

ence you from hypocrites ; which must settle you in peace, and make you an honour to your profession, and a blessing to those that dwell about you ! Happy is the land, the church, the family, which doth consist of such as these ! These are not they that either persecute or divide the church ; or that make their religion servant to their policy, to their ambitious designs, or fleshly lusts ; nor that make it the bellows of sedition, or rebellion, or of an envious, hurtful zeal ; or a snare for the innocent ; or a pistol to shoot at the upright in heart ; these are not they that have been the shame of their profession, the hardening of ungodly men and infidels, and that have caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. If any man will make a religion of or for his lusts, of papal tyranny, or pharisaical formality, or of his private opinions, or of proud censoriousness, and contempt of others, and of faction, and unwarrantable separations and divisions, and of standing at a more observable distance from common professors of Christianity than God would have them ; or of pulling up the hedge of discipline, and laying Christ's vineyard common to the wilderness. The storm is coming, when this religion, founded on the sand, will fall, and great will be the fall thereof. When the religion, which consisteth in faith and love to God and man, in mortifying the flesh, and crucifying the world, in self-denial, humility, and patience, in sincere obedience and faithfulness in all relations, in watchful self-government, in doing good, and in a divine and heavenly life, though it will be hated by the ungodly world, shall never be a dishonour to your Lord, nor deceive or disappoint your souls.

THE SEVENTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Of a Holy Family ; and how to govern it, and perform the duty of all Family Relations, and others.

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

PAUL. Welcome, Neighbour ; how do you like the new life which you have begun ? You have taken home instructions already which will find you work : but what do you find in the practising of them ?

SAUL. I find that I have foolishly long neglected a necessary, noble, joyful life ; and thereby lost my time, and made myself both unskilful and undisposed to the practice of it : I find that the things which you have prescribed me are high and excellent, and doubtless must be very sweet to them that have a suitable skill and disposition ; and some pleasure I find in my weak beginnings : but the greatness of the work, and the great untowardness and strangeness of my mind, doth much abate the sweetness of it, by many doubts, and fears, and difficulties : and when I fail, I find it hard both to repent aright, and, by faith, to fly to Christ for pardon. And if you had not forewarned me of this temptation, I should have thought by these troubles, that my case is worse in point of ease (though not of safety) than it was before. But I foresee that better things may yet be hoped for : and I hope I am in the way.

P. Where is your great difficulty that requireth counsel ?

S. I find a great deal of work to do in my family, to govern them in the fear of God, to do my duty to them all ; especially to educate my children, and daily to worship God among them. And I am so unable for it, that I am ready to omit all. I pray you help me with your advice.

P. My first advice to you is, that you resolve, by God's help, to perform your duty as well as you can : and that you ^P devote your family to God, and take him for the Lord and Master of it, and use it as a society sanctified to him. And I pray you let these reasons fix your resolution.

1. If God be not master of your family, the devil will ; and if God be not first served in it, the flesh and the world will. And I hope I need not tell you how bad a master, work, and wages, they will then have.

2. If you devote your family to God, God will be the Protector of it. He will take care of it for safety and provision as his own. Do you not need such a Protector ; and can you have a better, or better take care for the welfare and safety of you and your's ? And if your family be not God's, they are his enemies, and under his curse as rebels. Instead of his blessings of health, peace, provision, and success, you may look for sickness, dangers, crosses, distresses, unquietness, and death ; or, which is worse, that your prosperity shall be a curse and snare to you and your's.

^P See the Dispute for Family Worship, in my Christian Directory, part 21.

3. A holy family is a place of comfort, a church of God. What a joy will it be to you to live together daily in this hope, that you shall meet and live together in heaven; to think that wife, children, and servants, shall shortly be fellow citizens with you of the heavenly Jerusalem! How pleasant is it to join with one heart and mind in the service of God, and in his cheerful praises! How lovely will you be to one another, when each one beareth the image of God! What abundance of jars and miseries will be prevented, which sin would daily bring among you; and when any of you die, how comfortably may the rest be about their bed, and attend their corpse unto the grave, when they have good hopes that the soul is received to glory by Christ. But if your family be ungodly, it will be like a nest of wasps, or like a jail, full of discord and vexation: and it will be grievous to you to look your wife or children in the face, and think that they are like to lie in hell; and their sickness and death will be tenfold the more heavy to you to think of their woful and unseen end.

4. Your family hath such constant need of God, as commandeth you constantly to serve him. As every man hath his personal necessities, so families have family necessities, which God must supply, or they are miserable. Therefore family duty must be your work.

5. Holy families¹ are the seminaries of Christ's church on earth, and it is very much that lieth upon them to keep up the interest of religion in the world. Hence come holy magistrates, when great men's children have a holy education. And, oh, what a blessing is one such to the countries where they are! Hence spring holy pastors and teachers to the churches, who, as Timothy, receive holy instructions from their parents, and grace from the Spirit of Christ in their tender age. Many a congregation that is happily fed with the bread of life, may thank God for the endeavours of a poor man or woman, that trained up a child^r in the fear of God, to become their holy, faithful teacher. Though learning be found in schools, godliness is oftener received from the education of careful parents. When children and servants come to the church with understanding, godly, prepared minds, the labours of the pastor will do them good; they will receive what they hear with faith, love,

¹ Tim. iii. 12; Deut. vi. 7, and xxx. 2; Psalm cxlvii. 13; Acts ii. 39; Eph. vi. 4—6; Prov. xxii. 6, 15; xxix. 15, and xxiii. 13.

