
THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. Six Days shalt thou labour, and do all thy Work. But the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any Work, Thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, nor thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, nor thy Stranger that is within thy Gates. For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the Seventh Day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it.

WE are now arrived, in pursuance of our designed Method; to the Fourth, and Last Commandment of the First Table; and with the Exposition of this, I shall shut up the Consideration of those Duties which do immediately concern the Worship and Service of God.

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We have already observed, as a great deal of Wisdom and Excellency in the Matter of each Command, so a great deal of Heavenly Art in the Method and Digestion of them. And upon serious Reflections on both, we may very well conclude, that they are as well the contrivance of the Divine Understanding, as the engraving of his Finger.

The First requires that which is first and principally to be regarded, *viz.* The inward Veneration of the true God, in the dearest Love, and highest Esteem, and choicest Affections of a pious Soul.

The Second enjoins the external Expressions of this Reverence, in the prostration of the Body, and other Acts of visible Worship. For altho God chiefly regards the Heart, and the Frame and Disposition of the Inward Man; yet he neglects not to observe the due Composure of the Body, as a Testimony of the Soul's Sincerity.

And as this requires us to honour the Majesty of God in our Gestures; so the Third requires us to glorify the Holy and Reverend Name of God in all our Speeches and Discourses, never to make mention of it but with that Prepossession of Holy Awe and Dread that might compose us into all possible Gravity and Seriousness.

And because every thing is beautiful in its Season, therefore we have subjoined to all these a particular Command, concerning the time wherein God prescribes all these to be more especially tendred unto him. And this is that Precept which we have now under Consideration; *Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it Holy, &c.*

In the Words we have a Command, and the Inforcement of it.

The Command is to sanctify the Sabbath.

And this is justly observable, in that whereas all the rest are simply either Positive, or Negative, this is both.

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Remember to keep it Holy: and, in it thou shalt not do any Work. As if God took an especial care to fence us in on all Sides to the Observation of this Precept.

The Inforcement also is more particular, and with greater Care and Instance, than we find in any other Command. For God hath here condescended to use three cogent Arguments to press the Observation of this Law upon us.

The First is taken from his own Example, whom, certainly, it is our Glory, as well as our Duty, to imitate in all Things, in which he hath propounded himself to be our Pattern. *The Lord rested the Seventh Day*, and therefore rest ye also.

The Second, From that bountiful and liberal Portion of Time that he hath allowed us for the Affairs and Business of this present Life, *Six Days shalt thou labour, and do all thy Work*; and therefore it is but fit and equitable, that the Seventh should be given to God, who hath so freely given the rest to thee.

The Third, From the Dedication of this Day to his own immediate Worship and Service; *The Lord blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it.* So that it is no less a Sin than Sacriledg, and stealing of that which is Holy, to purloin any part of that time which God hath thus consecrated to himself, and to imploy it about either sinful or secular Actions.

I shall begin with the Command, *Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it Holy.*

The Word *Sabbath*, signifies Rest, and Cessation from Labour; and it is applied unto several Things.

First; It signifies the Temporal Sabbath, or the recurring seventh Day or Year, which we are now treating of. And

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because this was the most principal Day of the Week, therefore we find that the whole Week is denominated from it, a Sabbath, *Luke 10. 12. Mat. 28. 1.*

Secondly; It signifies a Spiritual Rest, a Rest from the Slavery and Drudgery of Sin, and those fordid Labours which the Devil, our grievous Task-master, exacts of us. And of this Spiritual Sabbath, the Temporal one is a Sign and Type. So *Exod. 31. 13. My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a Sign between me and you, — that ye may know that I am the Lord, that doth sanctify you.*

Thirdly; It is used likewise, to signify the eternal Rest of the Blessed in Heaven, where they rest from all their Labours, and from all their Sorrows, in the full Fruition of the ever-blessed God, and of all Blessedness in him. So the Apostle, *Heb. 4. 9. There remaineth a Rest unto the People of God*; the word is *σαββατισμός*, there remaineth a Sabbath, or the Celebration of a Sabbath unto the People of God.

It is only of the first of these, the Temporal Sabbath, that I am now speaking. And here, neither shall I speak of the Sabbath of Years, when the Land was every seventh Year to rest from the Labour of Tillage and Husbandry, as we find it *Levit. 25. 4. The seventh Year shall be a Sabbath of Rest unto the Land*: Nor yet of the greater Sabbath of the Jubilee, observed every fiftieth Year, at the Period of seven Sabbatical Years, wherein all Possessions and Inheritances which had been sold, or mortgaged, were again to return to the first Owners; which Sabbath you have described *Levit. 25. 8, &c.* But I shall only treat of the Sabbath of Days, which this Commandment doth principally respect. And the General Heads upon which I shall proceed, are these four.

I. Its Primitive Institution.

II. Its Morality and perpetual Obligation.

III. Its Change from the last to the first Day of the Week.

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IV. The manner how God hath required it to be sanctified by us.

Concerning the first. When the Sabbath was instituted, there is some difference between Learned Men: Some put a like Date upon it, and refer its beginning to the Promulgation of the Law, or at farthest, to the sending of Manna to the *Israelites*. And they ground their Assertion upon this, That before that time we read not in all the History of the Patriarchs, and first Ages of the World, of any Sabbath that was observed and sanctified by the holy Fathers who then lived; which doubtless they would not have neglected, had any such Command been given them.

Others, who I believe concur with the Truth, fetch its Original as high as the Creation of the World, grounding their Opinion upon that unanswerable Testimony, *Gen. 2. 2, 3. On the seventh day God ended his Work which he had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.* Now that there cannot in these words be understood any *Prolepsis*, or Anticipation, declaring that as done then, which was done many Ages after, appears plainly, because God is said to sanctify the Sabbath then when he rested: but he rested precisely on the seventh Day after the Creation; that very seventh Day did God sanctify, and made the beginning of all ensuing Sabbaths. So that you see it is but one day younger than Man, ordained in the State of his Uprightness and Innocence, that being then holy and excellent, he might improve, especially on that Day, in the singular and most worship of God his Creator.

