

THE

YOUNG COMMUNICANT'S

CATECHISM,

REV. JOHN WILLISON.



WITH

Questions and Counsel

FOR

YOUNG CONVERTS.

By REV. ASHBEL GREEN, D.D. LL.D.



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RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Rev. Mr. Willison's *Young Communicant's Catechism* has been so long before the Public, has passed through so many editions, and is so highly esteemed for its piety and judiciousness, that recommendation seems now to be unnecessary. I am glad to learn that another American edition of it is projected. It certainly merits an extensive sale, and I cannot doubt, will command it.

Princeton, June 23, 1831.

SAM'L MILLER, D.D.
Prof. Princeton Theolo. Sem.

I entirely concur in the statement of Professor Miller in regard to Willison's *Young Communicant's Catechism*. It was the manual I usually recommended to my young candidates for communion, when, for more than five and twenty years, I was a pastor of a church in this city. I hope it will be extensively circulated.

Phila. June 29, 1831.

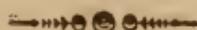
ASHBEL GREEN, D.D. LL.D.

Willison's Young Communicant's Catechism can be safely recommended as an orthodox and pious work; and being both short and plain, may be a very useful help for instructing and preparing the young to make a right approach to the Lord's table.

A. ALEXANDER, D.D.
Prof. Princeton Theol. Sem.

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Pastor of 2d Presbyterian Church, Baltimore.

THE
YOUNG COMMUNICANT'S
CATECHISM.



Concerning Man's Natural Estate.

Quest. In what estate were you born?

Answ. In a woful, miserable estate, wanting the image and favour of God, which man at first had: and with a sinful nature, prone to what is evil, backward to what is good, and exposed to the wrath of God, both here and hereafter.

Q. How came you to be born in this estate?

A. Because of my descent from sinful Adam, who fell from his happiness, by breaking covenant with God, and incurring the penalty thereof; whereby he lost all his grace, and was wholly unable to recover himself.

Q. Is fallen man left without hope in this miserable estate?

A. No: there is a noble remedy provided; for though the *Old Covenant* be broken and dissolved, there is an excellent *New Covenant* contrived, yea, revealed, and tendered unto lost sinners of mankind.

Concerning the two Covenants.

Q. What are these covenants which God hath made with man?

A. The covenant of works, and the covenant of grace.

Q. By which of these two covenants is it that you can be saved?

A. Only by the covenant of grace, which is called the New Covenant.

Q. Which is the covenant of works?

A. It is God's agreement with Adam and Eve, wherein he promised them life upon their perfect obedience to his law, and threatened death upon their disobedience.

Q. How can we be charged with Adam's guilt, seeing we were not existent when he sinned?

A. Because, when the covenant was made with Adam, he acted as a public person, representing his whole posterity, who were then in his loins; and thus the covenant being made with them in him, they sinned in him, and fell with him, Rom. 5: 12, 18, 19. 1 Cor. 15: 21, '22.

Q. Why cannot you be saved by the covenant of works?

A. Because I am neither able to fulfil the condition, nor endure the penalty of it; that is, I can neither give perfect obedience to God's law, nor bear his wrath, which is due for breaking it.

Q. Is any man now able to answer the demands of the covenant of works?

A. No; for, as we have lost our strength to perform its condition, so it is impossible for any created power to pay its penalty, or give satisfaction to infinite justice for the offence of sin.

Q. But how is it consistent with justice to require that from us, which we are utterly unable to perform?

A. Though we, by our own fault, have lost our strength to obey, yet God doth not thereby lose his just right to demand what belongs to him. A creditor loseth not his right to crave a just debt, because the debtor has squandered away his stock and is turned bankrupt; nay, he is still liable, and his children too. So, in this case, being

unable to pay, will not absolve us from our debt; especially seeing the inability is brought on by ourselves.

Q. What is the covenant of grace, by which you are to be saved?

A. It is God's gracious covenant with sinners in Christ, in which he is pleased mercifully to offer and promise salvation to all poor fallen sinners of Adam's race, who believe in his Son Jesus Christ.

Q. Who are those that truly believe in him?

A. They are such, who, being made sensible of their low estate, are content to receive Jesus Christ as their surety and Saviour, and to depend upon his righteousness and satisfaction to divine justice, as the only ground of their justification before God, and are resolved in his strength to show forth their faith, by a sincere love and obedience to God.

Q. Why is this new covenant called a covenant of grace?

A. To distinguish it from the covenant of works, wherein the ground of a man's justification is something done by the man himself: whereas, in this new covenant, the ground of a man's justification is something done by a surety in his room; and also because the surety himself, and all the blessings of this covenant, are most gracious and free gifts bestowed by God upon undeserving and ill-deserving creatures, who could do nothing to obtain them.

Q. How can this covenant be altogether of grace when faith is required of us as the condition to interest us in the blessings of it, and likewise good works to show forth our faith?

A. Though both of these be required of us, yet the grace for producing that faith and those works is promised to us in this covenant as freely as any other blessing in it; upon which account this cove-

nant is frequently called in scripture a Testament.

Q. Why is this covenant called a Testament ?

A. Because all the blessings and good things promised therein, are freely bequeathed and made over to sinners as legacies left and made sure to them by the death of Jesus Christ the Testator ? and also, in it there is grace left them to perform all the duties required of them.

Q. What are the principal legacies of this Testament ?

A. Pardon of sin, deliverance from wrath, peace with God, all the graces of the Spirit, with perseverance therein to the end ; safety through death, resurrection to life, and eternal glory.

Q. How is it that this covenant or testament is established and confirmed to us ?

A. By the death and blood of Jesus Christ, the Mediator and Testator of it ; and by the outward signs and seals which he hath instituted to be dispensed to us, with the preaching of the gospel.

Concerning the Seals of the Covenant.

Q. What are the seals of the covenant of grace ?

A. The two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's supper.

Q. For what end hath God appointed these sacraments, or seals ?

A. To be sacred signs, memorials, and pledges of his mercy to us through a crucified Jesus, he being the great surety and sacrifice, to which we are directed constantly to look for pardon, grace, and glory.

Q. Why are baptism and the Lord's supper called seals of the covenant of grace ?

A. Because, like sealed charters, they confirm and assure us of the certainty of the covenant, and all its promised blessings ; and particularly, that God is willing, in and through Christ, to be a God to us, and to take us for his people ;

Q. What is baptism ?

A. It is the sacred washing, or sprinkling with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Q. What is the necessity of baptism ?

A. It is necessary in respect of the command of Christ, who hath appointed it as a sign and seal of his covenant, and an external means of salvation ; and therefore ought to be held in reverence, and sought for with all due care: and to contemn or neglect this ordinance of Christ's institution, is a very heinous sin. Matth. 28: 19. Luke 7:30. Acts 17: 14. Exod. 4: 24, 25.

Q. Who properly have a right to baptism ?

A. All the members of the visible church, and their infants, and such only. Acts 2: 39.

Q. What doth the sprinkling signify ?

A. The cleansing of our souls from sin by Christ's blood and Spirit, and our entering in among the disciples and followers of Christ.

Q. Why are you baptized in the name of the Father ?

A. In testimony of my choosing and owning God the Father, as my Father, and the great contriver of the gospel-method of salvation through Christ.

Q. Why are you baptized in the name of the Son ?

A. In token of my choosing and accepting of the Son of God as my great Redeemer and Saviour, in all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

Q. Why is he especially styled our Saviour ?

A. Because of the eminent hand he hath in the salvation we look for ; he preached it to us as our great Prophet ; he procured it for us as our high Priest ; and bestows it on us as our Lord and King.

Q. Why are you baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost ?

A. In testimony of my owning and accepting of the Holy Ghost as my sanctifier, and the great applier of Christ's purchase to me, whose office it is to work saving faith and all grace in sinners.

Q. What engagement have you come under by your baptism?

A. To believe and obey the holy Trinity, and to renounce the three great enemies thereof, viz. the devil, the world, and the flesh; and to live as a christian indeed, always remembering the name by which I am called.

Q. How is it that a christian or baptized person ought to live?

A. As one that is solemnly consecrated to the faith and obedience of the holy Trinity; and particularly as one that is washed in the blood of the Lamb, who will not again venture to defile himself with sin, but will study to make Christ his pattern.

Q. Are you not bound to renew your baptismal engagements, and to take them upon yourself?

A. Yes, I am; and I do it expressly when I go to take the second seal of the covenant, and partake of the Lord's supper.

Q. What is the difference betwixt baptism and the Lord's supper?

A. The first is to be administered to us but once, but the second often: The first doth signify our spiritual birth; the second our spiritual nourishment: Baptism is the door of Christ's house, by which we must enter; but the Lord's supper is the table at which Christ's children must feed and get strength.

Q. What should be your great design in attending and partaking of these sacraments?

A. That thereby I may show my regard and obedience to the author of them, and that I may

find a crucified Jesus in them, and get myself assured of his love and purchase.

Concerning the Lord's Supper.

Q. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. It is a religious eating of bread and drinking of wine, according to Christ's institution and example, in remembrance of his death and sufferings for us.

Q. When did Christ institute this sacrament?

A. In the same night wherein he was betrayed, and immediately after he had eaten the Jewish passover with his disciples.

Q. Why did he institute it at that time?

A. To show that the passover was abrogated by this new ordinance, and the Lord's supper come in its room; and also to lay all his people under the stronger obligations to observe and attend it.