^r 2 Tim. iii. 15.

and obedience. It will be a joy to the minister to have such a flock: and it will be joyful to the people that are such, to meet together in the sacred assemblies, to worship God with cheerful hearts: and such worshippers will be acceptable to God. But when families come together in gross ignorance, and with unsanctified hearts, there they sit like images, understanding little of what is said, and go home little the better for all the labours of the minister: and the motions of their tongue and bodies is most of the worship which they give to God; but their hearts are not offered in faith and love as a sacrifice to him, nor do they feel the power and sweetness of the word, and worship him in spirit and truth.

6. And in times when the churches are corrupted, and good ministers are wanting, and bad ones either deceive the people, or are insufficient for their work, there is no better supply to keep up religion than godly families. If parents and masters will teach their children and servants faithfully, and worship God with them holily and constantly, and govern them carefully and orderly, it will much make up the want of public teaching, worship, and discipline. Oh, that God would stir up the hearts of people thus to make their families as little churches, that it might not be in the power of rulers or pastors that are bad to extinguish religion, or banish godliness from any land! For,

7. Family teaching, worship, and discipline, hath many advantages which churches have not. 1. You have but a few to teach and rule, and the pastor hath many. 2. They are always with you, and you may speak to them as seasonably and as often as you will, either together, or one by one, and so cannot he. 3. They are tied to you by relation, affection, and covenant, and by their own necessities and interest, otherwise than they are to him. Wife and children are more confident of your love to them than of the minister's; and love doth open the ear to counsel. Children dare not reject your words, because you can correct them, or make their worldly state less comfortable. But the minister doth all by bare exhortation; and if he cast them out of the church for their impenitence, they lose nothing by it in the world: and unless it be in a very hot persecution, families or not so restrained from holy doctrine, worship, and discipline, as churches and ministers often are. Who silenceth you or forbiddeth you to catechise and teach your family? Who forbiddeth you to pray or praise God with them, as well and as

often as you can? It is self-condemning hypocrisy in many rulers of families, who now cry out against them as cruel persecutors, who forbid us ministers to preach the Gospel, while they neglect to teach their own children and servants, when no man forbiddeth them; so hard is it to see our own sins and duty, in comparison of other men's.

8. You have greater and nearer obligations to your family than pastors have to all the people. Your wife is as your own flesh; your children are, as it were, parts of yourself. Nature bindeth you to the dearest affection, and therefore to the greatest duty to them. Who should more care for your children's souls than their own parents? If you will not provide for them, but famish them, who will feed them? Therefore, as ever you have the bowels of parents; as ever you care what becometh of your children's souls for ever, devote them to God, teach them his word, educate them in holiness, restrain them from sin, and prepare them for salvation.

S. I must confess that natural affection telleth me that there is great reason for what you say: and my own experience convinceth me; for if my parents had better instructed and governed me in my childhood, I had not been like to have lived so ignorantly and ungodly as I have done: but, alas! few parents do their duty. Many take more pains about their horses and cattle than they do about their children's souls.

P. O that I could speak what is deeply upon my heart to all the parents of the land; I would be bold to tell them that multitudes are more cruel than bears and lions to their own children. God hath committed their souls as much to their trust and care as he hath done their bodies. It is they that are at first to devote them to God, in the covenant of baptism: it is they that are to teach them,* and to exhort them to keep the covenant which they made, to catechise them, and to mind them of the state of their souls, their need of Christ, the mercy of redemption, the excellency of holiness, and of everlasting life. It is they that are to watch over them with wisdom, love, and diligence, to save them from temptation, Satan, and sin, and to lead them by the example of a holy life.

But, alas! instead of this, they bring their children hypocritically to make that covenant in baptism with God, which they never heartily consented to themselves. They turn all into a mere ceremony, and know no more of it, than to have godfathers

* Deut. vi. 6—8, and xi. 19, 20.

and godmothers as ignorant and ungodly as themselves, to promise and vow that in the name of the child, which they never understood, nor intended to perform their promise for his holy education, the child being none of their own, nor ever instructed by them. And when they think that the water, and the gossips, and the words of the priest, have thus made a Christian of their child, they afterward as formally teach him at age to go to church, and at last to receive the Lord's supper: and this is almost all that they do for his salvation. They never teach him the meaning of the covenant which he was entered into. If they teach him to say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, they never teach him to understand them. They never seriously mind him of his natural corruptions, or of the need and use of a Saviour and a Sanctifier, nor of the danger of sin and hell, nor of the way of a holy life, or of the joyful state of saints in glory. They teach him his trade and business in the world, but never how to serve God, and be saved. They chide him for those faults which are against themselves, or against his prosperity in the world, but those that are against God and his soul only, they regard not. If they do not by their own example teach him to be prayerless, and neglect God's word, to curse, to swear, to speak filthily, and to deride a holy life, (which in baptism he vowed to live,) yet they will bear with him in all this wickedness. The Lord's day they are content that he spend in idleness and sports, instead of learning the word of God, and practising his holy worship, that so he may be the willinger to do their work the week following. In a word, they treacherously teach their children to serve the flesh, the world, and the devil, which in their baptism they renounced, and to neglect, if not despise, God, the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of souls, to whom by vow and covenant they were dedicated. So that their education is but a teaching or permitting them to break and contradict their baptismal vow, and, under the name of Christians, to rebel against God and Jesus Christ.

And is not this greater treachery and cruelty than if they famished their bodies, or turned them naked into the world? Yea, or if they murdered them, and eat their flesh? If an enemy did this, it were not so bad as for a parent to do it. Nay, consider whether the devil himself be not less cruel, in seeking to damn them, than these parents are? The devil is not their parent: he hath no relation to them, no charge of them to edu-

cate and save them. He is a known renounced enemy, and what better could be expected from him? But for father and mother, thus to neglect, betray, and undo their children's souls for ever! For them to do it, that should love them as themselves, and have the tenderest care of them! O worse than devilish, perfidious cruelty!