And so we find no more mention of the Sabbath, till he had conducted the Children of *Israel* into the Wilderness, which was about two thousand four hundred Years after the Creation; yet it is not to be thought that among the People of God, who were very careful

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careful as in observing the Law of God themselves, so in delivering it likewise to their Posterity, that the Observation of this Law, or of this Day utterly failed, but was continued among those that feared God, till it was again invigorated with new Authority by the Promulgation of it from Mount *Sinai*. And thus much for the Institution.

Secondly; Concerning the Morality of the Sabbath, is a greater Controversy, and of far greater moment. Some loose Spirits contend that it is wholly Ceremonial, and so utterly abolish'd at the coming of Christ, and will not be under the Restriction of their Liberty in observing any Days or Times. Others again make it wholly Moral, and affirm, that the Observation of the very seventh Day from the Creation, is a Law of Nature, and of perpetual Obligation; and therefore think themselves bound to keep the Jewish Sabbath.

That I may clearly state this obscure and difficult Question, I shall only premise, * That those things are said to be Moral and of the Law of Nature, which are in themselves rational and fit to be done, altho there were no express Command to injoin them. So that where there is a great Equity in the thing it self, enough to sway a rational and honest Man to the doing of it, that is, to be accounted Moral, and authorized by the Law of Nature. That is of positive Right which is observed only because it is commanded, and hath no intrinsical Goodness, or Reason in it self to commend it to our Practice, but obligeth us only upon the Injunction and Authority of another. As for Instance; It is naturally good to obey our Parents, to abstain from Murder, Theft, Adultery, &c. to do to others as we would be content to be dealt with. These things we are obliged unto by the very Light of Reason, and the Principles of Nature, altho there had been no written Law of God to impose them. But then there were other things to which God ob-

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liged some of his People, that had nothing to commend them besides the Authority of his Command: And such were the various Ceremonies under the Law, yea, and in Innocence it self, that Prohibition given to *Adam* not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledg of Good and Evil. The former sort are moral and natural Commands, the latter positive and instituted. The former are commanded, because good; the latter are good, because commanded.

Now here first; Certain it is, that a convenient portion of our time is due unto the Service and Worship of God by natural and moral Right. For certainly 'tis but fit and just that he should have a large share of our Life and Time, who hath given us Life and Time here upon Earth, and hath created us to this very end, that we might serve and glorify him. Yea, had it been propounded to our selves how much we would have allowed for God? could we, without shame and blushing, have set apart less Time for his Service from whom we have all, than himself hath done? This I think is by all agreed to.

Secondly; The Law of Nature doth not dictate to us any particular stated Days to be set apart for the Worship of God, one more than another. For indeed there can be no natural reason why this Day more than that; why every seventh Day, rather than every sixth, or fifth, or fourth. For all Days being in their own nature alike, Reason can find no advantage to prefer one of them before another. But that which is obligatory by the Law of Nature, ought to be plain and evident to all Men, or else evidently deducible from some natural Principles. Now if we lay aside the positive Command of God, there is no one day in it self better than other: And therefore there is a *Memento* prefixt to the Command, (*Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day*) which is not added to any other Precept; intimating to us, that the Observation of a special Day is not a Dictate of Nature, but only an Imposition of God,

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God, which he requires us to remember and bear in Mind.

Thirdly; That the Seventh Day should be especially consecrated to the Service and Worship of God, is from his Positive Will and Command; and therefore is as binding and forcible, as if it were a Law of Nature ingraven on our Hearts; unless the same Authority alter it, that did first injoin it. For this being a Positive Law, is therefore good and necessary, because commanded. And if it had not been revealed to us, we should never have been obliged to this Observation, nor made obnoxious to Punishment for failing in it. Yet again,

Fourthly; This Declaration of the Will of God concerning the Sanctification of the Sabbath, is attended with a Moral Reason; and therefore is not merely and barely Positive, as Ceremonial Laws are. Which Reason is, that God rested on the Seventh Day, and therefore we ought so to do. Now although this Reason carries not such a natural Evidence in it as to have obliged us, unless it had been revealed, yet being revealed, we may discern a certain Aptitude and Fitness in it to oblige us to the Observation of the Seventh Day rather than any other, since Piety and Religion require that we should imitate God in those things wherein he would have us to imitate him. So that I account this Command to be Moral-Positive. Moral, in that it requires a due portion of our Time to be dedicated to the Service and Worship of God; Positive, in that it prescribes the Seventh Day for that especial Service, which the Light and Law of Nature did not prefix: and mixt of both, in that it gives a reason of this Prescription, which hath somewhat of natural Equity in it, but yet such as could not have been discovered without Special and Divine Revelation.

Now because the Observation of a Sabbath hath thus much of Morality, and of the Law of Nature in it, it is most certain that we are bound to keep a Sabbath, as much

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as the Jews were; altho not to the Circumstance of the Duty. For,

First, This Command was obligatory even in Paradise it self in the state of Innocency, and therefore contains nothing in it unworthy the state of a Christian. It is no Ceremonial Command, nor to be reckoned amongst those things which were typical, and prefigured Christ to come in the Flesh; and therefore neither was it abolish'd at his coming, but still there lies a strict and indispenfible Obligation upon us to observe a Sabbath Holy unto the Lord.

Secondly, The Reasons of this Command are all of them Moral and Perpetual, and therefore such is the Obligation of it to us Christians. The Equity is the same to us, that it was to them, *viz.* That we should allow one Day in seven to the Worship of that God, who so liberally allows us six for our ordinary Affairs. The Ease and Refreshment of our Bodies from the Labours of our Callings, is as necessary as then it was. And we are still as much obliged with Thankfulness to remember and meditate upon the great Mercy of our Creation, as they were: and therefore if these were sufficient Reasons, why the Jews should observe a particular Sabbath, they are still as forcible and cogent with us. Again,

Thirdly, Our Saviour foretelling the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, bids his Disciples *pray that their Flight might not be in the Winter, nor on the Sabbath Day.* And yet the Destruction of that City happened about forty Years after the Death of Christ: And therefore certainly those who were his Disciples, lay under an Obligation of observing a Sabbath-Day; because our Saviour intimates, that it would prove an heavy Addition to their Affliction, if they should be forced to take their Flight on the Sabbath, when they ought and desired to be employed in the Spiritual Exercise of Devotion and Holy Duties proper to that Day.