Q. Why doth the time of the institution lay us under such obligations to observe it?

A. Because the command and directions which he gave us at that time, are to be regarded as the solemn dying charge of a crucified Jesus, who was going to do more for us than all the world could do.

Q. Did Christ enjoin this ordinance as any task or burden on his people?

A. Not at all, but left it as a great privilege and precious legacy to the church, seeing it is a bright memorial of his dying love, a sure pledge of his second coming, and a quickener of all the graces.

Q. What are the elements or signs appointed in this sacrament?

A. Bread and wine.

Q. What do they represent unto us?

A. Christ's body and blood, with all the benefits and blessings thereby purchased to us.

Q. What is signified by the breaking of the bread and pouring of the wine ?

A. All Christ's sufferings, and particularly the breaking and wounding of his body on the cross, and the shedding of his blood, to take away our sins.

Q. What is signified by giving the broken bread and poured out wine to the communicants ?

A. God's actual making over and giving a crucified Christ, with all the benefits of his purchase, to believing partakers.

Q. What are these benefits here made over and sealed unto them ?

A. A remission of sin, freedom from wrath, peace with God, peace of conscience, adoption into God's family, increase of grace, perseverance therein, sanctified mercies and crosses, and a title to eternal life.

Q. What is signified by communicants taking the bread and cup in their hand ?

A. Their putting forth the hand of faith to receive a crucified Christ for their Saviour, in all his offices and with all his benefits, as offered to them in the gospel.

Q. In what manner ought you to receive a crucified Christ at his table ?

A. With much humility, self-denial, thankfulness, and with close and particular application of his offices and fulness to my soul's necessities.

Q. What is signified by communicants eating of the bread and drinking of the wine ?

A. Their near union with Christ, their actual partaking of the benefits of his death, the great satisfaction they have in him, and the spiritual strength and nourishment they get from him.

Q. Why ought communicants to partake of the cup, as well as of the bread ?

A. For the more full confirmation of their faith, and because Christ said to his disciples, drink ye all of it.

Q. What is signified by our receiving of both the elements ?

A. Our taking and receiving Christ wholly, as he is held forth and offered unto us in the gospel, without making exception of any of his offices or demands. We profess hereby that we are satisfied to take Christ as he is, his person, his offices, his benefits, promises, and all that is in him: That we are content with his laws, as well as his love; his precepts, as well as his promises; and his cross as well as his crown.

Q. Why did Christ make choice of bread and wine as the symbols of his body and blood ?

A. To hold forth their refreshing and strengthening virtue to believing communicants; for as bread strengthens man's heart, so wine makes it glad.

Q. What were Christ's words when he instituted the sacrament ?

A. He spoke something concerning the bread, something concerning the cup, and something concerning the whole sacrament.

Q. What spoke he concerning the bread ?

A. He said, take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.

Q. What said he concerning the wine ?

A. This cup is the New-Testament in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Q. What said he concerning the whole sacrament ?

A. He said, as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

Q. Do we partake of Christ's body and blood here in a carnal manner ?

A. No ; but only in a spiritual way.

Q. What is the meaning of these words, Take, eat, this is my body broken for you ?

A. The plain meaning is, that the broken bread signifies and represents Christ's body as it was broken and bruised for his people.

Q. In what manner are we to take Christ and his benefits in this sacrament ?

A. We are to take Christ and all the blessings of his covenant in the following manner: 1. Sincerely and honestly, without dissimulation or hypocrisy, which is a thing most hateful to God.

2. Entirely, fully, and without exception of any thing required of you.

3. With close and particular application, saying, "My Lord, and my God."

4. With thankfulness and praise, stirring up your souls, and all that is within you to bless his holy name.

5. With humility and self-denial, reckoning yourselves unworthy of the least crumb from his table, renouncing all confidence in your preparations, humiliations, or qualifications of any sort, saying, "In the Lord only have I righteousness and strength."

Lastly. We ought to take Christ and his purchase in the sacrament with full assurance of faith; believing that Christ and all the blessings of the covenant, and purchase of his death, are herewith given to us, as really as Christ gives the bread into our hands.

Q. Is not Christ really present in the sacrament?

A. Yes, he is so ; but yet he is not bodily, but spiritually, present there.

Q. How is it we partake spiritually of Christ's broken body ?

A. We do it when our souls do share of the be-

benefits and fruits of his broken body, such as pardon of sin, increase of grace, access to God, spiritual discoveries, freedom from bondage, and the like.

Q. How long did Christ intend this sacrament should continue?

A. Until his coming.

Q. Why no longer?

A. Because in heaven there will be no need of sacraments to represent Christ, he being always there in a bodily way.

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Something more particular of the Nature and Ends of the Holy Supper.

Q. What further account can you give of the nature and design of this sacrament?

A. It doth evidently partake of the nature of a seal, of a feast, and also of an oath.

Q. What hath it of the nature of a seal?

A. It is justly called a seal of the covenant of grace; because, like a sealed charter put into our hands, it doth make over, seal and confirm to us, a right and title to all the benefits and fruits of Christ's purchase, which are therein promised to believers.

Q. What kind of a seal is this sacrament?

A. It is a spiritual seal, and of great value, seeing it is a seal of Christ's own devising and engraving, whose inscription is, Christ loving us; and whose image is, Christ dying for us.

Q. What hath this sacrament in it of the nature of a feast?

A. It is justly called a feast, as it brings food, nourishment, and delight, to the souls of worthy communicants, the invited guests.

Q. What sort of a feast is it?

A. It is a spiritual feast, a marriage feast, a

feast upon the sacrifice of the Son of God ; a feast of Christ's making, of a strange nature, in which Christ is both the master and matter of the feast, the provider and provision, the feeder and the food: for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.

Q. In what respect is this sacrament of the nature of an oath ?

A. In respect the word sacrament was used among the Romans, (from whence it is borrowed) for a military oath, whereby they bound themselves to be true and faithful soldiers to their general ; so in this ordinance we in effect swear allegiance to the King of heaven over the broken body and shed blood of the Son of God, and also bind ourselves to be true and faithful soldiers to Christ our captain-general in the spiritual warfare.

Q. What are the main ends you have in view in coming to this ordinance ?

A. To keep up the remembrance of Christ's death and sufferings, to get communion with him, to renew my baptismal covenant, to get my faith strengthened and confirmed, and all my graces quickened.

Q. What is implied in remembering Christ ?

A. It hath in it, 1. The knowledge of Christ, and the method of redemption through his blood.

2. Some precious acquaintance with him, by a work of grace on the heart, and closing with him by faith.

3. A believing contemplation of his death and sufferings.

4. Such a remembrance as makes deep and suitable impressions on our souls.

Q. What are these sufferings of Christ, which you are to remember at his table ?

A. Those which are recorded in his word.

Q. What do you remember of these just now ?

A. I remember the assaults and temptations he met with from the devil ; the reproaches and persecutions he endured from wicked men ; his soul-sufferings and agonies in the garden of Gethsemane ; the cruel mockings, buffetings, crownings, spittings, and scourgings, he endured in the high-priest's palace, and in Pilate's judgment-hall ; and lastly, his bloody sufferings, and bitter death on Mount Calvary, when he was nailed to the cross, forsaken by his friends, derided by his enemies, and deserted of God.

Q. What was the cause of all these sufferings ?

A. Christ's own love, and our sins: For having in his astonishing free love, undertaken to satisfy divine justice for us ; " He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities."

Q. Are we not under the strongest obligations to keep up the sacramental remembrance of Christ ?

A. Surely we are ; for he is matchless in his love to us, poor, sinful worms, having remembered us in our low estate, and done and suffered more for us than all the world could or would have done. And likewise, he hath strictly enjoined us, among his last words, to continue to celebrate this memorial of his death.

Q. Why do we need this memorial ? Are we in any hazard of forgetting his matchless love ?

A. Yes ; for so worldly are our hearts, so unbelieving our minds, so treacherous our memories, and so wavering our affections, that we are apt to be ensnared by the world's allurements, and to let Christ and his love slip out of our thoughts.

Q. Is not the fresh and frequent remembrance of a crucified Christ in the sacrament very useful and advantageous to us ?

A. Yes.

Q. In what respect is it useful ?

A. For weakening and killing of sin, for melting a hard heart, for overcoming of Satan's temptations, for quickening and increasing grace, and for giving comfort in all tribulations.

Q. What kind of a remembrance ought we to have of the sufferings and death of Christ at his table ?

A. 1. We must have an awful and reverential remembrance, adoring the justice and holiness of God, displayed in the sufferings of Christ his dear Son.

2. It must be a mournful and heart-breaking remembrance to look on a slain Christ in the elements, as one pierced through and crucified by our sins.

3. We must have a sin loathing remembrance ; abhorring with the utmost detestation, our cursed sins that made a strong and mighty Redeemer to sweat blood.

4. It must be an affectionate remembrance.

5. It must be a thankful remembrance.

6. It must be a confident remembrance, laying the whole stress of our soul's justification and salvation upon the death of Christ.

Q. How can we both mourn and rejoice at the same time ?

A. We may upon different accounts ; for as we should mourn for our sins that pierced Christ, and put him to death ; so we ought to rejoice in his wonderful goodness, that undertook to be our surety and sacrifice, to save us from sin and wrath : and the more we are helped to mourn, we have still the greater ground to rejoice and be glad in him.