Repent, repent, O you forsworn, unmerciful murderers of your children's souls! Repent for your own sakes! Repent for their sakes! And yet teach them and remember them of the covenant which they made, and tell them what Christianity is. You have conveyed a sinful nature to them: help yet to instruct them in the way of grace. But how can we hope that you should have mercy upon your children's souls, that have no mercy on your own? Or that you should help them to that heaven which you despise yourselves? Or save them from sin, which is your own delight and trade?

S. Your complaint is sad and just: but I find that men think that the teaching of their children belongeth to the schoolmaster and the minister only, and not to them.

P. Parents, schoolmasters, and pastors, have all their severa. parts to do, and no one's work goeth on well without the rest. But the parents' is the first and greatest of all. As when the lower school is to teach children to read, and the grammar school to teach them grammar, and then the university to teach them the sciences. If now the first and second shall omit their parts, and a boy shall be sent to the university before he can read, yea, or before he hath learned his grammar, what a scholar do you think that he is like to make? If you have a house to build, one must fell and square the timber, and another must saw it, and another frame it, and then rear it, but if the first be undone, how shall the second and third be done? A minister should find all his hearers catechised and holily educated, that the church may be a church indeed, but if a hundred or many hundred parents and masters will all cast their work upon one minister, is it like, think you, to be well done? Or is it any wonder if we have ungodly churches of Christians that are no Christians, who hate the minister, and his doctrine, and a holy life; and the physician that would heal their souls is beholden to them, if they do not deride him, and lay him not in the gaol.

I know that all this will not excuse ministers from doing what they can for such. If you will send your children and servants ignorant and ungodly to him, he must do his best; but O how

much more good might he do, and how comfortable would his calling be, if parents would but do their parts.

We talk much of the badness of the world, and there are no men (except bad rulers and pastors) that do more to make it bad, than bad parents and family governors. The truth is, they are the devil's instruments, (as if he had hired them,) to betray the souls of their families into his power, and to lead them to hell with a greater advantage than a stranger could do, or than the devil in his own name and shape could do.

Many call for church reformation, and state reformation, who yet are the plagues of the times themselves, and will not reform one little family. If men would reform their families, and agree in a holy education of their children, church and state would be soon reformed, when they were made up of such reformed families.

S. I pray you set me down such instructions together, as you think best, concerning all my duty to my children, that I may do my part; and if any of them perish, their damnation may not be along of me.

P. I. Be sure that you do your part in entering them at first into the baptismal covenant. That is, 1. See that you be true to your covenant yourself, for the promise is made to^t true Christians and their seed. No man can sincerely and rightly consent to the covenant for his child, that doth not consent to it for himself. 2. Do not think that his^u bare being the child of godly parents is his full condition of right to the benefits of the covenant. That is but the fundamental part: but you must also actually dedicate him to God in baptism, when it may be had: and when it cannot, yet in the same covenant which baptism solemniseth. As you are a believer, he and all that you have are virtually devoted to God; but besides that, there must be an actual dedication of him. The child of a believer, actually offered or dedicated to God, is a rightful receiver of baptism and its benefits. 3. Understand well the covenant and what you do: and first humble yourself for your own sins against the holy covenant; and then with the greatest seriousness and thankfulness, enter your child into the same covenant.

II. Understand, that as his first condition of right is upon your faith and consent, and not upon his own, so the continu-

^t Rom. vii. 12, 16—18; Eph. ii. 13; Gen. xvii. 4, 13, 14.

^u Deut. xxix. 10—12; Rom. xi. 17, 20; John iii. 3, 5; Matt. xix. 3, 14, and xxviii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. vii. 14.

ance of his right, while he is an infant short of the use of reason, cannot be upon any condition to be performed by him, but by you, which is the continuance of your own^{*} fidelity, with your faithful endeavours for his holy education. And, therefore, if you should send a baptised child to be educated as the janisaries among infidels, he falleth, as I think, from his covenant-right by your perfidiousness. And what forfeiture parents' gross neglect at home may make, I leave to further consideration.

III. [†] Teach them, therefore, to know what covenant they have made, and do by them just as I have done by you. Cease not till you have brought them heartily to consent to it at age themselves; and then bring them to the pastor of the church, that they may seriously and solemnly own the covenant, and so may be admitted into the number of adult communicating members, in a regular way.

IV. Let your teaching of them to this end be jointly of the words, the sense, the due affections, and the practice. That is, 1. Teach them^{*} the words of the covenant, and of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and Commandments, and of a catechism, and also the words of such texts of Scripture as have the same sense. 2. Teach them the meaning of all these words. 3. Join still some familiar, earnest persuasions and motives, to stir up holy affections in them. 4. And show them the way of practising all.

No one or two of these will serve without all the rest. 1. If you teach not the forms of wholesome or sound words, you will deprive them of one of the greatest helps for knowledge and soundness in the faith. 2. If you teach them not the meaning, the words will be of no use. 3. If you excite not their affections, all will be but dead opinion, and tend to a dreaming and prating kind of religion, separated from the love of God. 4. And if you lead them not on to the practice of all, they will make themselves a religion of zealous affections corrupted by a common life, or quickly starved for want of fuel. Therefore be sure you join all four. When you teach them the words of Scripture and catechism, make them plain, and often mix familiar questions and discourse about death, and judgment, and eternity, and their preparations. Many professors teach their

^{*} Mark through all the Scriptures, how God useth the children as related to their faithful or faithless parents.

[†] Jos. xxiv. 15—18; Deut. xlix. 10, 11.