Matth. 24.
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But although the sanctifying of a Sabbath be thus Obligatory to Christians, yet it is not the same Sabbath Day, to

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the Observation of which the Jews and the People of God, before Christ's coming into the World, were bound. But it is with good Ground, and upon good Authority, changed from the last to the first Day of the Week, from Saturday to Sunday; called now the Lord's Day, because it was that Day of the Week on which our Lord and Saviour rose from the Dead; in Memory of which, and in a Thankful Acknowledgment of the great Mercy of our Redemption, fully compleated by his Resurrection, the Sabbath hath been translated to this Day, and is now rightly celebrated on this Day by all the Churches of Christ throughout the World.

And this Change of the Sabbath is the third Head which I promised to speak of.

Now as the first Institution of the Sabbath was by Divine Authority; so likewise is the Change of it. For as God rested from his Labour on the last Day of the Week; so Christ rested from all his Labour, Sorrows, and Afflictions on this Day, in which he fully compleated the Work of our Redemption, and manifested it to be perfected by his Resurrection from the Dead. Therefore, as the Jewish Sabbath was sanctified, because of the finishing of the Work of Creation; so was the Christian Sabbath, because of the finishing of the Work of Redemption; which is of far greater Importance, and therefore deserves more to be celebrated than the other. Christ sanctified this Day by his Resurrection; and the Apostles confirmed the Observation of it, both by their Writings, and uniform Practice; and it hath such an inviolable Stamp of Divinity upon it, that now it is no more alterable to the end of the World.

Nor is it needful that an express Command of Christ should be brought for this Change out of the New Testament; it is sufficient if by necessary Consequence it may be deduced from Scripture. And yet,

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Time for Christians to meet together, to preach, to hear, and to break Bread in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, and to perform other Duties of Religion. So *Acts 20.7. Upon the first Day of the Week, when the Disciples came together to break Bread, Paul preached unto them.* Which plainly declares that the solemn Meetings and Assemblies of Christians were then on this Day; the Jewish Sabbath beginning to wear out, and the Christian Sabbath, or the Lord's-Day, coming into its place and stead.

Again; The publick Collections for the poorer Saints, were ordain'd by the Apostle to be made on this day: *Now concerning the Collection for the Saints: upon the first Day of the Week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.* And this very Rule and Custom the Apostle saith he had before establish'd in the Church of the *Galatians*. And why should this Day be chosen for their Collections, but only because the Assemblies of Christians were held on this Day, and so gave a better Conveniency to gather their Charity than at any other time? 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

Again; *St. John* saith of himself, *that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's-Day*; which is no other but this our Christian Sabbath, that hath received this Title and Denomination from our Lord Christ. For what some say, that the Lord's-Day means no more than the Day of the Lord's appearing to him, and revealing those many mysterious Visions, is vain and dilate, and scarce agreeable to the Sense and Gravity of Scripture-Expression. It signifies therefore this Day, wherein the Apostle being in all likelihood taken up with Spiritual Meditations, God was pleased to gratify him with the Revelation of these great Things, which were afterwards to take their Effect and Accomplishment. Rev. 1. 10.

Now put the force of these Scriptures together, and they will certainly amount to the full proof of the Institution of this First-Day Sabbath. It is called the Lord's-Day; it was appointed and used for the Assemblies of the Saints, for the

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preaching and hearing of the Word, and Administration of the Sacrament, for the Collection of Alms for the Relief of the Poor ; and this not in one Church only, but in other Churches of the Saints ; and that likewise not at some more solemn times only, but weekly. Put these together, and what more plain and evident Proof can a thing of this nature admit of ?

Secondly ; A second Argument to prove this Change, shall be that which with all sober Men may be sufficiently valid, which is the constant and uninterrupted Practice of the Church in all Ages, from the time of Man's Redemption by the Death and Resurrection of Christ, to this very present Day. Christ himself began the Sanctification of it by his Resurrection, on the same Day he appeared to his Disciples, and he himself informs them of his Resurrection, *John* 20. 19. I have already declared unto you the Practice of the Apostles ; and for the Practice of the Primitive Church immediately after the Apostles, all Ecclesiastical Histories do with one consent, testify that the solemn Assemblies of Christians were held on this Day. Which unvaried Custom and Observation of the Church of Christ ought to be of great weight with all solid and serious Christians ; and if we add to this likewise the unanimous Consent of the most holy and spiritual Men, who are generally found to be the most strict Observers of the Lord's-Day ; and lastly, the great Blessing, that God hath poured out upon his People in the plentiful Effusion of his Grace and Spirit on them in his holy Ordinances celebrated on this Day, it will be past all question and debate, that this is the Day that the Lord hath made for himself, and therefore let us be glad and rejoice therein.

We have thus considered the Institution, Morality, and Change of the Sabbath. All which are the more abstruse and intricate, partly from the Silence of the Scriptures, which leave us to collect the Truth, by Inferences and Deductions ; and

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and partly from the different Opinions of Learned Men, whose Queries and Disputes about these Points are so various and endless; that, as *Malden* said of *Luke 2.34.* *The place had been much easier understood, if no Man had attempted to expound it;* so I may say of the Questions in hand, It had been much easier to determine them, if no Man had debated them. I have endeavoured to make them as plain and perspicuous as the nature of the Subject would permit, laying aside all contentious Arguments and needless Cavils, both of one side and the other.

The fourth General propounded, remains now to be considered; which as it is of greater Concernment than the rest, so it is of equal Difficulty; and that is concerning the Sanctification of the Sabbath. In treating of which I shall observe the same Method, and satisfy my self in laying down positively what Scripture and Reason dictate, without ingaging in those tedious Disputes about it, which might make this Discourse both unpleasing and unprofitable.

