heb. xlii. 7, 17.

A quieting confidence in Christ and his covenant now sealed to us. 7. A renunciation of all other love and hopes, and carnal, worldly pleasures and felicity; forsaking all in heart for Christ, and ready to suffer for him whose^e sufferings save us. 8. A hearty love to one another, and great desire of the unity of believers, and readiness to communicate to their wants. 9. You must renew the devoting and giving up yourself to God, your Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, with a firm resolution, sincerely to cleave unto him and obey him to the death. 10. You must do all in hope of Christ's second coming, and of everlasting life. All these graces must be exercised in the sacrament.

S. What have I there to move me to all this?

P. 1. You bring with you a sinful soul to humble you. 2. You have God's truth there sealed, and Christ crucified, represented, and freely offered you, to exercise your faith; and all his benefits and salvation given you, to exercise your desires, thankfulness, love, and joy. 3. You have the Bread of Life there broken to you, and the Spirit of Christ there given you, with his body and blood, to stir up your appetite after holiness. 4. You have the odiousness of sin, and the justice of God, presented to you in the commemoration of the sacrificed Lamb of God. 5. You have a sealed pardon of sin given you, to teach you thankfulness and resolution of new obedience. 6. You have a commemoration of Christ, till he come in glory, to keep up your hope and desire of that glory which he purchased, and prepareth for you. 7. You have the most wonderful demonstration of the love of God; giving his Son, and all his mercy, to his enemies; and promising you life eternal by him, to win your heart to the love of God. 8. You have a sight of him that despised all the riches, and honours, and pleasures of the world, and willingly hung upon the cross, as if he had been a malefactor. And all this to please God, condemn sin, and save souls; to show you how the flesh, and world, and life itself, is to be forsaken and contemned; and at what rates God must be pleased, and how highly souls must be valued. 9. You have the church before you, as one body partaking of one bread, one cup, one Christ, to show you how love and unity must be valued. 10. And you there are a receiver of the signs, and give up yourself to him that giveth them to you, to show that you receive Christ and his sal-

^e 1 Cor. xi. 26—30.

vation, and are obliged, and absolutely devoted to him, to serve him in thankful, obedient love.

S. Direct me when and how to do all this.

P. 1. When you are ^f called, and going up to the table, remember, with humble thankfulness, to what a feast God's mercy freely inviteth such an unworthy sinner.

2. When the minister is confessing sin, cast down your soul in penitent confession of your own sins.

3. When you see the bread and wine provided for this use, remember that it is the Creator of all, by whom we live, whom we have offended.

4. When you hear the words of the institution read, remember that ^g love which prepared and gave us a Redeemer.

5. When you look on the consecrated bread and wine, ^h discern and reverence the representative body and blood of Christ, and take it not profanely now for common bread and wine.

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

7. When the minister prayeth to God for the efficacy of the sacrament, join heartily with him, and beg for that pardon, peace, and Spirit, which is here offered.

8. When the minister delivereth you the bread and wine, look on him as the ^k messenger of Christ, appointed to deliver to you Christ himself, his sacrificed ^l body and blood, to be your Saviour; and with him the sealed covenant of grace, pardoning all your sins, and giving you right to justification, sanctification, and glory; and, accordingly, with thankful faith receive him.

9. When you see the communicants receiving the same Christ with you, let your heart be ^m united in love to all believers, and long for their union, and think how perfectly we shall be one in Christ, in the heavenly glory.

10. When the minister returneth ⁿ thanks and praise to God, stir up your soul to love and joy; and suppose you saw the heavenly society, who are saved by Christ, how vigorously they thank and praise him, that you may endeavour to intimate them in your degree.

^f Matt. xxii.; Luke xiv.; Cant. v. 1; Isa. lv. 1—3; Rev. xxii. 17.

^g John iii. 16; 1 John ii. 1.

^h 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.

ⁱ Rev. i. 5; 1 John iv. 19.

^k 2 Cor. v. 19—21.

^l 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

^m John xvii. 23, 24; 1 Cor. i. 10; 1 John iv. 11.

ⁿ Luke ii. 13, 14; Heb. viii. 5, and xii. 22, 23; Rev. v. 5—7, 11, 14.

11. When the minister telleth you what you have done, and received, and what you must ° do for the time to come, consent, and resign yourself to Christ, and resolve to live in thankful, obedient love.

12. When you are going away, remember; thus we are ready to go out of the world, and church on earth, where our mercies are much in signs and means, and are hastening to the place where we shall P see and enjoy the things now signified, and know, face to face, as we are known, and have higher joys than faith can raise.