[‡] 1 Tim. iv. 6, and vi. 3; 2 Tim. i. 13.

children to go in a road of hearing, reading, and repeating sermons, and joining in constant prayer, when all proveth but customary formality, for want of some familiar, serious, wakening speech or conference interposed now and then.

To this end, 1. Labour to possess them with the greatest reverence of God and the holy Scriptures; and then show them the word of God, for all that you would teach them to know or do; for till their consciences come under the fear and government of God, they will be nothing. 2. Never speak of God and holy things to them but with the greatest gravity and reverence, that the manner, as well as the matter, may affect them; for if they are used once to slight, or jest, or play with holy things, they are hardened and undone. 3. Therefore avoid such kind of frequencies and formality in lifeless duties, as tendeth to harden them into a customary deadness and contempt. 4. Often take an account of what they know, and how they are affected and resolved; and what they do, both in their open and their secret practice. Leave them not carelessly to themselves, but narrowly watch over them.

V. Use all your skill and diligence, by word and deed, to make a holy life appear to them as it is, the most honourable, profitable, safe, and pleasant life in the world, that it may be their constant delight. All your work lieth in making good things pleasant to them; and keep them from feeling religion as a burden, or taking it for a disgraceful, needless, or unpleasant thing. To which end, 1. Begin with, and intermix the easiest parts, such as the Scripture history. Nature is pleased sooner with history than with precept, and it sweetly insinuateth a love of goodness into children's minds, which maketh the Roman fathers of the oratorian order make church history one part of their exercise to the people. Let them read the lives of holy men, written by Mr. Clark, and his martyrology; and the particular lives of Mr. Bolton, Mr. Joseph Allein, Dr. Beard's 'Theatre of God's Judgments,' Mr. Janeway's Life, &c.

2. Speak much of the praise of ancient and later holy men, for the due praise of the person allureth to the same cause and way. And speak of the just disgrace that belongs to those sots and beasts, who are the despisers, deriders, and enemies of godliness.

3. Overwhelm them not with that which for quality or quantity they cannot bear.

4. Be much in opening to them the riches of grace, and the joys of glory.

5. Exercise them much in psalms and praise.

VI. Let your conference and carriage tend to the just disgrace of sensuality, voluptuousness, pride, and worldliness. When fools commend fineness to their children, do you tell them how pride is the devil's sin; teach them to desire the lowest room, and to give place to others. When others tell them of riches, and fine houses, and preferments, do you tell them that these are the devil's baits, by which he stealeth men's hearts from God, that they may be damned. When others pamper them, and please their appetites, do you often tell them how base and swinish a thing it is to eat and drink more by appetite than by reason; and labour thus to make pride, sensuality, and worldliness, odious to them. Make them often read Luke xii. xvi. xviii.; and James iv. and v.; and Rom. viii. 1, 2, &c.; and Matt. v. 1—21; and vi.

VII. Wisely break them from their own wills, and let them know that they must obey and like God's will and your's. Men's own wills are the grand idols of the world, and to be given up to them is next to hell. Tell them how odious and dangerous self-willedness is. In their diet let them not have what they have a mind to, nor yet do not force them to what they loathe; but use them to stand to your choice. And let them have that in temperance which is wholesome, and not loathsome, and rather of the coarser, than of the finer, or the sweeter sort. A corrupted appetite, strengthened by custom, is hardly overcome by all the teaching and counsel in the world; especially use them not to strong drink, for it is one of the greatest snares to youth. I know that some wise parents (wise to further the everlasting ruin of the children's souls) do still say, that the more they are restrained, the more greedily they will seek it when they are at liberty. Unhappy children that have such parents! As if the experience of all the world had not told us long ago, that custom increaseth the rage of appetite, and temperance by custom turneth to a habit. And in those years of youth, while they are restrained, we have time to tell them the reason of all, and so settle their minds in a right government of themselves; so that custom and teaching, till they come to age, is the means on our part to save them from sensuality and damnation. When they that will teach them sobriety with the cup at their noses, or temperance at a constant feast or full table of delicious food, and this in their injudicious youth, deserve rather to be numbered with the devil's teachers than with God's.

So if their fancies be eagerly set upon any vanity deny it them, and tell them why. Use them not to have their wills, and let them know that it is the chief thing that the devil himself desireth for them, that they may have all their own carnal will fulfilled. But they must pray to God, "Thy will be done," and deny their own.

VIII. As you love their souls, keep them as far from temptations as you can. Children are unfit persons to struggle against strong temptations. Their salvation or damnation lieth very much on this; therefore my heart melteth to think of the misery of two sorts: 1. The children of heathens, infidels, heretics, and malignants, who are taught the principles of sin and wickedness from their infancy, and hear truth and godliness scorned and reproached. 2. The children of most great men and gentlemen, whose condition maketh it seem necessary to them to live in that continual fulness, or plainly pomp and idleness, which is so strong a temptation daily to their children, to the sins of Sodom, (Ezek. xvi. 49,) pride, fulness of bread, and idleness, as that it is hard for them to be godly, sober persons, as for those that are bred up in playhouses, alehouses, and taverns. Alas, poor children, that must have your salvation made as hard as a camel's passage through a needle's eye! No wonder if the world be no better than it is, when the rich must be the rulers of it, of whom ^a Christ and James have said what they have done.

Be sure, therefore, 1. To breed your children to a temperate and healthful diet; and keep tempting meats, but specially drinks, from before them.

2. Breed them up to constant labour, which may never leave mind or body idle, but at the hours of necessary recreation which you allow them.