Q. How so?

A. Because a mourning heart for sin is a good evidence of a person's interest in Christ, and his purchase.

Q. What obligations lie upon us to come and partake of this ordinance?

A. All the professors of Christ are obliged to it on many accounts: 1. In point of duty. 2. In point of interest. 3. In point of gratitude. 4. In point of safety.

Q. Wherein lies the sin of neglecting this ordinance?

A. In that it is no less than contempt of the words of our dying Saviour, disobedience to his command, ingratitude to our greatest benefactor, a base slighting of God's love, Christ's sufferings, and all the great preparations he hath made for us; a wronging of our own souls, and despising of our choicest mercies and privileges.

Q. What is the danger of neglecting this duty?

A. It draws on the wrath and vengeance of God, nay, of Christ the Mediator; which must be very terrible. As God threatened to cut off those that neglected the passover of old, so he threatened severe wrath against those, who should neglect the gospel feasts. Num: 19, 13. Zech. 14: 16, 17, 18. And these threatenings are renewed. Matth. 22: 7. Luke 14: 24.

Q. What are the great ends and uses of the Lord's supper?

A. 1. To keep up the solemn and lively remembrance of Christ's death, and dying love to lost sinners among men, while the world stands.

2. Solemnly to make over, apply, and seal Christ, his purchase, and all the benefits of the new covenant unto true believers.

3. That hereby we may have occasion to make

public profession of our owning and receiving a crucified Jesus, as our only Saviour and Master.

4. That we may testify our thankfulness to God, for giving his Son to die for our redemption; and to the Son, for laying down his life so willingly for us.

5. That we might get a pledge and seal of our union and communion with Christ, and our faith in his promises strengthened and confirmed.

6. That we may renew and seal our covenant with God in Christ, personally ratify our baptismal vows, and solemnly bind ourselves to take God for our God, and give up ourselves to be the Lord's people, and to walk with him in the ways of gospel obedience.

7. It is appointed as a sign and bond of believers' union and communion among themselves; their mutual love, and fellowship one with another.

Lastly. It is designed as a spiritual meal, for strengthening the Lord's people in the inward man, for nourishing their graces, cheering their hearts, removing their fears and faintings, and giving them a pledge of heaven, and a foretaste of the eternal communion above. For all which, see Math. 26: 26, 27. 1 Cor. 11: 20, 25, 35, 36. Gal. 3: 1. 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17. Heb. 9: 15, 16, 17.

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Of worthy and unworthy partakers.

Q. Are all partakers to be reckoned welcome guests at this holy feast?

A. No.

Q. Who then are such?

A. Only believers are worthy partakers of it.

Q. Who are these?

A. They are such, who by faith do cordially consent to the covenant of grace, sincerely aim to

do honour to Christ at his table, by showing forth his death, and study preparation for it.

Q. Who are the unwelcome guests?

A. Those who never closed with the offers of the gospel, and neglect preparation for this feast; and particularly those who continue in love and league with sin, while they pretend kindness to Christ, and to renew covenant with him.

Q. What is to be understood by the worthiness of those who are called worthy partakers?

A. Not any worthiness in a legal sense, for we are all unworthy before God of the least mercy; but only a gospel suitableness, and meetness of the soul's state and frame to attend this holy institution.

Q. May not even a believer be guilty of partaking unworthily?

A. Yes, he may, if he neglect self-examination, harbour any known sin, or want grace in exercise.

Q. What is the duty of worthy partaking, and wherein doth it lie?

A. It is, in short, to eat and drink at Christ's table, with a believing and thankful remembrance of his dying love, looking by faith to him whom we have pierced for salvation, and lodging our souls in his wounds, mourning for sin that pierced him, and solemnly resolving in his strength that we will pierce him no more.

Q. What is the advantage of worthy partaking?

A. Hereby remission of our sins through Christ's blood is assured, the power of sin is weakened, the graces of the Spirit are strengthened, the soul's diseases are cured, the doubts of the mind are resolved, and sweet views of Christ and glory are obtained.

Q. What is the sin of unworthy communicating, and wherein doth it lie?

A. It is to partake without due preparation, and right ends, or to eat and drink without suitable knowledge and reverence, without reconciliation to God and our neighbour, or without the exercise of the sacramental graces, such as faith, love, and repentance ; or to approach, while we entertain any known sin.

Q. What is the danger of unworthy partaking ?

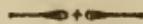
A. Hereby the guilt of Christ's body and blood is contracted, and God highly provoked ; and the guilty person draws down judgments and damnation upon himself, if it be not timely prevented by repentance and free mercy.

Q. Why is a man's unworthy partaking charged mainly upon not discerning the Lord's body in the sacrament ?

A. Because the unworthy communicant doth not consider that the bread here is solemnly consecrated to represent the Lord's body, but eats it as earnestly as if it were common bread ; and because he puts not due respect and honour upon the body of our crucified Lord, here set forth ; but treats it as if it were the body of a mere man or common person.

Q. How shall we prevent this guilt and danger ?

A. By entering into God's covenant, and making due preparation for approaching to his holy table, both habitual and actual.



Of preparation for the Lord's Supper.

Q. What is the necessity of making such preparation for attending this ordinance ?

A. Because the approach we make to God in it is very near and awful ; and the author of it is a holy, jealous, and heart-searching God, who will shortly call us to account. And because we are

assured there is great benefit by a worthy approach, and as great danger by an unworthy.

Q. What is our habitual preparation?

A. Our being in a gracious state.

Q. What is the actual preparation requisite for approaching the Lord's table?

A. It mainly lies in these two; Examination of ourselves, and excitation of our graces.

Q. What sort of examination is needful before our partaking?

A. There is a public church examination necessary by church officers, that the Lord's table be not abused by the ignorant and profane; and there is a private self-examination necessary by our own consciences, that the Lord's supper be not unworthily received through unbelief, impenitency, formality, earthliness, pride, malice, or any secret sin entertained by us.

Q. What things must we examine ourselves about before we approach?

A. Principally concerning these three: Our right to the Lord's supper, our need of it, and our actual fitness for it.

Q. Why about these three?

A. Because, if we have no right to it we shall but usurp it; if we feel no need of it, we shall but despise it; if we be unfit for it, we shall but abuse it, and hurt ourselves.



Examination of our Right to the Lord's Table.

Q. What is the right to the Lord's table?

A. It is two fold: 1st. There is an outward and visible right before the church. 2dly. There is an inward and invisible right before God.

Q. Who are those that have the outward and visible right to this ordinance?

A. Those who are baptized, and have a compe-

tent measure of Christian knowledge, profess their faith in Christ, and are blameless in their lives before men.

Q. Are all such persons worthy partakers ?

A. No ; but they have such an outward and visible right before the church, that they cannot be excluded ; for of this outward right, only the church is to judge.

Q. Who are these who have this right ?

A. Neither the ignorant nor profane have it, and therefore they are to be excluded from the Lord's table.

Q. Why are the ignorant to be excluded ?

A. Because they are not capable to examine themselves, nor to discern the Lord's body ; and so behoved in this case to eat and drink unworthily.

Q. Why are the profane to be excluded ?

A. Because they who allow themselves to live in sin, can have no communion with a holy God. Nay, they expose themselves to his judgments by coming with defiled hands to his holy table.

Q. Who are those that have the inward and invisible right to his holy ordinance ?

A. Those who not only have knowledge, a profession, and blameless walk ; but are really within the covenant by a true faith in Jesus Christ, even a faith that works by love, and purifies the heart as well as the life ; they are really in heart before God, what they seem to be outwardly before men.

Q. Who are the judges of this right ?

A. Of this inward right the church cannot judge ; but every man is to inquire, examine, and judge of it with respect to himself.

Q. By what evidence may a man know that he is really within the new covenant and thereupon judge that he hath an inward and invisible right to its seal before God ?

A. If he can say, that he hath seen himself perishing, while upon the whole bottom of a covenant of works, and that he hath fled from it to the new covenant, heartily approving the whole frame and contrivance of it; accepting of Christ the Mediator of it in all his offices, and giving up himself to be the Lord's, to live for him, and walk with him in newness of life. And that it is his earnest desire that his inward man, as well as his outward, may be conformed to the laws and image of God.

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Examination of our need of the Lord's Supper, and of the wants we should seek to be supplied thereat.

Q. What need have you of the Lord's supper?

A. I need it upon many accounts: As, 1st. To bring a crucified Jesus, in a lively manner, to my remembrance. 2dly. To renew my baptismal vow, and lay me under stronger engagements to be the Lord's. 3dly. To nourish and strengthen my weak graces. 4thly. To fortify me against Satan's temptations, and all other discouragements. 5thly. To renew the sense and assurance of my pardon, which is frequently obscured and darkened.

Q. What are these things which obscure the evidence of pardon?

A. Sins, both of omission and commission, and especially sins against light.

Q. Why should you examine your wants before you approach to the Lord's table?

A. Because there Christ is set forth with all his fulness for the supply of my spiritual wants and necessities; and it is necessary that I should have a lively sense of these needs, that I may know what to apply for to this full Saviour, when at his table.

Q. What are these wants you ought to inquire into before partaking?

A. I ought to examine these chiefly: 1st. What sins I want most to be subdued. 2dly. What graces I want most to be strengthened. 3dly. What mercies I want most to be bestowed. 4thly. What faculties of my soul I want most to be sanctified. 5thly. What offices of Christ I want most to be executed in my soul.