This Commandment therefore speaks of a twofold Sanctification of this Day. The one which it hath already received from God; the other which it ought to receive from Man. And the former is given as a Reason of, and Motive unto the latter.

First, God hath sanctified the Sabbath-day, so we have it, *ver. 11.* *The Lord blessed the seventh Day, and hallowed it.* Where these two words *blessed* and *hallowed*, are only exegetical one of the other, and carry in them the same sense common to both.

Now God blessed and hallowed the Sabbath-day, not by infusing any inherent Quality of Holiness into it (for neither Days, nor Places, nor any inanimate things are Subjects capable of real Holiness.)

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But first, God blessed and hallowed it by separating that Day from others, bestowing an higher Dignity and Priviledg upon it, as the Day whereon both himself chose to rest from the Works of Creation, and the Day whereon he requires that we also should rest from the Works of our ordinary Vocations. For to hallow and sanctify, is to set any thing apart from profane and common, unto sacred and spiritual Uses. God therefore sanctified the Sabbath, when he selected it out of the course of other Days, and set it apart from the common Employments and Services of Life, ordaining that the Spiritual Concernments of his Glory, and our Salvation should be therein especially transacted. And this is that Blessing which God hath conferred upon this Day; for what other Benefit is a Day capable of, but only that when the other six Days, like the unregarded Vulgar of the Year, were to be employed in the low and fordid Drudgery of Earthly Affairs; this seventh Day God hath raised from the Dunghil, and set upon the Throne, appointing it according to *Ignatius* his Phrase, *πρω βασιλεα*, *πρω υπατον* *της ημερας*, the Prince and Sovereign of Days, exempting it from all servile Works, and designing it for such Spiritual and Celestial Employments, that were it observed according to God's Command, Eternity it self would not have much advantage above it, but only that it is longer: So that in the Ring and Circle of the Week, the Sabbath is the Jewel, the most excellent and precious of Days.

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Secondly; God hath blessed and sanctified it, not only in this relative, but also in an effective sense, *viz.* as he hath appointed it to be the Day whereon he doth especially bless and sanctify us; yea and possibly he makes the Means of our Sanctification to be more effectual on this Day, than when they are dispensed on any other common Days. God doth then especially give out plentiful Effusions of his Spirit, fills his Ordinances with his Grace and Presence; and we

we may with a more confident Faith expect a greater portion of Spiritual Blessings from him, when both the Ordinances and the Day too are his, than when tho the Ordinances be his, yet the Day is ours. In this sense God may be said to bless and sanctify the Sabbath-day, because he bleseth and sanctifies us on that Day. As the Psalmist most elegantly, and in an high strain of Poetry, saith, That God crowneth the Year with his Goodness, *Psalm 65. 11.* Not that the Plenty and Fruitfulness of the Year is any Blessing unto it, but it is a Blessing unto Men, whose Hearts God then filleth with Food and Gladness. In both these senses may God be said to bless and sanctify the Sabbath.

Secondly; As God sanctified the Sabbath, so Man is commanded to sanctify it also; ver. 8. *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.* Now we sanctify and hallow a Day, when we observe it holy to the Lord, sequestering our selves from common Affairs to those spiritual Exercises which he hath required us to be conversant about on that Day. God sanctifies it by Consecration, we sanctify it by Devotion. He hath set it apart for his Worship, and on it we ought to set our selves apart for his Worship, and to be taken up only with those things which he hath either allowed or prescribed us; And therefore God doth lay an especial Claim to this Day. For altho he be the supream Lord of all, and doth dispense, and as it were draw out the Thred of Time, and Days, and Years for us, out of the infinite Bottom of his Eternity; yet he doth not so particularly challenge any part of it to himself, as he doth this seventh Day: Whence it is said, *ver. 10. The seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* The six foregoing Days of the Week are thine, and thou mayst dispose of them in the honest Works of thy Calling, as Prudence and Convenience shall direct; but this Day God challengeth to himself, as his peculiar portion of our time, because he hath ordained it for his Worship and Service, and therefore it is called his. And when we devote
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our selves to his Service and Worship, meditating on his Excellency, magnifying and praising his Mercy, and invoking his holy Name, we then hallow this Day, and give unto God that which is God's.

And thus you see what it is to sanctify the Sabbath, both as God hath done it by Dedication, and as Man ought to do it by Observation. But the great Difficulties in what manner the Sabbath ought to be sanctified and kept holy, whether or no we are bound to the same strict and vigorous Observation of our Christian Sabbath, as the Jews were of theirs under the Oeconomy of *Moses*?

To this I answer in the general; That as our Sabbath is not the very same with theirs, but only the same analogically, bearing a fit proportion to it; so likewise our Sanctification of the Lord's-day (for thus I had rather call it than the Sabbath) is not in all particulars the same that was required from the Jews, but bears a proportion to it in those things which are not Ceremonial nor burdensome to our Christian Liberty.

But more particularly, The sanctifying of this Day consists partly in abstaining from those things whereby it would be profaned; and partly in the performance of those things which are required of us, and tend to promote the Sanctity and Holiness of it.

Here, first, I shall lay down this; That in order to our due sanctifying of the Sabbath, we ought to abstain from the common and servile Works of our ordinary Callings and Vocations. So we have it expressly, *ver. 10. In it thou shalt not do any Work*. And this God prohibits, not that Rest and Cessation is in it self acceptable unto him, or any part of his Worship and Service; but only because Earthly Employments are an Impediment and Distraction to that heavenly frame of Spirit which we ought to maintain in all the Parts, and Duties of this Day. The Works of our Callings are not evil in themselves, but lawful and good; and

and such wherein on other Days we serve God, and whereon we may expect a Blessing from him. But yet our Mind is so narrow and stinted, that we cannot at once attend them, and the Service of God with that Zeal and Fervour that he requires; and therefore that we may be wholly employed in his Work, he hath taken us off from our own.