3. Let their recreations be such as tend more to the health of their bodies, than the humouring of a corrupted fancy; keep them from gaining for money, from cards, dice, and stage-plays, play-books and love-books, and foolish wanton tales and ballads. Let their time be stinted by you; and let it be no more than what is needful to their health and labour, as whetting to the mower.

4. Let their apparel be plain, decent, and warm, but not gaudy; neither such as useth to signify pride, or to tempt people to it.

^a Luke xii. 19, and xvi.; Jam. v.

5. Be sure when they grow towards ripeness, that you keep them from opportunity, nearness, or familiarity, with tempting persons of another sex.

I am sure this is the way to your children's safety. If presumptuous, self-conceited persons, especially the rich, will despise such counsel, as they use to do, let them take what they get by it: if the gentry be debauched, if their children be everlastingly undone, if the whole country, church, and state, must suffer by it, and if their own hearts at last be broken by such children, it is not along of me; let them thank themselves.

IX. Be sure that you engage your children in good company, and keep them as much as possible out of bad. Wicked children, before you are aware, will infect them with their wicked tongues and practices: they will quickly teach them to drink, to game, to talk filthily, to swear, to mock at godliness and sobriety: and, oh, what tinder is in corrupted nature!

But the company of sober, pious children and servants will use them to a sober, pious language, and will further them in knowledge and the fear of God, or at least will keep them from great temptations.

X. Do all that you do with them in love and wisdom: make them not so familiar with you as shall breed contempt: and be not so strange to them as shall tempt them to have no love to you, or pleasure in your company. But let them perceive the tender bowels of parents, and that, indeed, they are dear to you, and that all your counsel and government is for their good, and not for any ends or passions of your own. And give them familiarly the reason of all which they are apt to be prejudiced against. For love and reason must be the means of most of the good that you do them.

XI. Keep a special watch upon their tongues, especially against ribaldry and lying; for dangerous corruptions do quickly this way obtain dominion.

XII. Teach them highly to value time: tell them the preciousness of it, by reason of the shortness of man's life, the greatness of his work, and how eternity dependeth on these uncertain moments. Labour to make time-wasting odious to them. And set death still before their eyes; and ask them oft, whether they are ready to die.

XIII. Use them much to the reading of the most suitable books: such as Mr. Richard Allen's, Mr. Joseph Allen's, Mr. Whateley's New Birth, and Redemption of Time; Mr. Gurnal,

Mr. Bolton, Dr. Preston, Dr. Sibbes, Mr. Perkins, Dod, Hildersham ; of which more anon.

XIV. Let correction be wisely used, as they need it ; neither so severely as to disaffect them to you, nor so little as to leave them in a course of sin and disobedience. Let it be always in love ; and more for sin against God, than any worldly matters ; and show them Scripture against the sin, and for the correction.

XV. Pray earnestly for them, and commit them by faith to Christ, into whose covenant you did engage them.

XVI. Go before them by a holy and sober example, and let your practice tell them what you would have them be, specially in representing godliness delightful, and living in the joyful hopes of heaven.

XVII. Choose such trades and callings for them as have least dangerous temptations, and as tend most to the saving of their souls, and to make them most useful in the world, and not those that tend most to the ease of the flesh, or worldly ends.

XVIII. When they are marriageable, and you find it needful, provide such for them as are truly suitable, and stay not till folly and lust ensnare them.

These are the counsels which I earnestly recommend to you in this important work. But you must know that your children's souls are so precious, and the difference between the good and bad so great, that all this must not seem too much ado to you : but as you would have ministers hold on in the labour of their places, so must you in yours, as knowing that a dumb and idle parent is no more excusable, than an unfaithful, dumb and idle minister. The Lord give you skill, and will, and diligence, to practise all : for I take the due education of children for one of the most needful and most excellent works in the world, especially for mothers.

S. I pray you, next tell me my duty to my wife, and her duty to me.

P. I. The common duty of husband and wife is, 1. Entirely to ^b love each other ; and therefore choose one that is truly lovely, and proceed in your choice with great deliberation ; and avoid all things that tend to quench your love.

2. To dwell together, and ^c enjoy each other, and faithfully join as helpers in the education of their children, the government of the family, and the management of their worldly business.

^b Eph. v. 25, &c. ; Col. iii. 19.

^c 1 Cor. vii. 29.

3. Especially to be helpers of each other's salvation : to stir up each other to faith, love, and obedience, and good works : to warn and help each other against sin, and all temptations : to join in God's worship in the family, and in private : to prepare each other for the approach of death, and comfort each other in the hopes of life eternal.

4. To avoid all dissensions, and to bear with those infirmities in each other which you cannot cure : to assuage, and not provoke, unruly passions ; and, in lawful things, to please each other.

5. To keep conjugal chastity and fidelity, and to avoid all unseemly and immodest carriage with any other, which may stir up jealousy ; and yet to avoid all jealousy which is unjust.

6. To help one another to bear their burdens (and not by impatience to make them greater). In poverty, crosses, sickness, dangers, to comfort and support each other. And to be delightful companions in holy love, and heavenly hopes and duties, when all other outward comforts fail.

S. II. What are the special duties of the husband ?

P. They are, 1. To exercise love and authority together (never separated) to his wife. 2. To be the chief teacher and governor of the family, and provider for its maintenance. 3. To excel the wife in^d knowledge and patience, and to be her teacher and guide in the matters of God, and to be the chief in bearing infirmities and trials. 4. To keep up the wife's authority and honour in the family over inferiors.