Q. How may you discover the sins you want most to be subdued?

A. By examining what are the sins or corruptions which do most prevail in me, if it be atheistical thoughts, unbelief, pride, passion, heart-hardness, earthliness, wandering, formality, backsliding or any other; and these I must keep in eye, that I may apply to a full Saviour at his table for strength to wrestle against them and overcome them.

Q. How may you discover the graces you want most to be strengthened?

A. By examining which of the graces are weakest and lowest there, if it be faith, hope, love, meekness, humility, or any other; and these I must bring to a full Christ at his table, to be cherished, strengthened and increased.

Q. How may you find out the mercies you need most to be bestowed?

A. By examining what are my present complaints, wants, and difficulties, and what are the mercies which would be most suitable and relieving to me under them; if such as these, intimations of pardon, spirituality of affections, liveliness in duty, patience under crosses, conduct in intricate cases, strength against corruptions and temptations, deliverance from atheistical or blasphemous thoughts, or the like: And these mercies

I must remember, to ask them from Christ, when at his table.

Q. How can you find out the faculty of your soul you want most to be sanctified?

A. By examining what is the power or faculty that is least renewed, and needs most the Spirit's influence to be poured out upon it, if upon my understanding, to cure its blindness, and enlighten it with saving views of spiritual things; or if upon my will, to cure its perverseness, and make it pliable to God's will; or upon my memory, to cure its treachery and weakness, and to strengthen it to retain God's word; or upon my conscience, to cure its searedness, and to make it tender and watchful; or upon my affections, to cure their coldness to Christ and spiritual things, and to fix them upon right objects.

Q. How may you discover the office of Christ you want most to be executed in you?

A. By inquiring into the case of my soul, and plagues of my heart, saying, Whether do I need Christ most as a prophet to teach me and cure my ignorance? or as a priest, to cover me with his righteousness, and intercede with God for me? or as a king, to subdue my heart to himself, and conquer my indwelling corruptions? And being sensible of my soul's need, I must go to my full Redeemer at his table, and say, Lord, come and execute such an office in my soul.

Examination of our sins necessary before partaking.

Q. Why must you inquire so narrowly about your sins before partaking?

A. Upon several accounts: 1st. That there may be no *Achan* lodged to hinder the presence of God

with me. 2dly. That, by discovering them, I may be helped the better to look upon him whom I have pierced, and mourn. 3dly. That I may be more capable to point out my wound and sore unto my physician for cure. 4thly. That I may behold the evil of them in the glass of Christ's sufferings, and be thereby moved to hate them and turn from them all unto God, and walk with him in newness of life.

Q. How ought you to manage this part of your preparation-work, so as to accomplish a diligent search for your sins?

A. 1st. I must set time apart for it, and before I begin it, pray earnestly for the illuminations of the Spirit of God to discover sin unto me. 2dly. I must think upon the sins of my heart and my life, my sins of omission and commission, and these both open and secret, of ignorance, and against light, and the sins of my station and character in the world. 3dly. For my help, I will read our Catechism and the ten commandments, and the sins therein enumerated, with their many aggravations, and inquire how far I am chargeable therewith. 4thly. I will never give over searching, and thinking, until I see my indispensable need of the blood of the Lamb of God, which cleanseth us from all sin.

Q. What are those lusts and plagues of the heart, that we should be most concerned about, in self-examination?

A. We ought, with deep concern of soul, to inquire into those grievous heart-plagues, viz. our atheism, unbelief, worldly-mindedness, pride, impenitency, forgetfulness of God, slighting Christ, as offered in the gospel, our aversion to duty, ingratitude for mercies, security and formality, unmindfulness of death and eternity; our heart-back-

slidings, wanderings and wearying in duty, resting upon duties, forgetfulness of solemn vows, our malice, passion, envy, discontent, &c.

Examination of our actual fitness for the Lord's Table.

Q. What is that fitness which every communicant ought to have before partaking?

A. It is two-fold, both habitual and actual; and both must be had by every one.

Q. What is this habitual fitness or preparation which every partaker must have?

A. He must be a believer, a man in a gracious state, that hath the habits of grace planted in his soul.

Q. How may we know if our spiritual state be good?

A. By such evidences as these. If we be heartily concerned about our souls and eternity, and carefully seek the favour of God through Christ: if we place our happiness in the enjoying of communion with God, and not in the world's comforts. If Christ the Mediator, his ordinances, people, and all that belongs to him, be precious to us; if in-dwelling sin be our burden, and we sincerely strive against sin both in heart and life: if we make conscience of our words and ways, and have a respect to all God's commandments. These are marks of our state being good. Psal. 73: 25. Rom. 8: 5. 1 Pet. 2: 7. 1 John 3: 9, 14. Gal. 5: 25. Rom. 7: 24. Psal. 119: 6, 128.

Q. What is that good estate we must necessarily be in, if we would be worthy communicants?

A. We must be in covenant with God through faith in Jesus Christ; and acquainted with a saving change of our hearts and natures by a work of regeneration.

Q. Who are those that are in covenant with God?

A. Those who have actually taken hold of the covenant of grace, and have cordially consented to its gracious offers and terms by faith. Particularly those who have been thoroughly convinced of their misery under a covenant of works, and have betaken themselves to the new covenant; have heartily acquiesced in the way and method of salvation through Christ and his righteousness; have cordially accepted of Christ in all his offices and promises; and in Christ's strength have engaged to live for God, and walk with him in newness of life. Isa. 44: 5. Jer. 50: 5. Rom. 6: 4, 13.

Q. But what shall be said to those, who are discouraged with a sense of their own unworthiness to enter into covenant with God, that they suspect God is not willing to accept of them?

A. 1. God never refused to enter into covenant with any upon the account of unworthiness. Who more vile than Manasseh? and yet God excluded him not upon his humble application. Who more unworthy than the prodigal, that forsook his father? and yet upon his return, the father takes him into his arms. 2 Chron. 33: 12, 13. Luke 15: 13, 15.

2. God never took any into covenant with him but the unworthy.

3. The more sensible we are of unworthiness, and humbled for it, the more fit we are for covenanting with God; for it is such he hath promised to accept. Psalm. 10: 17. Isa. 66: 2. Matth. 5: 3.

4. Though we be altogether unworthy, in ourselves, of being taken into covenant with God; yet worthy is the Lamb our surety, who hath merited this privilege to unworthy sinners, and it is only his worthiness that we must plead.

5. We have the plainest calls, and most pressing invitations from God to the unworthiest of sinners to come and enter into covenant with him, and many arguments made use of to engage them to it. 2 Chron. 30: 8. Isa. 51: 4. Isa. 55: 3, 7. Ezek. 18: 30, 32. 2 Cor. 5: 20. Now for any to doubt of God's willingness to enter into covenant with them, after these plain proofs which he has given us of it, is no less than to suspect God's sincerity and ingenuity in his offers and declarations; which must be no small crime.

Q. Are not those, that are truly in covenant with God, acquainted with the new birth and a work of regeneration?

A. Yes; for those two, being in covenant with God by faith in Jesus Christ, and being renewed or born again, are inseparably connected. Ezek. 36: 26, 27, 28. 1 Cor. 5: 17.

Q. What are the signs of a person that is unregenerate, and in a state of nature?

A. They are such: 1. Who love the world and the things of it more than God. 1 John 2: 15. James 4: 4.

2. Who against light live in the practice of secret wickedness, or regard iniquity in their hearts. Col. 3: 5, 6. Isa. 1: 13, 14, 15. Jer. 44: 16.

3. Who believe not the report of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ. John 3: 36. John 8: 24.

4. Who go about to establish their own righteousness, not submitting to the righteousness of Christ. Rom. 10: 3.

5. Who are haters of the people of God. 1 John 2: 9. John 3: 10.

Q. By what marks may we know if the saving change by regeneration be wrought upon us, and that we are new-born, and in a state of grace?

A. By these: 1. If we have got our eyes opened,

and new discoveries of sin, Christ and holiness: If sin appear to us most vile, Christ most necessary, and holiness most beautiful. Acts 27: 18. Rom. 7: 12, 13.

2. If we have got new cares and concernments of soul, not about "what we shall eat, drink," &c. but "what we shall do to be saved," get the favour of God, our interest in Christ secured, and our souls made meet for glory. Matth. 6: 31, 32, 33. Acts 16: 30. Job 23: 3.

3. If we have got the new heart, and a new principle of spiritual life, and be endued with new resolutions to strive against sin, and walk with God in newness of life. Ezek. 36: 26. Rom. 6: 4, 12. Gal. 5: 16, 17.

4. If we have new desires after the word of God, and the means of spiritual nourishment. 1 Pet. 2: 2.

5. If we have earnest desires after God's presence in ordinances, and particularly after converse with God in secret prayer. Psal. 63: 1, 2. Psal. 73: 28. Acts 9: 11.

6. If we hunger and thirst after righteousness both imputed and inherent. Matth. 5: 6.

7. If indwelling sin, and remaining corruption in our hearts, be our greatest grief and trouble. Rom. 7: 24.

8. If we have a sincere love to all the people of God. 1 John 3: 14.

Lastly. If we come to the light, and be willing to be searched, and have matters put to trial. John 3: 20, 21. Psal. 139: 23, 24.

Q. Is it not an essential property of true grace, and where it is to grow?

A. Yes; because, 1. Grace is the seed of God, 1 John 3: 9. And it is natural for seed to grow.

2. Because of the union of the gracious soul with Christ the head. All believers are branches

ingrafted into this true vine, and therefore must grow. John 15: 5.