Now this Prohibition of working on the Sabbath, is strongly enforced by the Concession of six Days for our ordinary Labour. A Concession I call it, considering the Indulgence granted unto us; but yet it is not merely a Concession, but a Command too; *Six Days shalt thou labour, and do all thy Work; but the seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord.* That exceptive Particle *But*, intimates unto us, that none of that Work which is lawful to be done on ordinary Days, ought to be performed by us on the Sabbath.

I know it is a Question, Whether these words, *Six Days shalt thou labour*, be a Precept, or a Permission only? To me they seem preceptive, requiring us diligently to attend that Vocation and State of Life in which the Divine Providence hath set us; and to perform the Offices of it with Care and Conscience: For it is said, *thou shalt labour*, not only *thou mayst labour*. And those who contend that they merely signify a Permission of the daily Works of our Callings, open too wide a Gap for Sloth and Idleness to creep in, without violating any Commandment, or being censured and condemned for Sin.

But I shall not trouble you with the Disputes about this: Only let me take notice of the weakness and inconsequence of one Inference that is commonly drawn from it; and that is, If it be a Divine Precept, that we ought six Days to labour, then can we not by any Constitution whatsoever be taken off from the lawful Works of our Callings, nor obliged to keep any other Days holy and solemn besides the Sabbath; for God's Laws do not contradict themselves; and

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whereinsoever Humane Laws contradict the Divine, they are of no force nor validity.

But this Argument fails in its Deduction: For the Command, *Six Days shalt thou labour*, is not to be understood absolutely and unlimitedly, but with a just Restraint and Exception; that is, Thou shalt labour six Days ordinarily, unless any of them be set apart either by thine own private Devotion, or by publick Authority, for the immediate Worship and Service of God. And that this is of necessity to be so understood, appears, if we consider how many Days in the Week God himself did dedicate in those Feasts which he commanded the Jews strictly to observe, notwithstanding that they were enjoined six Days Labour. Besides every New Moon; the Paschever, in remembrance of their Deliverance from the Bondage of *Egypt*, and as a clear Type of Christ, who, as a Lamb without spot, was offered up to God for us. Then Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, fifty days after the Paschever, a Memorial that the Law was given to them from Mount *Sinai* fifty days after their departure out of *Egypt*; typifying likewise the sending of the Holy Ghost to inspire the Apostles with Heavenly Truth, and to enable them to preach the Gospel, which is the Law of Jesus Christ, which was accordingly fulfilled fifty days after Christ, our great Paschever, was sacrificed for us. Then, thirdly, The Feast of Atonement or Expiation, which was celebrated on the tenth Day of the seventh Month, whereon the High-Priest was solemnly to confess unto God both his own Sins, and the Sins of the People, and to make Atonement for them; typifying thereby the full Expiation and Atonement of our Sins made by our High-Priest Jesus Christ. And lastly, There was ordained likewise the Feast of Tabernacles, on the fifteenth day of the same Month, and this was to last not only one Day, but a whole Week together, and was instituted to be a Memorial to them of their Journey through the Wilderness, wherein
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for forty Years they lived in Tents and Tabernacles. All these Feasts we find appointed by God himself, and imposed upon the *Israelites*, Levit. 23.

And not only did they account themselves obliged to keep these Days holy, which were enjoined by the Divine Command, but those also which were appointed by Humane Authority; and such were the Feast of *Parim*, to be kept two days following, in remembrance of their Deliverance from the malicious and bloody Designs of *Hamon*, *Esth.* 9. 21. And the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple, first observed at the rebuilding of their Temple after their return from the Babylonish Captivity; as you may read *Exra* 6. 16. and from that time perpetuated unto the Days of our Saviour Christ, who, tho' it were but of Humane and Ecclesiastical Institution, yet was pleased to honour that Solemnity with his Presence, *John* 10. 22. Besides, we frequently read of Fasts, both personal and national, appointed upon some emergent Occasions, to appease and divert the Wrath of God, as the Fast of the fifth and the seventh Month, for seventy Years together, *Zech.* 7. 5. And the like to these without doubt, either our own private Devotion, or the publick Authority of the Nation, may in the like Circumstances impose on us without violating this Command of six Days Labour.

But now, altho' this six Days Labour was not so strictly required, as not sometimes to admit the intervention of an holy Rest; yet the seventh Day's Rest was so exactly to be observed, as not to admit any bodily Labour, or secular Imployment. God would not have this holy Rest disturbed by the tumultuous Affairs and Business of Life; and we find this Command strictly enforced by the double Sanction both of a Promise and Threatning, *Jer.* 17. from ver. 24 to the end. *If ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burthen through the Gates of the City on the Sabbath-Day, but hallow the Sabbath-Day, to do no Work there-*

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in : Then shall there enter into this City, Kings and Princes sitting upon the Throne of David, — and the City shall remain for ever. But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-Day; then will I kindle a Fire in the Gates thereof, and it shall devour the Palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched. Yea God was so accurate about this, that he descends to a particular Prohibition of several sorts of Works which he would not have to be done on the Sabbath-Day; on that Day the *Israelites* were not to gather Manna, *Exod.* 16. 27. nor to gather in their Harvest, *Exod.* 24. 21. nor to buy or sell, *Nehem.* 10. 31. nor to tread the Wine-Press, *Neh.* 13. 15. nor so much as to gather Sticks, *Numb.* 15. 32. nor to go from their places of Abode to provide themselves Food, *Exod.* 16. 29. yea so strictly were they tied to the Observation of this Sabbath, that they might not so much as kindle a Fire, *Exod.* 35. 3. *Ye shall kindle no Fire throughout your Habitations on the Sabbath-Day.* Unto all which Prohibitions from God, the Jews added many superstitious and ridiculous ones of their own, not grave enough to be here mentioned; whereby they made that Burthen which was before heavy, to be altogether insupportable by their foolish and vain Traditions.

Now the great Question is, How far these Prohibitions do concern us, and whether we are obliged to the punctual observance of them as the Jews were?