S. III. What are the special duties of the wives ?

P. 1. ^eTo excel in love. 2. To be obedient to their husbands, and examples therein to the rest of the family. 3. Submissively to learn of their husbands (that can teach them) and not to be self-conceited, teaching, talkative, or imperious. 4. To subdue their passions, deny their own fancies and wills, and not to tempt their husbands to satisfy their humours and vain desires in pride, excess, revenge, or any evil, nor to rob God and the poor by a proud and wasteful humour (as the^f wives of gentlemen ordinarily do). 5. To govern their tongues, that their words may be few, and grave, and sober ; and to abhor a running and a scolding tongue. 6. To be contented in

^d 1 Pet. iii. 7.

^e 1 Tim. iii. 11, 12 ; Zech. xii. 14 ; 1 Pet. iii. 1 ; Col. iii. 19 ; Eph. v. 22, 24 ; Tit. ii. 4, 5 ; 1 Cor. vii. 16.

^f Jer. xlv. 9.

every condition, and not to torment their husbands and themselves with impatient murmurings. 7. To avoid the childish vanity of gaudy apparel, and following vain fashions of the prouder sort; and to abhor their vice that waste precious time in curious and tedious dressings, gossipings, visits, and feasts. 8. To help on the maintenance of the family by frugality, and by their proper care and labour. 9. Not to dispose of their husband's estate without his consent, either explicit or implicit. 10. Above all, to be constant helpers of the holy education of their children. For this is the most eminent service that women can do in the world; and it is so great that they have no cause to grudge at God for the lowness of their place and gifts, for mean gifts (with wisdom and godliness) may serve to speak to children. The mother is still with them, and they are still under her eye; her love must chiefly work towards their salvation. She must be daily catechising them, and teaching them to know God, and speaking to them for holiness and against sin, and minding them of the world to come, and teaching them to pray. Godly mothers may educate children for magistracy, ministry, and all public services, by helping them to that honest and holy disposition, which is the chief thing necessary in every relation to the common good; and so they may become chief instruments of the reformation and welfare of churches and kingdoms, and of the world.

S. I pray you tell me, also, the duty of children?

P. I. The duty of ^s children to their parents is, 1. To love them dearly, and to be thankful for all their love and care, which they can never requite. 2. To learn of them submissively, especially the doctrine of salvation. 3. To obey them diligently in all lawful things, and that for conscience' sake, in obedience to God. 4. To ^h honour them in thought, and words, and actions; and avoid all appearance of slighting, dishonour, or contempt. 5. To be contented with their parents' allowance and provisions, and willing and ready to such labour or employment as they command them. 6. To take patiently the reproofs and corrections of their parents, and to confess their faults with humble penitence, and amend. 7. To use such company as their parents command them, and not to run into the company of vain and tempting persons. 8. To be content with such a calling as their

^s Eph. vi. 1—3; Col. iii. 20; Prov. i. 8, 9; xiii. 1, and xxiii. 22.

^h Gen. ix. 22, 25; Prov. xxx. 17; xlii. 21; xxii. 15; xxix. 15; xxlii. 13, 14, and xix. 18.

parents choose for them. 9. To marry by their parents' choice or consent only. 10. To relieve their parents, if they need.

S. What is the duty of children towards God?

P. II. 1. To learn what they are by nature, and what that covenant was which in baptism they were entered into; what are the duties, and what the benefits; and to renew that covenant with¹ God themselves, and understandingly, seriously, and resolvedly to give up themselves absolutely and entirely to God the Father, Son, and Spirit, their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. 2. To remember that the corruption of their nature must be more and more healed, and their sins forgiven; and, therefore, daily, by faith and obedience, to make use of the justifying, teaching, and sanctifying grace of Christ. 3. To remember that they are not here entering upon a life of rest, or sinful pleasure, but upon a short, uncertain life of care, and labour, and sufferings, in which they must do all that ever must be done, for an everlasting life that followeth; and that to make sure of heaven is their work on earth. 4. To love and learn the word of God, and to delight in all that is good and holy, especially on the Lord's days. 5. To see that they love not fleshly pleasures more than God and holiness, and that they fly from² youthful lusts, from excess of eating, drinking, and sports; that they avoid wantonness, and immodesty of speech or action, cards or dice, gaming, pride, love-books, play-books, loss of time by needless recreation. 6. That they use their tongues to sober and godly speech, and abhor lying, railing, ribaldry, and idle, foolish talk. 7. To subdue their wills to the will of God and their superiors, and not to be eagerly set on any thing which is unnecessary, or which God or their superiors forbid them.

S. What is the duty of masters towards their servants?

P. 1. To¹ rule them with such gentleness as becometh fellow Christians; and yet, with such authority as that they be not encouraged to contempt. 2. To restrain them from sinning against God. 3. To instruct them in the doctrine of salvation, and pray with them, and go before them by the example of a sober, holy life. 4. To keep them from evil company, and temptations, and opportunities of sinning. 5. To set them upon meet labours; to keep no idle serving-men, nor yet to over-labour them to the injury of their health, nor command them

¹ Eccl. xii. 1.

² 2 Tim. ii. 22; Prov. vii. 7, 8; Luke xv. 12, &c.

³ Eph. vi. 9, 10; Col. iv. 1—8.

any unlawful thing. 6. To provide them such food and lodging as is wholesome and meet for them; and to pay them what wages is due to them by promise or desert. 7. Patiently to bear with daily infirmities, and such frailties as must be expected in mankind.