3. Because God hath appointed it, that hereby believers by degrees may be made meet for heaven, and ripened to be transplanted to the new Jerusalem. Col. 1: 12. Prov. 4: 18.

Q. How may we know whether we grow in grace or not?

A. By these marks our growth may be discerned:

1. If we are growing downward in humility, and are still more vile in our own eyes. 1 Pet. 5: 5.

2. If we be growing upward in heavenly mindedness, and the world have still the less room in our hearts. Heb. 11: 13.

3. If our appetites after spiritual food be increasing. 1 Pet. 2: 2.

4. If our consciences be growing more tender and watchful against sin: and if we notice the first rising of sin in the heart, and avoid all temptations to it. Gen. 39: 9, 10.

5. If we take more delight in spiritual exercises, prayer, praise and meditation: or in those duties that are displeasing to the flesh, such as mortification, self-examination, mourning for sin, self-denial, &c.

6. If we be more concerned for the glory of God, the interest of Christ's kingdom, and the good of precious souls.

7. If we can trust in God, when outward and visible helps do fail. Heb. 2: 17, 18.

Q. Shall we conclude those to have no true grace, who complain that grace is so far from growing in them, that they are sensible of a decline in it?

A. No; for 1. Believers do not grow at all times, they have not only their spring-time, but

also their winter-seasons, when their leaves do wither through some prevailing temptation, and they seem to be on the declining hand ; for we see the church of Ephesus is charged with falling from her first love, and yet a golden candlestick still. Rev. 2: 4, 5.

2. Believers may mistake about their growth ; they may judge their grace grown weaker when really it is not, when only a sense of their corruption has grown stronger, their temptations increase, or comforts are withdrawn ; and yet in the mean time grace may be in its vigor. Also the earnest thirstings for some after grace, may occasion them not to notice what they have.

3. It is with the growth of grace, as with the motion of the sun, or the growth of plants, which we perceive better a while afterwards, than in the mean time of it. Mark 4: 26, 27.

Q. What is that actual fitness you must have ?

A. It is when a man is not only in a gracious state, but in a gracious frame ; when grace is not only in the habit, but in the lively exercise.

Q. What are those sacramental graces or qualifications, which we should especially inquire after, and examine into, before our partaking of the Lord's Supper ?

A. There are eight, viz. Knowledge, faith, repentance, fear, love, thankfulness, holy desires, and new obedience ; all of them necessary to fit us for a worthy partaking of this ordinance.

Examination of Knowledge.

Q. What is that knowledge you must have, to qualify you for worthy partaking ?

A. It is a gracious discovery and uptaking of God and divine truths, as they are revealed in his word.

Q. What is to be understood by discerning the Lord's body in the sacrament?

A. 1. Our putting a difference between the consecrated elements, and common bread and wine.

2. Our making a solemn difference between the body and the blood of Christ, and that of a mere man.

3. Our looking through the elements to a bleeding Saviour, as offering up himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice for us, and discerning him as really present in the sacrament.

4. Our having some distinct views of Christ's sufferings and the cause of them, the greatness of them, the necessity, value and sufficiency of them; together with their great and glorious effects.

5. Our beholding a dying Saviour with suitable affections.

Q. What are those things particularly, which you must know in order to a partaking aright?

A. I must have a competent knowledge of these five things: 1st. Of God in his essential perfections and Trinity of persons. 2dly. Of man, and his estate both before and since his fall. 3dly. Of Jesus Christ the mediator, in his two-fold nature, and three-fold office. 4thly. Of the new covenant, or gospel method of justification by the Surety's righteousness apprehended by faith. 5thly. Of the seals of this covenant, and particularly of the holy supper, in its nature, ends, and uses.

Q. Is a literal knowledge of these things sufficient for a communicant?

A. No. It must be a true, sanctified, and saving knowledge.

Q. How may we discover if our knowledge be sanctified and saving?

A. We may know it by its properties and effects, as, 1. If it be experimental, and gives us a sweet

taste and relish for the truths we know. 2dly. If it be humbling, and makes us, like *Paul*, look upon ourselves as the least of saints, and the chief of sinners. 3dly. If it leads us to Christ and his righteousness, as the only ground of our hope. Lastly, if it be communicative, practical, obediential, fruitful, and puts us on to desire a greater conformity to Jesus Christ our Head.

Examination of Faith.

Q. What is true saving faith ?

A. It is a grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby a man, knowing his sin and misery, and assenting to the truth of God's record concerning Christ, doth cordially receive and rest upon Christ, and his righteousness for pardon and salvation, according to the gospel offer.

Q. What is implied in that saving act of faith, the soul's receiving and resting on Christ as exhibited in the sacrament ?

A. It imports these things: 1. A lively sense of the soul's misery and danger without Christ.

2. A rejecting all other dependencies and supports, besides Christ. Hos. 15: 3.

3. A fixed resolution to look still to Christ, wait on him, and humbly submit to any thing for mercy ; like Job, and the woman of Canaan. Job, 13: 19. Matth. 15: 23, 25, 27.

4. A hearty consent of the soul to the covenant of grace and God's offer of salvation through Christ, with a cordial approbation of the gospel way of salvation, and the soul's acquiescing in it, as most excellent and suitable.

5. Our actual venturing ourselves and our salvation upon a crucified Christ and his righteousness: casting our perishing souls into the bleeding

arms of our high-priest and surety, for shelter and mercy.

Q. What need is there for the exercise of faith at the Lord's table?

A. It is needful: 1st. For discerning the Lord's body, and the spiritual mysteries here represented; seeing faith is the spiritual eye whereby the soul sees Christ and things invisible. 2dly. For applying Christ, and his benefits here set forth to our souls, seeing faith is the spiritual hand for taking hold of a crucified Jesus, and the mouth that feeds upon him.

Q. How may we know if our faith be true and saving?

A. True faith hath these effects: 1st. It softens the heart and makes it bleed for sin that pierced Christ. 2dly. It makes the soul approve and admire the gospel contrivance of salvation, through the righteousness of Christ. 3dly. It works by love, and carries out the soul to love Christ above all things, and to do all duties from a principle of love. 4thly. It makes a man sincerely obedient and fruitful in good works. 5thly. It looses the heart from the world and all earthly felicities, and carries it to things above.

Examination of Repentance.

Q. What is the true repentance which worthy partakers must have?

A. It is a grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are convinced of the evil of sin, sincerely mourn for it, and turn from it unto God, through Jesus Christ, resolving to serve him in newness of life.

Q. What parts are there in true repentance?

A. Chiefly three; conviction, contrition, and conversion.

Q. What is conviction?

A. It is a right sight and sense of the evil and sinfulness of sin.

Q. What is contrition ?

A. It is a true and godly sorrow and grief of heart for sin, chiefly because God is offended, and Christ pierced thereby.

Q. What is conversion ?

A. It is the soul's turning from all sin to God in Christ for mercy and pardon, and to all the ways of holiness and new obedience.

Q. What need is there for the exercise of repentance and godly sorrow at the Lord's table !

A. Because here we are to renew covenant with God, and certainly, penitent mourning for former breaches and backsliding is very suitable upon that occasion. Again, we are here to behold Christ bruised for our sin, and to receive him into our hearts ; and nothing suits a broken Christ so well as a broken heart ; nay, this is what he prefers to all sacrifices.

Q. How may we know if our repentance be of the right sort ?

A. We may judge it right: 1st. If we do lay the axe to the root of sin, the corruptions of the heart and nature, and long to be delivered from it. 2dly. If we do hate all sin, and resolve to harbour no known evil, either in heart or life. 3dly. If we have recourse to Christ's blood and Spirit, for freedom from the filth as well as the guilt of sin, and breathe after universal holiness.



Examination of Love.

Q. Why is the exercise of love so necessary at the Lord's table ?

A. Because it is a love feast, an ordinance where we have the highest representation of divine

love to sinners that ever was given ; which necessarily requires the exercise of love in us.

Q. What do you understand by the love which is required of communicants ? and what are the objects upon which it must be placed ?

A. It is a saving grace or spiritual affection wrought in believers by the Holy Spirit, which terminates upon various objects, namely upon God, upon Jesus Christ, upon the brethren, and every thing that bears his image, and in some sense upon all mankind ; even our very enemies.

Q. Why do you make God and Jesus Christ different objects of your love ?

A. I love Jesus Christ as he is God, and the same God with the other persons of the glorious Trinity: but seeing the second person is for us become God-man, our mediator, and the great sacrifice to justice for our sins, in this respect I view him as a special object of my love.

Q. By what marks may you examine if your love to God be true ?

A. By such as these: my care to please him, my fear to offend him, my desire after his presence, my regard to his laws, and concern for his glory.

Q. By what marks may you examine your love to Jesus Christ ?

A. By the same before mentioned, to which I may add, true love to Christ far exceeds all our love to relations, and dearest worldly enjoyments; it terminates upon him in all his offices, as a *prince* upon the throne, as well as a *priest* upon the cross; in his life as a pattern, as well as in his death as a sacrifice, and embraceth him as altogether lovely: also, it prompts the soul to have many thoughts of him, and even to look and long for his second coming.

Q. How may we know if we love him above all things in the world?

A. By these marks: If we value his favour more than that of any creature; if the loss of his countenance affects us more than any worldly loss; if we rather displease all the world than offend him; and if it be our greatest grief that we cannot love more.