S. What must I do when I come home?

P. 1. Continue to love and praise him that hath feasted you with a such salvation; and keep up a life of thanks and joy.

2. Continue in the r use of all other means, to keep up the life and resolution which you here obtained. 3. See that you live as you have covenanted.

S. How oft should I communicate?

P. As oft as the church doth in which you live. In old time, it was done at least ° every Lord's day.

S. I pray you, next, teach me how to meditate profitably in private on all occasions.

P. 1. Choose such matters to t meditate on as you have greatest use for on your heart: which is above all. 1. The truth of the Gospel, and of the meditation of life to come, to confirm your faith and hope. 2. The infinite goodness and love of God in Christ, and the joyful state of the blessed in heaven, to inflame your love, and heavenly desires and joys. 3. The sufficiency of Christ, in all cases, to exercise your communion with him by faith. 4. The operations of the Spirit, that you may know how to receive and improve them. 5. The nature of all duties, that you may know how to do them. 6. The evil and nature of every sin, and the ways of all temptations, that you may know how to avoid or overcome them. 7. The nature of all mercies, that you may thankfully improve them. 8. The use of afflictions, and the nearness of death, and what will be then necessary, that you may be prepared with faith and patience, and all may be your gain.

II. For the time and length of meditation, let it be, whether

° John v. 14.

P 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

¶ Rom. y. 1—8.

r Phil. ii. 12.

¶ Acts xx. 7, 11.

t Gen. xxiv. 63; Josh. i. 8; Psalm i. 2; lxiii. 6; civ. 34; cxix. 15, 97, 99; xxiii. 48, 78, 149; cxliv. 5, and lxxvii. 12; 1 Tim. iv. 15.

at your work, or when you do nothing else, at your best opportunity and leisure. And let it be as long as your time will allow you, without neglecting any other duty, and as your head can well bear it. For solid, sober men can carry on long and regular meditations; but ignorant, weak men must take up with short and broken thoughts, like short prayers; and melancholy people are unfit for any musings or meditation at all. For to do that which they cannot do, will but make them worse.

III. As for the work itself; observe how profitable ministers preach; and even so in meditation do youⁿ preach to your own heart. 1. Consider of the meaning of the matter, and understand it. 2. Consider of the truth of it, and believe it. 3. Consider how it is most useful to you. And there convince your conscience by evident reasons: disgrace your sins by odious aggravations: invite your soul to God, and Christ, and goodness, by spreading the amiableness of all before it. Chide yourself sharply for the sins you find: stir up yourself earnestly by all the powerful motives that are before you. Comfort your soul, by spreading before it the present and the everlasting joys: support it by thinking on the grounds of faith: and direct it into the right way of duty, and drive it to resolve and promise obedience for the time to come.

And in all this, let clearness and liveliness concur: for as it is those that make a good preacher; so it is those that make a profitable meditation. Preach not coldly and drowsily to your hearts, but even as you would have a minister preach.

I tell you, the benefits of such meditation is very great: few men grow very wise, or very good, that use it not. We are full of ourselves, and near ourselves, and know our hearts better than others do; and many will hear and learn of themselves that will hardly hear and learn of others. And secret duties have usually most sincerity.

S. I would next entreat you to teach me how to pray in secret.

P. I told you in part before. I now only add, 1. Understand well what it is that you must desire in your heart, and in what order; and then you will have a habit of prayer in you when you have got a habit of those desires. For desire is the life of prayer. To this end, study well the true meaning of the

ⁿ Psalm xvi. 2, 3; xlii. 1, 4, 5, 11; xliii. 5; lxii. 1, 5; lxiii. 8; lxxxvi. 4; ciii. 1, 2, 22; civ. 1, 35; cxvi. 7, &c., and cxlvi, 1; Gen. xlix. 6.

* Lord's Prayer; for that is the platform, and the very seal that should imprint the same matter and order of desires on your soul. I have elsewhere opened that prayer at large. †

II. When you have got this impression of holy desires on your heart you are then a Christian indeed; let the expressing or wording of them be according to occasions: you are not always to speak them just in the order as they are in your heart and in the Lord's Prayer: for † particular occasions may call you oft to mention some particular sins, wants, or mercies, without then mentioning the rest; or to mention them more largely than the rest; as there is cause.

III. Think not that you have prayed, when your tongue hath gone † without your heart: therefore, get the deepest sense of your sins, wants, and mercies, and labour more with your hearts than with your tongues: and, out of the abundance and treasure of a feeling, fervent heart, the tongue will be able so to speak as that God will accept it.

IV. Go to God only in the † name of Christ, in trust upon his merits and intercession: put all your prayers as into his hands, to offer them to God: and expect every mercy from God as by his hands. For since sin defiled us, man can have no happy communion with God in himself, but by a mediator.