S. What is the duty of servants towards their masters?

P. 1. ^m To honour and reverence them, and obey them in all lawful things belonging to their places to command; and to avoid all words and carriage which savour of dishonour, contempt, or disobedience. 2. Willingly to perform all the labour which they undertake and is required of them, and that without grudging; and to be as faithful behind their master's back as before his face. 3. To be trusty in word and deed; to abhor lying and deceit; not to wrong their masters in buying or selling, or by stealing, or taking any thing of theirs, no not meat or drink, against their will; but being as thrifty and careful of their master's profit as if it were their own. 4. Not to murmur at the meanness of food that is wholesome, nor to desire a life of fulness, ease, and idleness. 5. To be more careful to do their duty to their masters than how their masters shall use them; because sin is worse than suffering. 6. Not to reveal the secrets of the family abroad, to strangers or neighbours. 7. Thankfully to receive instruction, and to learn God's word, and observe the Lord's day, and seriously join in public and private worshipping of God. 8. Patiently to bear reproof and due correction, and to confess faults, and amend. 9. To pray daily for a blessing on the family, on their labours, and on themselves. 10. And to do all this in true obedience to God, expecting their reward from him.

S. What is the duty of children and servants to one another?

P. 1. To provoke one another to all their duty to God, and to their parents and masters. 2. To help one another in knowledge, and all the means of salvation, especially by godly, profitable conference, when they are together. 3. To save each other from sin and temptation, by loving advice; and to take heed that they be not tempters to each other, either to lust, and wanton dalliance, and unchaste speech or actions, or to excess of meat or drink, or idleness, or deceiving their master, or, by passionate words, provoking wrath; but that they assuage the passions of each other, and keep peace in the family. 4.

^m 1 Pet. ii. 18; Tit. ii. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2; Col. iii. 22—25; Eph. vi. 5—8; Matt. x. 24.

To love each other as themselves, and do as they would be done by; and not to envy one another, nor strive who shall have the most, or who shall be nighest, but humbly to submit to one another, and be helpful to each other in their labour and every way they can. 5. To bear patiently with little injuries to themselves; and open none of the faults of each other, when it tendeth but to stir up strife, and do no good. 6. But conceal not those faults which by concealment will be cherished, and whose concealment hindereth the right government of the family, or tendeth to the master's wrong. But in sins against God, first admonish each other privately; if that prevail not, reprove it before others; if that prevail not, acquaint your master with it.

S. Now, you have gone so far, tell us our duty to our neighbours?

P. Your duty to your neighbours lieth in love and justice. 1. To love them as yourself. 2. To do as you would be done by; for which the six last commandments are your rule. Your love must be exercised, 1. Towards their souls in furthering their salvation, by drawing them to hear God's word, helping them to good books, giving them seasonable, wise, and serious exhortations, and by the example of a holy, blameless life. 2. Towards their bodies, by doing them all the good you can, and doing them no wrong, nor speaking evil of them, nor provoking or scandalizing them, but patiently bearing and forgiving injuries from them.

S. And what is the duty of subjects to magistrates?

P. 1. To reverence and honour them as the officers of God, and speak not dishonourably of them. 2. To pay them in due tribute, and to protect them to your power in your place. 3. To obey them in all lawful things,^a which it belongeth to their several powers, places, and offices to command. 4. To provoke others to the same obedience. 5. To avoid all conspiracies, seditions, treasons and rebellions, and resistance of the higher powers;^o and patiently to suffer where God forbiddeth us to obey. 6. To approve and further the execution of true justice. 7. To detect and resist all treasons, conspiracies, and rebellions in others. 8. To do all this for conscience' sake, in obedience to God, and for the common good.

S. Must I not obey all the laws and commands of rulers?

P. 1. No: you must obey none which command you any thing which God forbiddeth; or which forbid you any thing

Rom. xiii. 1—7.

^o Tit. iii. 1, 2; 1 Tim. ii. 2.

which is at that time and place your duty by God's command ; nor that which certainly and notoriously tendeth to the destruction of the common good, unless, accidentally, any obedience of your's, to a particular command, be like to do more good than hurt, as to that end.

S. Will you next lay me down distinct directions how to spend every day in my family and by myself?

P. I will not set you upon too much, nor upon any unnecessary task, lest I hinder you while I seem to help you. 1. Let the time of your sleep be so much only as health requireth,^p for precious time is not to be wasted in unnecessary sluggishness.

2. Let your heart be so disposed Godward, that your waking thoughts may make out towards him.^q Lift up a thankful heart for your night's rest unto him, and think what a blessed rest you shall have in the presence of his glory, and how great a privilege it is to be in his love, and under his protection ; and, if you have company, speak these thoughts to others.

3. Quickly dress you, and use no vain attire that shall steal your time :^r but if sickness or other necessity make it long, either let one of your children read a chapter till you are ready, or let some suitable meditation or discourse take up the time.

4. If you have leisure, go presently to prayer by yourself, or with your wife. If you have not, at least put in the same requests in your family prayer, especially if you be the family's mouth.

5. Let family worship be kept up twice a-day, unless some extraordinary necessity hinder it, at the most convenient hours of the day.

6. Do all your business as the work of God more than your own, and nothing but what it is his will that you should do, that you may expect from him both protection and reward ; and oft renew your devotion of yourself, and all your business, to him, and your actual intending to please and glorify him.

7. Highly value all your time ; and follow your labours with constant diligence, believing that it is part of your service of God ; six days must you labour and do all that you have to do. Idleness is the ruin of soul, body, and estate.

8. Be well acquainted with your special corruptions, and the special temptations of every day ; and never intermit your watch against them .

9. If you labour alone, take in such seasonable meditations as you need, and your business will permit, but turn it to good conference if you are in company : not so as to think and talk of

^p Prov. vi. 9, 10 ; John i. 6.

^q Psalm cxxxix. 18.

^r 1 Pet. iii. 3.

nothing else, to turn all to weariness or affected formality, but at reasonable times, and in a serious manner; and talk not of small matters, but of heart and heaven affairs.