Q. By what marks are you to examine if your love to the brethren be true?

A. By such as these: If I love them not for outward or temporal things, but upon spiritual accounts, because they are God's children, and bear his image; if my love be to all saints, poor and rich, hated and honoured, strangers and friends; if I sympathize with them both in their joys and sorrows, and prefer their company to all others.

Q. How doth your love to God's people differ from your love to the rest of mankind, and those who are your enemies?

A. I love the rest of mankind, and even my enemies, with a love of benevolence and beneficence, being inclined to wish them well, pray for them, do them good, and even return them good for evil; but I love the people of God with a love of delight and complacency, and esteem them as the excellent ones of the earth, the friends of God, and the pillars of the land.

Examination of Humility.

Q. Why is the grace of humility so needful in your approach to the table of the Lord?

A. Because I am a most unworthy creature, and he is a great and holy God with whom I have to do, and he hath a special respect unto the lowly: besides this grace is necessary to make me resemble my Saviour, whose love I commemorate; for as he was meek and lowly in his disposition, so he humbled himself deeply for my good.

Q. How may you know if your humility be of the right stamp?

A. By such marks as these: 1st. If I have low and mean thoughts of myself under a sense of unworthiness, and be ready to say with the prodigal, *I am no more worthy to be called thy son*; and with the Canaanitish woman, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog*. 2dly. If I be more apt to suspect myself than to censure my neighbour, like the eleven disciples at the Supper. 3dly. If I be grieved for the motions of pride and self-conceit within me. 4thly. If I renounce all confidence in my duties, and betake myself entirely to Christ for righteousness and acceptance with God.

Examination of thankfulness.

Q. Why is thankfulness necessary to worthy partaking?

A. Because it is the chief design of the ordinance to keep up a thankful remembrance of redeeming love, and to give thanks to God for the unspeakable gift of a crucified Christ; and hence it is called *Eucharist*, or thanksgiving.

Q. How may you discern if your thankfulness be of the right sort?

A. By these marks: 1st. If I account myself unworthy of the least mercy, and admire God's undeserved goodness. 2dly. If I look upon Jesus Christ as the mercy of mercies, and the channel of all other mercies. 3dly. If I sincerely love my benefactor and study to please him. 4thly. If I be oft meditating how to express my thankfulness to him, saying with the Psalmist, *What shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts and benefits towards me?*

Q. But what can you, or should you, render for a crucified Jesus?

A. Though all I have be nothing in comparison

of the benefit received, yet I should be willing to render it to the Lord; such as: 1st. My endeared affections. 2dly. My triumphant praises. 3dly. My unfeigned repentance and reformation. 4thly. My faithful performance of vows. 5thly. My zealous actings for his glories. 6thly. My cheerful resolution to suffer for Christ, who so willingly suffered for me.

Examination of Spiritual appetite.

Q. Why is a spiritual appetite so requisite at this time?

A. Because a feast is not relished but by those who have an appetite for it: and it is the hungry and the thirsty that God hath promised to satisfy with good things.

Q. How may you know if your appetite or spiritual desires be of the right sort?

A. By these marks: 1st. If I be glad of the news of Christ's feast, and an invitation to it. 2dly. If I count the cost, and be willing to be at all pains to obtain soul-food, such as to pray, to search, to humble myself, and part with my dearest sins. 3dly. If I be satisfied with no food for my soul but a crucified Christ. 4thly. If I find this food very sweet and pleasant to my soul's taste.

Examination of resolution for new obedience.

Q. Why is a believer's obedience called new obedience?

A. 1. Because it proceeds from new principles, faith, and love. 2. It is performed in a new manner, to wit, by faith leaning upon Christ's strength for enabling him to do it, and upon Christ's righteousness for his acceptance with God. 3. It is done for new ends, not to advance his own secular interest but to please God, and to promote his glory.

Q. How may you know if your resolutions for new obedience be of the right stamp?

A. By these marks: 1st. If I count the cost, and be deliberate in making them. 2dly. If they be absolute, without any reserve for a beloved sin. 3dly. If I make them in a deep sense of my own insufficiency to keep them, and in a humble dependence upon Christ, my surety, for strength.

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Concerning the excitation of graces.

Q. How shall you get all these graces before mentioned, excited and brought to lively exercise, before you come to the table?

A. I must use all the means which God hath appointed for this end: such as reading and hearing the word, Christian conference, retired meditation, fervent prayer, and frequent ejaculations to God for the awakening influences of his Holy Spirit; and cry with the spouse, “Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.”

Q. How shall we know that our prayers are not rejected, when yet we receive no answer to them?

A. 1. When we are resolved and enabled still to wait upon God in the way of duty, though he hide himself from us. Isa. 7: 17.

2. When we are enabled to clear and justify God in his dealings, and blame ourselves only for the cause of his silence. Lam. 3: 39, 48, &c.

3. When we are helped to discover the failings and defects of our prayers, so as to be humbled for them, Isaiah 64: 6, 7.

4. When we get the Spirits’ assistance to strengthen and enlarge our hearts in prayer. Psal. 138: 3. Isaiah 65: 34.

5. When the Lord’s suspending his answer, makes us the more inquisitive into our hearts, and

ways, to find out the cause thereof. Lam. 3: 8, 40.

Q. What ought you to do when spiritual deadness doth continue, after using all the aforesaid means?

A. I must go a little further in humiliation and prayer, and meditate more closely upon the sufferings of Christ, and also act faith upon him, as my head of influences, for life and quickening to my dead graces, and resolve still to depend upon him for needful supplies of life according to his promise.

Q. What are the ordinary causes of our spiritual deadness?

A. 1. Our commission of some sin, and not repenting for it; upon which account God is provoked to withhold the influences of his Spirit. Psalm 51: 11.

2. Our omission of duty, or sluggish performance of it, especially brings on deadness, the neglect of secret prayer. A key not turned, rusts in the lock. Isa. 64: 7.

3. Our careless entertaining of convictions and the motions of the Holy Spirit, doth grieve and quench the Spirit, and so brings on deadness.

4. Our unthankfulness for former mercies, especially spiritual mercies and revivings, provokes God to shut his hand and suspend his influences. Col. 2: 7.

5. Our earthly-mindedness, and taking too much liberty in the delights of the world, deadens the heart. Psalm 119: 37. Jude 19.

6. When we grow proud of gifts, attainments or enlargements in duty, God is provoked to blast them to us. James 4: 6.

7. Heavy troubles and discouragements tend to deaden the heart. Psalm 119: 107.

Q. How ought you to pray at this time so as to prevail?

A. I must pray with humility, faith, fervency,

and importunity, as knowing how much is at stake, both with respect to the glory of God, and the salvation of my soul: I must plead the power, the mercy, and free promise of God, and merits of Jesus Christ his beloved Son.

Q. For what things ought you mainly to pray before this solemn approach?

A. For these things: 1st. For the preparation of the heart, and chiefly for sanctifying grace, and a spiritual frame of soul. 2dly. For life and liveliness to all the sacramental graces, and for the assistance of the Spirit of God in all the parts of the work. 3dly. For the cure of all my soul distempers, and the pardon of all defects. 4thly. For much nearness and communion with God at his table. 5thly. For the Lord's gracious presence both with ministers and people through the whole solemnity.

Q. How ought you to be employed upon the Saturday evening and Sabbath morning before partaking?

A. Besides the work of self-examination, and excitation of grace, I resolve to spend much of that precious time in direct covenanting with God on my knees, taking and accepting of him for my God in Christ, and of Christ the mediator in all his offices, and in giving up myself, soul and body, to be the Lord's, to be disposed of by him in time and to eternity. Also, I will make it a particular piece of my preparation, to consider, beforehand, how will I act when I go to the Lord's table; how my faith and love shall then be employed; what objects I will think of, and what sins I will mourn over, that so I may not spend my short time there in confusion.

Q. How should we be employed when going to the Lord's table?

A. 1. We should be thinking what a high privi-

lege it is; that such unworthy creatures as we should be admitted into such near communion and fellowship with God.

2. We should have an awful impression of the solemnity of the ordinance and greatness of the work we are going about; the great advantage of doing it right, and the great danger of doing it wrong.

3. We should be thinking, this may be the last communion we shall see on earth.

4. We should guard against wandering and improper thoughts.

5. We should be meditating on the unsearchable love of Christ, and his undertaking to suffer both the pains of death and hell for us, that were enemies to him.

6. We should be meditating on the fulness and suitableness of the many sweet offices and relations, which Christ bears to his people.



Concerning our employment when at the Lord's Table.

Q. What is that suitable communion frame, and disposition with which you would desire to go to the Lord's holy table?

A. I would desire to go to it with a humble, believing, and affectionate frame of soul, having in it a mixture of holy mourning and rejoicing, which I look upon as a noble communion frame; I mean mourning for my sins that were the cause of Christ's sufferings, and rejoicing in Christ Jesus, that came to satisfy justice for me.

Q. How are you to be employed when sitting at the table, and when beholding and making use of the elements there?

A. 1st. I must take a view of the sufferings of Christ, both in soul and body for me; and particularly, I must remember the anguish of his soul,

when he lay under the pressure of God's wrath for my sins. 2dly. I must take a view both of the mercy and justice of God, and of Christ's love displayed in these sufferings. 3dly. I must exert faith in embracing a crucified Jesus, and my faith is to be attended with the exercise of all the sacramental graces, repentance, love, thankfulness, &c. 4thly. I am to be suitably affected with the amazing sights set before me. 5thly. I am to make vows and prayers after the partaking, and before I rise from the table.