To this I answer in the Negative, that we are not: For we are bound to nothing by the Law of *Moses*, but only what was of Moral and Natural Right in that Law; and as for other Ordinances which were positive, we are set free from them, by that Liberty which Jesus Christ hath purchased for, and conferred upon his Church. We do not celebrate the Lord's-Day it self upon any Obligation laid upon us by the Letter of this fourth Commandment, (for that expressly enjoyns the seventh Day from the Creation, whereas ours is the eighth) but only from the Analogy and
Propor-

Proportion of Moral Reason; which requires that a due and convenient Portion of our Time should be separated to the Service and Worship of God. But for the fixing of the very Day, why it should be this rather than any other, we acknowledg it to proceed from the Consecration of it by our Saviour's Resurrection, the Institution of the Apostles, and the consequent Practice of the Universal Church of Christ in all Ages, as I have already declared. And therefore should we as scrupulously and nicely observe it in all Circumstances, as the Jews did their Sabbath; possibly it would not be a Sanctification of the Sabbath, but a fond and groundless Superstition.

The Lord's Day is therefore to be observed, as only in things that are in themselves Moral and Rational: Nor will this give any Scope to the Libertinism of those who would willingly indulge themselves, either in Worldly Affairs, or loose Recreations on this Day. For it is Moral and Rational that the whole of that Day, which is set apart for the Worship of God, should be employed in his Worship. This likewise is Moral, and of Spiritual Obligation, that we do not our own Pleasure, nor speak our own Words on his Holy Day, as the Prophet expresseth it, *Isa. 58. 13*. This obligeth us Christians, as well as the Jews. For if a Day be dedicated unto God, certainly every part and parcel of it belongs unto him; and we ought to rest from all our Worldly Employments, that might steal away our Thoughts and Affections from God, or indispose us to his Spiritual Worship and Service.

But yet this extends not to these small Punctualities of gathering Sticks, kindling a Fire, and preparing Food for our selves; for these things doubtless may be done, without being any Moral Impediments to our Piety and Devotion on this Day: Yea they may be Moral Helps and Furtherances unto it.

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For notwithstanding this Rest and Cessation from Labour, that is required from us on the Lord's Day, yet there are three sorts of Works that may, and ought to be performed on it, how great soever our Bodily Labour may be in doing them. And they are,

Works of Piety.

Works of Necessity. And,

Works of Charity.

First; Works of Piety are to be performed on the Lord's Day; yea on this Day especially, as being the proper Works of the Day: And such are not only those which consist in the internal Operations of the Soul, as Heavenly Meditations, and Spiritual Affections; but such also as consist in the external Actions of the Body, as Oral Prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and preaching of the Word; yea on this Day are Ministers chiefly employed in their Bodily Labour, and spending of their Spirits, yet it is far from being a Profanation of the Lord's Day; for Holy Works are most proper for Holy Days. And not only are such Works to be performed on the Lord's Day, but they were enjoined also on the Jewish Sabbath. And therefore saith our Saviour, *Matth. 12. 5. Have ye not read in the Law, how that on the Sabbath Days the Priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath, and yet be blameless?* This Word therefore of profaning the Sabbath, is not to be understood of a formal Profanation, as if they did that which was unlawful to be done on that Day, but only of a Material Profanation; that is, they laboured hard in killing and slaying, and dividing and boiling, and burning the Sacrifices in the Temple: which, had they not been instituted parts of God's Worship, had been Profanations of the Sabbath; but being commanded by God, were so far from being Profanations, that they were Sanctifications of that Day. And upon this account likewise were Sabbath

bath Days Journeys permitted to the Jews, which tho they were not Actions of Piety in themselves, yet were they Actions tending towards Piety, that those who were remote from the Places of Worship, might assemble themselves together to hear the Scriptures read and expounded to them. This appears 2 *Kings* 4. 23. where the Husband of the *Shunammite* Woman expostulates with her, *Wherefore wilt thou go to the Prophet to Day? it is neither new Moon nor Sabbath.* Whence it may be clearly collected, that they were permitted to travel a certain Space, to attend upon the Worship and Service of God. And this Sabbath-Day's Journey some limit to a Mile, others two, the distance of the utmost part of the Camp of *Israel* from the Tabernacle of the Congregation. But with very good reason, it may be thought that the Sabbath-Day's Journey, was any distance from the place of their abode to the next Synagogue, which commonly not being above a Mile, or two, that distance was vulgarly called a Sabbath-Day's Journey. So that it appears, that Works of Piety, or Works immediately tending to Piety, may lawfully be performed with the strictest Observation of the Lord's Day.

Secondly; Not only Works of Piety, but Works of Necessity, and of great Convenience, may also be done on the Lord's Day. And they are such without which we cannot subsist, or not well subsist: and therefore we may quench a raging Fire, prevent any great and notable Damage that would happen either to our Persons or Estates; fight for our own Defence, or the Defence of our Countrey, without being guilty of the Violation of this Day. Concerning the last of which, Histories inform us, that the Jews were so scrupulous, as to suffer themselves to be assaulted and slain by their Enemies, rather than they would on this Day lift up a Weapon to repel them, till *Matthias* persuaded them out of this Foppish Superstition, 1 *Maccab.* 2. 40.

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And not only these Works which are of absolute Necessity, but these likewise which are of great Conveniency, may lawfully be done on the Lord's Day. Such as are kindling of Fire, preparing of Meat, and many other Particulars too numerous to be mentioned: We find our Saviour defending his Disciples against the Exceptions of the *Pharisees*, for plucking the Ears of Corn, rubbing them in their Hands, and eating them on the Sabbath-Day, *Matth. 12: 1, &c.* Only let us take this Caution, that we neglect not the doing of these things till the Lord's Day, which might be well done before, and then plead Necessity or Convenience for it. For if the Necessity or Convenience were such as might have been foreseen, our Christian Prudence and Piety ought to have provided for it before this Holy Day; so that we might wholly intend the immediate Service of God in it, with as few Avocations and Impediments as are possible.