10. Crave God's blessing upon your food, and return him thanks for it. Receive it, not chiefly to please your appetite, but to strengthen you as a servant of God, for your duty; and for quality and quantity avoid^{*} flesh-pleasing curiosity and excess, and make your health and reason, and not your appetite, the measure of both. Write over your table "Behold, this was the iniquity of Sodom; pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." (Ezek. xvi. 49.) And, "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and silk, and fared sumptuously every day." "Son, remember that thou, in thy life-time, receivedst thy good things," &c. (Luke vi. 12, 25.) "Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts (or desires) thereof." (Rom. xiii. 14.)

11. At evening, return to your food, and to God's worship in your family; and in secret, if you have time, as was directed you in the morning.

12. At night, look back how you have spent the day: not to waste time in writing down all sins and mercies which are ordinary (for the same coming daily to be repeated will turn all to formality): but to have a special thankfulness for special mercies, and a special repentance for great or aggravated sin, yea, for all that you remember. And quickly rise, by free confession, repentance, and faith, where you have fallen: and so betake yourself to rest,[†] with a holy confidence in God's protection, and delightful meditation of him.

S. You tell me of family worship twice a day. I pray you tell me how I must perform it.

P. 1. With a composed, reverent mind, having all your family together that can come, briefly crave God's assistance and acceptance. 2. Then read a chapter, and, if you have leisure, some leaves of some other good book, or else bid them mark such passages as most concern them as they go. 3. Before or after sing a psalm, if you have a family that can sing; if not, read some psalms of praise. 4. Then, in faithful, fervent prayer, call on God through Jesus Christ, in his Spirit: and so at evening.

S. I pray you resolve me these few questions. Quest. 1. How oft in a day must I pray in my family?

P. God hath not punctually determined just how oft: therefore

^{*} Prov. xxxi. 4, 6.

[†] Psalm iv. 7—9.

you must not superstitiously feign more commands than he hath made. But the general commands of praying continually, and in all things, with the final law, 'Do all to edification,' and the nature of families, and their necessities and opportunities, and Scripture examples, do fully prove that, ordinarily, twice a-day is a duty; which, because I must not here stay to prove, read the full proof in the second part of my 'Christian Directions.' Keep up the life of grace within, and sense of your necessity, and of the worth of mercy, and keep up the experience what lively prayer and thanksgiving is, and it will preserve you against the libertines' opinion, who cry down constant worship in families, as superstition.

S. 2. At what hour must I pray?

P. God hath not tied you to an hour by Scripture; but his providence will direct you. Usually, early and late are fittest; but if all families have not the same employments nor leisure, that hour must be chosen which family occasions, and bodily temper, and company, do make most fit.

S. 3. Must I pray in secret with my wife, and in my family too, twice every day?

P. Only the general rule of edification, with your conveniences and opportunities, must here also direct you. Family prayer is of the greatest necessity; because there each person is contained. But secret prayer hath great advantages: the heart is there more free to open its particular sins and wants; and they that can do all, must do them. But if you cannot, you must rather take up with family prayer alone, than secret alone.

S. What do you mean by "cannot?" Must not all business give place to secret prayer?

P. No. There are businesses of greater obligation which must be preferred. Learn what this meaneth: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." A physician, in case of necessity, may omit all prayer, to go help to save a sick man's life. So may any man, to relieve the poor and miserable when it cannot be put off to another time; so may a magistrate to do justice; and so may a pastor, to preach to the congregation, when he hath not time to do both. And poor men, that cannot spare time from their labour, are not bound to spend as much time in reading and prayer as rich men are, who have fuller opportunities.

2. But the case of those who are the speakers in family prayer, much differeth from the case of them that join; for he that speaketh may put up all the same requests in the family as he may do in secret; and therefore a greater duty may oftener dis-

pense with his secret prayer: for it is not to be used as a formality. But he that joineth with the speaker hath not the choice of his own matter, nor can so easily keep up a praying mind, without distractions, as he can do when he speaketh himself. Therefore, (avoiding superstitious conceits, and making laws to ourselves, as God's, which he hath not made,) secret prayer is so great a duty, that every man must use it as oft as other duties at that time are not to be preferred; but will give leave. And some can find time for it (with meditation) in their labour, and travel, when they are alone.

S. 4. Is long or short prayer to be preferred?

P. The general rule, also, must direct you in this. It varieth the case, as times, and persons, and occasions vary. When no greater duty (at that time) putteth you off, you can scarce be too long, if you continue fit for it in mind and expression; but when other duties call you off, or you cannot be long without unmeet expressions and repetitions before others, or without your own or the family's dullness and unfitness, shorter, at that time, may be the best. But see that formal affectation be not the lengthener of your prayers, nor carnal weariness the shortener of them; at least, do not justify either of these.

S. 5. Is it better to pray by a set form, or book, or without, as I am able to express my desires?

P. God hath not made you a law against either, but left every man the way that is fittest for him.

S. How shall I know which is fittest for me?

P. 1. In secret, usually, it is best to use yourself ofttest to pray freely, from the present sense of your condition, that you may be able to do it; and vary as occasion serveth. For the best man's mind is apt to grow dull in using the same words an hundred times over: as a music lesson, played too oft, doth become less pleasing; and it will not cure us, to say that it should not be so.

2. Therefore, also, you should learn to pray freely, from an habit, before others also, as soon as you can.

3. But till you can do it without disgraceful expressions, repetitions, and disorders, it is better in your family to use a book, or form.

4. If in public, or secret, any one find that a form, having more fit, large, and lively expressions than he can have himself without it, doth quicken and enlarge him, he may best use it; but if it more bind and straiten him, he may forbear it.

I will add these two advices here. 1. Settle not yourself in

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.