[See the short account of the duty of worthy partaking given before.]

Q. Seeing faith is the principal grace in communicating, how is it to be exercised and employed at this time?

A. Faith being the soul's eye to discern Christ, the soul's hand to receive him, and the soul's mouth to feed upon him, it is to be employed at this time in the most active manner, in looking to Christ lifted upon the cross for healing our soul's maladies, in embracing Christ as our great surety and ransom, in fleeing into his wounds for shelter, in applying his blood for cleansing, and in pleading his blood with God for all we want.

Q. What are the amazing sights set before you at the Lord's table, which ought so much to affect you?

A. They are: 1st. The unspeakable evil of sin, and God's infinite displeasure against it. 2dly. The inexorableness of divine justice in demanding satisfaction for sin. 3dly. The infinite greatness of the love of God to lost sinners, in providing a surety and sacrifice for them, and of Christ in becoming both. 4thly. The great worth and preciousness of immortal souls, and the costliness of pardon, and of eternal glory. 5thly. Christ dying, and yet, in the mean time, conquering: principal-

ties and powers, and triumphing over them upon the cross.

Q. What ought you to vow when at the Lord's table?

A. That in the strength of Christ, my surety, I will abstain from all known sin, and make conscience of every known duty: That I will mind religion, as the one thing needful, and make the pleasing of God the chief business of my life.

Q. For what things are you to offer your request at this time?

A. For grace to preserve my liveliness of frame, for strength to pay my vows, for wisdom and skill to improve a crucified Christ in my after life, for furniture for future trials, for victory over Satan's temptations and indwelling sin; for mercy to my near relations, to my church, and for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ through the world.

Q. In what frame ought you to rise and go from this holy table?

A. 1st. In an admiring and thankful frame, upon account of redeeming love. 2dly. In an humble and watchful frame, because of the snares and dangers I am still exposed to. 3dly. In a believing and depending frame, leaning on Christ, for conduct through the wilderness.

Concerning our behaviour after partaking.

Q. How are you to behave when the public work is over?

A. 1st. I will retire in secret, and solemnly on my knees re-act what I was doing at the Lord's table; I will renew my choice of God, as my God, and my acceptance of Christ in all his offices, and my engagement to be the Lord's. 2dly. I ought to pray for the continuance of a communion frame with me when the communion is over. 3dly. I

must set about self-examination concerning my behaviour and success at the Lord's table.

Q. How may we keep up something of a lively frame when the communion is over?

A. In order thereto, we must, 1st. Be jealous of Satan, the world, and heart-lusts, that lie in wait to rob us of it. 2dly. Learn the art of living by faith, and of deriving life from Jesus Christ our head, for maintaining our life. 3dly. Still plead for the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, which must, like the bellows, blow up the fire, and maintain it against all the cold blasts of the devil and the world. 4thly. Delight in the company of lively christians.

Q. How may we examine our behaviour at the Lord's table, and discover if it were suitable?

A. We may take comfort, if we can say, 1st. We had there very low and abasing thoughts of ourselves and our own righteousness. Or, 2dly. We had something of a heart-melting remembrance of Christ's death and sufferings, when the signs and memorials of them were represented to us. Or, 3dly. We are filled with abhorrence of sin that pierced him. Or, 4thly. We went in cheerfully with the terms of the covenant of grace.

Q. How may we examine our success, and know if we have got any good by this ordinance?

A. We may discern it by such effects as these: 1st. If we have got any further assurance of God's love; or, 2dly. If we have higher esteem of Christ; or, 3dly, If we have greater delight in duty; or, 4thly. If we have a better relish of ordinances, and their usefulness, so as to make us resolve to hang still on God's hand.

Q. What should be our conversation after this solemn ordinance?

A. We should walk circumspectly, and conduct ourselves suitably to the Lord's dealings and dis-

pensations towards us, whether we had success at it or not.

Q. How ought they to conduct themselves, who have got no good by this ordinance?

A. 1st. They must search into the cause, if it were unbelief, sloth, self-conceit, or any sin reserved, and mourn over it. 2dly. They must flee to the blood of Christ for pardon and cleansing. 3dly. They should look out for another communion occasion, and prepare for it more diligently and self-deniedly; and watch especially against that evil or defect in their management, which conscience suggests was the cause of their bad success of the former.

Q. How should they conduct themselves who have got good at the sacrament?

A. 1st. They should be thankful to the author, and like the children of Zion, be joyful in their King. 2dly. Record what they have got, that it may be of use to them in a day of clouds. 3dly. Study to preserve it by committing it to God, and walking humbly and tenderly before him. 4thly. Pity and pray for others under discouragement, and be ready to communicate your experience to them for their support. 5thly. Study to recommend Christ and religion to strangers, by a holy and shining conversation before all men.

Q. What is that holy becoming conversation, which communicants should study?

A. It is a conversation ordered aright and suitable to the rule of God's word, to the principles they profess, the sights they have seen, the benefits they have received, and the vows they have made.

Q. What is it that makes our conversation to shine before the world?

A. When we have it adorned with humility, purity, justice, charity, meekness, patience, resig-

nation to God's will, and contentment in every condition.

Q. Are not the best of God's people in danger of miscarrying after such a solemn ordinance?

A. Yes? as appears from the instance of *Peter* and the rest of the disciples, after the first communion.

Q. Whence is it that we are in such hazards?

A. It proceeds from such things as: 1st. From the natural inconstancy of our hearts. 2dly. From that security and self-confidence we are prone to, after favour received from God. 3dly. From the malice and activity of Satan, who seeks by all means to ensnare us into sin after the sacrament, that he may thereby exceedingly widen the breach betwixt God and us.

Q. How shall we prevent backsliding and yielding to Satan's temptation after the sacrament?

A. 1st. We must labour to preserve a warm sense of the love of Christ in our souls. 2dly. Maintain an everlasting jealousy over our treacherous hearts, and never trust them at any time. 3dly. Keep Christ our ascended forerunner full in our eye, and beware of losing sight or thought of him. 4thly. We must commit our souls, by humble and believing prayer into the hands of God's power and mercy, as the child doth itself into the nurse's arms.

QUESTIONS

FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

Proper for young Communicants in examining the state and condition of their souls in secret, before they approach unto the Lord's Table: the which if they can answer in the affirmative, or some few of them, they have ground to hope they are in a gracious state, and have a right before God to this sealing ordinance.

Quest. 1. Can I say that I am deeply affected about my soul, and my eternal state, so that my great and leading questions are, What must I do to be saved?

Q. 2. Have I been spiritually enlightened to see the depravity of my nature, and the sinfulness of my heart and life, so as to be convinced that I am all as an unclean thing before God?

Q. 3. Have I been made to see sin as the greatest evil, and feel it as the greatest burden in the world, so as to account deliverance from it the greatest happiness?

Q. 4. Is my spirit very lowly and humble before God? Am I truly low and vile in mine own eyes, under a deep sense of my unworthiness and ill deserving, so as to cry with the Centurion, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: and with the publican, God be merciful to me a sinner?

Q. 5. Have I seen my absolute need of Jesus Christ to save me from sin and wrath, to restore the lost image of God, and to give me grace and glory, so that I am truly willing to part with all things for Christ?

Q. 6. Have I been made heartily to approve of the gospel method of salvation through the satisfaction of Christ? And is my soul well pleased with the self-abasing and grace-exalting way of saving sinners by the righteousness of another?

Q. 7. Have I made choice of God in Christ the mediator, as my God and portion? And can I say, that which moved me to this choice was a sight of the vanity of seeking a rest for my soul among the creatures, and that its happiness lies in the enjoyment of God, which is only to be had through Christ?

Q. 8. Have I a high opinion of Jesus Christ the Mediator? Is he very precious to my soul?

Have I seen a matchless beauty in his person, in his offices and fulness, and that the fulness of the Godhead is in him, and all freely exhibited for the use of those that come to him?

Q. 9. Have I been helped to close with God's offer unto me in the gospel, and to accept of this well qualified surety and Saviour in his fulness, and in his offices of prophet, priest, and king, and to embrace him as altogether lovely?

Q. 10. Have I been determined to resign and surrender myself unto the Lord, to be taught, ruled, and saved by him? And have I given up all I have, to be disposed of by him at his pleasure?

Q. 11. Am I willing to renounce my own righteousness in justification, and my own strength in sanctification, and to look to Christ as my surety and head for both, saying, in the Lord Jesus only have I righteousness and strength?

Q. 12. Is Jesus Christ welcome to my soul as a King, as well as a Priest, so that I am as willing to be governed by his laws, as to be justified by his righteousness?

Q. 13. Have I got new discoveries of spiritual and heavenly things, which I had not before? Do I see a reality in a future life and glory, an awfulness in eternity, an emptiness in this world, a worth in my soul, an evil in sin, and beauty in Christ and holiness, which I saw not before?

Q. 14. Do I seek more earnestly after the favour of God through Christ, than after any earthly comfort or enjoyment whatsoever?

Q. 15. Do I study the things that please God, and make for his glory? And do I prefer his interest above the interest of the world, or of the flesh?

Q. 16. Is indwelling sin, and the corruption and plagues of my heart, my daily grief and burden? Do I struggle and strive against them, and long for a deliverance, crying with the apostle, O!

wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death ?

Q. 17. Can I say that I have respect to all God's commandments ; and conscientiously practice whatever I discover to be my duty ? that I dare neither omit duty when I know it, nor dare I venture upon any sin against my light ?