Thirdly; Another sort of Works that may and ought to be done on the Lord's Day, are the Works of Charity and Mercy. For indeed this Day is instituted for a Memorial of God's great Mercy towards us; and therefore in it we are obliged to shew Charity and Mercy: Charity towards Men, and Mercy to the very Beasts themselves. And therefore, altho the Observation of the Sabbath was so strictly enjoined the Jews, yet was it to give place to the Works of Mercy, whensoever a poor Beast did but stand in need of it. So *Matth. 12. 11. What Man shall there be among you, that shall have one Sheep, and if it fall into a Pit on the Sabbath Day, will not lay hold on it, and lift it out?* And so again, *Luke 13. 15. Doth not every one of you on the Sabbath loose his Ox or his Ass from the Stall, and lead him away to watering?* Yea, and this the very Heathens observed on their Festivals; when other Works were forbidden, yet Works of Mercy were expressly allowed, and by Name the helping of an Ox out of a Pit. Works of Mercy therefore are to be done even

Macrobi.
Saturn.
lib. 1. cap.
16.

even to Beasts themselves, whatsoever Labour may be required to the doing of them? And how much more then, Works of Charity to Men like our selves? Which Charity is to be shewn either to their Souls, or their Bodies; for both many times are extremely miserable. To their Souls, in instructing, advising, exhorting, reproving, comforting and counselling of them, praying for them; and if in any thing they have offended us, freely forgiving them. This indeed is a Work of Charity proper for the Lord's Day, a Work highly acceptable unto God, and the best way that can be to sanctify it.

Neither are we to forbear any Work of Charity to their Bodies, and outward Man. And therefore we find how severely our Saviour rebukes the Superstitious Hypocrisy of the *Pharisees*, who murmured against him as a Sabbath-breaker, because he had healed some of their Infirmities on the Sabbath-Day, Luke 13. 14, 15, 16. *The Ruler of the Synagogue said to all the People with Indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath Day, There are Six Days in which Men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-Day.* See how our Lord takes him up, *Thou Hypocrite, dost not cure any one of you on the Sabbath least his Ox? &c.* And ought not this Woman, who is a Daughter of Abraham, to be loosed from this Bond on the Sabbath Day? And so again, *Matth. 12. 10.* Christ healeth a Man that had a withered Hand, and justifieth this Work of Charity to this Man, by their Works of Mercy to their Beasts; and asserts, ver. 12. *It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-Days.* Yea, he appeals to their very Consciences in this, whether a Benefit done to a poor helpless Creature, could be counted a Breach and Violation of the Sabbath, Mark 3. 4. *Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-Days, or to do evil? to save Life, or to kill?* Certainly it is a right Sabbath-Day's Work to do good, and to put our selves to any Work and Labour that may tend to the saving of Life, or easing of Pain, or healing the

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Diseases and Sickneſs of our Brother. And our Saviour hath told us, Mark 2. 27. *That the Sabbath was made for Man, not Man for the Sabbath.* The ſtrict and punctual Obſervation of the Sabbath, is, to give place whenſoever the Exigence or Good of our Neighbour doth require it; for God prefers Mercy before Sacrifice.

Thus you ſee what Reſt is required from us on the Lord's Day, and what Works may be done on it without any Violation of the Law, or Profanation of the Day: And this is the firſt Thing in order to our ſanctifying the Sabbath, *viz.* That we ought to reſt from the common and ſervile Works of our ordinary Callings and Vocations.

Secondly; The Sanctification of the Sabbath doth eſpecially conſiſt in a diligent and conſcientious Attendance upon all the Ordinances of God, and the Duties of his Worſhip, appointed to be performed on this Day: And that whether in Publick, or in Private, or in Secret.

Firſt; Conſider what Duties you are to be ingaged in, in the Publick and Solemn Worſhip of God on this Day; for in them a great and principal part of the Sanctification of it doth conſiſt. This I mention in the firſt place as moſt preferable. For certainly, as long as through the Mercy of God, we have the Publick and Free Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, we ought not to ſlight, nor turn our Backs upon this viſible Communion of the Church, but to honour and own the Freedom of the Goſpel, by our conſtant Attendance on the Diſpenſations of it; leſt, deſpiſing the Mercy of God in giving them to us ſo publickly, we provoke him, at length, moſt juſtly to neceſſitate us to theſe Retirements, which now ſo very many, out of Sloth or Faction, do ſo much affect. I pray God, that this prove not the ſad and direful Conſequence of that Contempt, that is caſt upon the Publick,

lick, by some Persons, whose only Study and Business it is to divide Christ, and make Rents and Schisms in his Body the Church.

Now the Publick Duties, which are necessary to the right Sanctifying of the Lord's Day, are these.

First; Affectionate Prayer, in joining with the Minister, who is our Mouth unto God, as well as God's Mouth unto us: For as he is intrusted to deliver his Sovereign Will and Commands, so likewise to present our Requests unto the Throne of his Grace. We ought heedfully to attend to every Petition, to dart it up to Heaven with our most earnest Desires; and to close and seal it up with our affectionate *Amen*, So be it. For tho it be the Minister alone that speaks, yet it is not the Minister alone that prays, but the whole Congregation by him, and with him; and whatsoever Petition is not accompanied with thy most Sincere and Cordial Affections, it is as much mocking of God, as if thine own Mouth had uttered it without the Concurrence of thy Heart, which is most gross Hypocrisy. Consider what Promises are made to particular Christians when they pray singly, and by themselves, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will grant it you*, John 15. 16. and 16.23. What great prevalency then must the united Prayers of the Saints have, when they join Interests, and put all the Favour that each of them hath at the Throne of Grace, into one Common Stock? When we come to the Publick Prayers, we are not to come as Auditors, but as Actors; we have our part in them; and every Petition that is spread before God, ought to be breathed from our very Hearts and Souls: Which if we affectionately perform, we may have good Assurance, that what is ratified by so many Votes and Suffrages here on Earth, shall likewise be confirmed in Heaven. For our Saviour hath told us, Matth. 18. 19. *That if two shall agree together on Earth, as touching any thing*

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that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by his Father that is in Heaven.