V. † Live as you pray, and think not that confessing sin to God will excuse you for continuing in it. And labour for what you pray for: and think not that praying is all that you have to do, to get God's grace, any more than to get your food and raiment: but you must labour, and beg, for God's blessing thereon.

About forms and family prayer I spoke before.

S. I pray you briefly direct me for good conference.

P. 1. Be † furnished for it, by a good understanding and a zealous soul: for as a man is, so will he speak: the inward disposition is all in all.

2. When you are with those that can teach you, be much forwarder to hear than to speak. Pride maketh men of a teaching, talkative disposition.

* Matt. vi. 6, 9; Rom. viii. 26.

† In my 'Christian Directory.'

‡ So did the Apostles oft. Acts i. 24; iv. 31; vi. 6, 8, 15; ix. 40, and xxviii. 8.

§ Psalm cxlii. 2; xlii. 4, lxii. 8; Lam. ii. 19; Matt. xv. 8.

¶ 1 John ii. 12; John xiv. 13, 14; xv. 16, and xvi. 23, 24, 26; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34; 2 Tim. iv. 16.

⋄ Luke xxii. 40, 46, and xxi. 36.

⋅ Matt. xii. 34—36, xiii. 52; Psalm cxix. 46, and cxlv. 5, 6.

3. Yet if such be silent as can teach you, set them on work by some seasonable question. For the best are too dull and backward to good. And many are silent for want of occasion, opportunity, or invitation.

4. 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 love and gentleness. Let instruction and sweet exhortation be instead of reproof, for the most part. And when you must reprove them, do it usually in secret, and not before others; for disgrace will provoke them, and hinder from repentance.

4. Drive home all your holy conference to some practical issue, for your own affection and resolution when you learn of others, and to affect the hearers at the very heart, and bring them to resolve on that which is their duty, when it is your lot to be as a teacher to others.

5. Avoid two pernicious destroyers of good discourse: 1. Choosing ^o little things, though good, to talk of. As some small ^t controversy, word, or text, less pertinent to men's present necessities. 2. An ignorant, unskilful manner of talking of weighty matters. Abundance of good people breed scorn and contempt in the wittier sort of hearers, by their imprudent manner of speech.

6. Because the ignorant and unlearned cannot well avoid this, when they talk with those that are more witty and learned than themselves, I advise them to say little to such, unless to name some plain text of Scripture which may convince them: and, instead of the rest, 1. To get them to read some fit books: 2. And to get them to discourse with some ministers or others that can overwit them, and silence all their cavils.

S. I have but one thing more to desire now: that you will teach me how to keep days of humiliation and thanksgiving in private and in public.

P. I would not overwhelm you with precepts: a little may serve for both these, besides what is said on other subjects. 1. In public, the pastors must choose the time of humiliations and fasts, with the order, and words, and circumstances of performance. But in private, your discretion must be chooser. And it must be, 1. After some great sin. 2. Or in some great danger or judgment, private or public. 3. Or when some great mercy is desired, or work to be done. And so thanksgiving are for great mercies and deliverances.

^o John iv. 20, 22.

^t Tit. iii. 9.

2. The manner of humiliation is, by due ^s fasting, and confession, and prayer, to humble the soul penitently for sin, and beg the mercy which we want : and the manner of thanksgiving, to ^b 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 our devotion and resolutions of obedience.

3. The outward parts (fasting and feasting) must not be made a form or ceremony of, 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, humiliation and thanksgiving ; and may be varied as men's cases and bodies differ. The weak may be humbled ^l 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.

4. ^k 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 all that attaineth not, or truly intendeth not that end, is vain. But so much for this present conference.

THE EIGHTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Directions for a safe and comfortable Death.

Speakers.—Paul, a teacher ; and Saul, a learner.

SAUL. Sir, I have been, since I saw you, with divers of my neighbours at their death ; and I see that weakness and pain of body, and the terrors of death, and the stir of friends and physicians, are so great impediments to men's preparation then, that I earnestly entreat you to help me to make ready while I am in health. For I am loth to leave so great work to so weak a state, and to so sad, and short, and uncertain a time.

PAUL. It is God's great mercy to make you so wise. There is nothing in which the folly of ungodly men doth more appear than in delaying their serious preparations for death. Is there

^s Est. iv. 16 ; Joel i. 14—16 ; Ezr. viii. 21, &c.

^b Est. ix. 17, 18 ; Psalm lxxxi. 3.

^l Matt. ix. 13, and xii. 7.

^k Rom. xiv. 17 ; 1 Cor. viii. 8 ; Isa. lviii. 2, &c. ; Psalm i. 14, 15, 23, and xvi. ; 1 Cor. v. 8.