Secondly; Our Reverent and Attentive Hearing of the Word of God, either read, or preached, is another Publick Duty necessary to the Sanctification of the Sabbath. This was observed also in the Times of the Law, before Christ's coming into the World, Acts 15. 21. *Moses of old time hath in every City them who preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath-Day.* Their Synagogues were built for this very purpose: And as their Temple was the great Place of their Legal and Ceremonial Worship; so these were for their Moral and Natural Worship. In the Temple they chiefly sacrificed; and in their Synagogues they prayed, read, and heard. And every Town, and almost every Village, had one erected in it, as now our Churches are; where the People on the Sabbath-Day assembled together, and had some Portion of the Law read and expounded to them; much more ought we to give our attendance on this Holy Ordinance, now in the Times of the Gospel, since a greater measure of Spiritual Knowledge is required from us; and the Mysteries of Salvation are more clearly declared unto us. And may that Tongue wither, and that Mouth be for ever silenced, which shall dare to utter any thing in contempt and vilifying of this Holy Ordinance. For such excellent Things are spoken of the preaching of the Gospel, *That it is the Power of God,* 1 Corinth. 1. 18. *that is, the Salvation of those who believe,* vers. 21. *That it is the sweet Savour of the Knowledge of God,* 2 Corin. 2. 14. That certainly whosoever disparageth it, rejecteth against himself the Counsel of God, and neglects the only appointed means for the begetting of Faith, and so for the obtaining of Eternal Salvation: *For Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God,* Rom. 10. 27.

Thirdly; Another Publick Duty pertaining to the Sanctifying of the Lord's Day, is Singing of Psalms. For this

this Day being a Festival unto God, a Day of Spiritual Joy and Gladness, How can we better testify our Joy, than by our Melody? *Is any Man merry?* saith St. James, chap. 5. 13 *let him sing Psalms.* And therefore let prophane Spirits deride this how they please, yet certainly it is a most Heavenly and Spiritual Duty. The Holy Angels, and the Spirits of Just Men in Heaven, are said to sing Eternal *Hallelujahs* unto the Great King, And if our Sabbath be Typical of Heaven, and the Work of the Sabbath represents to us the Everlasting Work of these Blessed Spirits, How can it be better done than when we are singing forth the Praises of him that sits upon the Throne, and of the Lamb our Redeemer? This is to join with the Heavenly Quire in their Heavenly Work; and to observe a Sabbath here, as like that Eternal Sabbath there, as the Imperfection of Earth can resemble the Glory and Perfection of Heaven.

Fourthly; Another Publick Duty belonging unto the Sanctifying of the Lord's Day, is the Administration of the Sacraments, especially that of the Lord's Supper. And therefore it is mentioned, *Acts 20. 7. Upon the First Day of the Week, when the Disciples came together to break Bread,* that is, to partake of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, *Paul preached unto them;* which intimates that the primary intent of their Assemblies, was to receive the Lord's Supper; and that upon occasion of this, the Apostle instructed them by Preaching. It is most evident by all the Records of the Church, that it was the Apostolick and Primitive Custom to partake of this most Holy Ordinance every * Lord's Day, and that their Meetings were chiefly designed for this; to which were annexed Prayer and Preaching. I am afraid, Sirs, that one of the great Sins of our Age, is not only the Neglect and Contempt of this Ordinance by some, but the seldom celebrating it

* *Yea He-
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by

by all. The Apostle, where he speaks of this Holy Institution, intimates that it should be frequently dispens'd and participated, *1 Corinths. 11. 26. As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup.* Let us consider then, what dishonour they reflect upon Christ, who although this Ordinance be too seldom administred, yet either totally withdraw themselves from it, or very rarely partake of it. I shall no longer insist upon this, but leave it to God and your own Consciences: For certainly if either Persuasion, or Demonstration it self, could prevail against Resolution, enough hath been many times said heretofore, to spare me the Labour of making this Complaint any more.

And thus, much concerning the Sanctification of the Lord's Day, in the publick Duties of his Worship and Service.

But what hast thou no Sabbath-Work to do, after thou returnest from the Congregation and Publick Assemblies? Yes, certainly, the Day is not done when the Church dissolves, and the whole of it is Holy to the Lord. And therefore,

Secondly; When you return every one to your Families, there are Private and Family-Duties to be performed. Walks and Visits are not to be Evening-Work of the Sabbath, but Holy and Spiritual Conferences are then proper, either to bring to your remembrance the Truths you before have heard, or to engage your own Hearts, or the Hearts of others, to admire and magnify God, for all his great Wonders of Providence and Redemption. Indeed, if a Walk be thus improved, it may be a Walk to Heaven. So we find the two Disciples, who on this Day were walking to *Emmaus*, how they

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they entertained themselves, and shortened their Way with Spiritual and Holy Discourses. *Luke 24. 13.* But those who have Families to look after, will be best employed, in seeing that those, who are under their Charge, spend the vacant time of the Sabbath in Holy Exercises, either reading the Scripture, or giving an account of what Truths they have been taught, or joining with them in Praises and Prayer unto God; or indeed in all of these in their several Courses and Order, till Night calls for Repose, and delivers them over with a sweet Seasoning and Blessing, to the Labours and Employments of the ensuing Day and Week. And,

Thirdly; If there be any spare time from these Publick and Private Duties, then sanctify it by entering into thy Closet; and there un-bosom thy Soul before God in Secret Prayer, spread thy Requests before him, lay open thy Wants and Desires. And though perhaps thou art not gifted to word a Prayer, yet sigh and groan out a Prayer; for thy God hears thee, and he understands the Language of Sighs, and knows the meanings of his Spirit in the inarticulate Groans of his Children. Here, likewise in Secret, meditate on what thou hast heard; admire the Glory of God in his Works, the Goodness of God in his Providences, the infinite Mercy of God in his Promises. Certainly Meditation is one great Duty of a Sabbath; without which, to hear the Word of God only, is but to swallow our Meat without chewing it. It is Meditation that makes it fit for Nourishment. This sucks the Juice and Sweetness out of it, concorporates it into us, and turns it into Life and Substance. Thus, if we endeavour to sanctify the Lord's Day, the Lord will sanctify his Day, and his Ordinances unto us, and by them convey so much Joy and Comfort into our Souls, that they shall be a temporary