Q. 18. Can I say, as I dare not omit duty, as little dare I rest upon it ? that I see my prayers have need of pardon, and my tears need to be washed in Christ's blood ; and therefore I can find no rest to the sole of my foot, but in my cautioner's perfect righteousness ?

Q. 19. Can I say, I am truly grieved in heart for sin that pierced Christ, and am ready to put a bill of divorce into the hand of every lust, yea, the most beloved idol, resolving never to give harbour to any of these traitors or enemies of my Lord ?

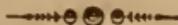
Q. 20. Can I say that I love Christ with my heart, and that I can appeal to himself for the truth and reality of it, though it be but weak ; and that it is my great grief that I cannot love him more ?

Q. 21. Can I say, that I breathe after greater conformity to God both in heart and in life, and that I desire heart holiness more than any temporal thing whatsoever ? and that I cry out with the Psalmist, O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes ?

Q. 22. Can I say that I am truly desirous of converse and fellowship with God in the duties of religion ? and that I look upon that prayer, that sermon, that Sabbath, as lost, where I find nothing of his gracious presence ?

Now, let young communicants retire in secret for putting these questions to their souls, as in the presence of God, and let them wait till conscience

give answer to them; but see that they do this when they are in the best frame.



A PROPOSAL

FOR YOUNG COMMUNICANTS.

Their express renewing the baptismal engagements, before their first admission to the Lord's table: which practice might be much for edification; especially if duly managed, and done with some solemnity before witnesses, such as ministers, elders, and other young persons.

Q. What moves you to seek access to the Lord's table?

A. The Lord's command, and because I desire to renew my baptismal engagements, and declare myself a christian by my own free choice and consent, and would join myself unto the Lord by my own voluntary act and deed.

Q. Why do you desire to do so?

A. Because when I got the first seal of the covenant, to wit, baptism, I knew not what was done for me, nor was I capable of consent to my parent's deed; but now, when I am come to some knowledge and capacity, I am willing to declare that I make religion my free choice and reasonable service.

Q. Why do you come so early? will it not be soon enough to mind religion in old age?

A. No: for besides that I may die young, those who neglect religion, and give up themselves to the world or the flesh in their youth, do fall into hardness of heart, from which few recover.

Q. What is the most proper season to seek acquaintance with Christ and religion?

A. The time of youth, because in this age the heart is more easily melted, and the habits of vice

are not so riveted, as afterwards: and because God has a special delight in early piety.

Q. What views have you got then of your natural state and condition?

A. I do see it to be a most sinful and wretched and helpless case; I am condemned to perish under a load of guilt and wrath, having broke the covenant of works, which I cannot fulfil, offended the justice of God, which I cannot satisfy, and lost the image of God, and my precious soul which I cannot recover. O what shall I do to be saved?

Q. To whom do you look for relief?

A. Only to Jesus Christ, who hath in his free love to lost sinners, undertaken as surety and mediator in the new covenant, which is exhibited and sealed to believers at the Lord's table.

Q. What views have you got of that covenant which is there sealed?

A. I see the way of salvation laid down in it through the suretyship and righteousness of Jesus Christ, to be an excellent contrivance, well ordered in all things, and sure; I look upon it as a device every way worthy of God, and of infinite wisdom, and I do heartily approve of it, consent to it, and desire to come and venture my soul and everlasting salvation upon it.

Q. What think you of the love of God, that was the spring of this new covenant?

A. I view it as wonderful and amazing; I admire the love of the Father, in contriving and sending his beloved Son to execute it: I admire the love of the Son of God, in undertaking to be a surety and sacrifice for lost sinners of Adam's race, when the sinning angels were past by and left to perish for ever: and I admire the love of the Holy Ghost, in undertaking to apply that redemption to lost sinners, by working in them con-

viction, conversion, and faith in Jesus Christ.

Q. With what frame and disposition do you come to renew your baptismal covenant?

A. I desire to be sensible of my guilt in breaking this covenant, in running away from Christ's colours, in going over to Satan's camp, and in standing so long out against Christ's calls and offers; and I desire now to return to the Lord as a penitent prodigal and a mourning backslider, with my face Zionward, weeping as I go, willing to renew my baptismal vows with others, saying, Come let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten. And, in a word, I desire to go to a broken Christ with a broken heart.

Q. What is that baptismal vow or covenant which you design to renew?

A. According to my engagement and dedication in baptism, I desire expressly to own and acknowledge the only living and true God as my God in Christ, as he offers himself in the covenant of grace; and to give up myself soul and body to him, to be for him, and not for another. And I design in the most solemn manner, to go and renounce all the enemies of the Holy Trinity, to wit, the devil, the world, and the flesh: and to declare my acceptance of God the Father as my Father, of God the Son as my Redeemer, and of God the Holy Ghost as my sanctifier: in whose blessed name I was baptized, and to whose service and glory I was dedicated.

Q. What do you think of Jesus Christ, the mediator of the covenant?

A. I think him a matchless person, and an excellent and all-sufficient Saviour; and I am content to accept of him in all his offices, namely, as a Prophet to instruct and teach me, as a Priest to atone and intercede for me, and as a King to rule in me and over me.

Q. What do you think of your own righteousness and strength with respect to your salvation?

A. I look upon my own righteousness and strength as insufficient to answer the demands of God's law, and therefore I renounce them and flee to a surety for both, saying, in the Lord Jesus Christ only have I righteousness and strength: and I am content, and resolved to make use of borrowed strength for my performing of duty, and of a borrowed righteousness for my acceptance in duty.

Q. How do you like this self-denying way of saving lost souls?

A. I am well pleased with it, as it makes me an eternal debtor to free grace, as it doth exclude all boasting and glorying in the creature, and ascribes all the glory of my salvation to Christ only; as it takes the crown off the head of self, and puts it upon the head of glorious Christ.

Q. How do you relish the kingly office of Jesus Christ?

A. I am well pleased therewith, and content to take Christ as a King to govern me by his laws, as well as a priest to save me by his blood; nay, I am desirous he may come in as a King, and execute his Kingly office in my soul; that he may set up his throne in my heart, subdue indwelling sin, and conquer all my rebellious lusts and corruption.

Q. What view have you of the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity, and of his office in the business of saving souls?

A. I look upon him as the blessed applier of Christ's purchase unto me, and do accept of him as such; and I am willing to give up myself to him, to convince, renew, enlighten, sanctify, and

guide me; and I believe he is as willing and ready to make the application, as Christ was to make the purchase; and therefore I desire to trust him for this blessed effect.

Q. What think you of the things of this world as a portion to the soul?

A. I look upon all its profits, honours, and pleasures, to be insufficient to suit the soul's desires, and that they are nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit; and therefore I will never set my heart upon the world as my portion; it is only the enjoyment of God reconciled in Christ, that can afford complete satisfaction to my soul; and this only I choose for my happiness and portion.

Q. What do you think of the world to come?

A. I look upon it, and the things thereof, as awful, certain, and very near. I look upon hell as the eternal habitation of unbelievers; but I view heaven as the country and dwelling-place of the followers of the Lamb, with whom I desire to join to seek that country, and dwell with them for ever.

Q. What do you think of a holy and religious life?

A. I think a religious life, or a life spent in the service of God, and in communion with him, the most pleasant and comfortable life that a man can live in the world.

Q. How do you think to attain to holiness for living this life?

A. I look upon Jesus Christ as the purchaser of holiness as well as of happiness; as he who by his death hath obtained the Holy Spirit to effectuate the new birth, and form the image of God in his people; and therefore I desire to come to Christ and his blood for sanctification, as well as for justification; for conformity and likeness to God, as well as for access to fellowship and communion with God; and I will plead, that he may send his

Holy Spirit into my soul, for producing holiness, and all the graces of the Spirit.

Q. What view have you got of the promises of the covenant, and their usefulness?

A. I look upon them as the ground of all my faith and hope, and I desire to make daily use of them, and to plead them with God for furniture and strength to perform every duty, and for perseverance and thorough bearing in all the steps of my pilgrimage, and I resolve to have recourse to him in every strait and difficulty.

Q. As you profess willingness to accept of God in Christ as your God, are you not also willing to dedicate yourself to him for his use and service?

A. Yes, I am willing (I hope through grace) to give up and surrender unto the Lord myself, and all that belongs unto me, my soul and body, with all their powers, faculties, senses, members, and enjoyments, to be instruments of his glory, and to be disposed of by him for his use and service at his pleasure.

Q. How do you instruct your willingness to give up and surrender the powers and faculties of your soul unto the Lord?

A. I think I am willing to dedicate and give up my understanding to the Lord, to contemplate his perfections, and know his will; my memory to him, to retain and treasure up his gracious promises and counsels; my will to him to choose and refuse every thing according to his will, and to comply therewith in all things: and my conscience to him, to be his deputy, to accuse and excuse according to his direction.

Q. Do you also resign and give up the passions and affections of your soul unto the Lord?

A. Yes, I give up and dedicate my passion of grief to the Lord, to mourn for every thing that is offensive to him; my hatred, to abhor every thing

that is hateful to him; my desires, to long for his presence; my love, to embrace and entertain him; my delight and joy, to solace myself, and to acquiesce cheerfully in him, as my soul's portion and happiness.

Q. In what respects do you resign your bodily senses and members to the Lord?

A. I give up my eyes to read his word, and behold his wondrous works; my ears, to hear his word, and attend to his counsels; my taste, smell, and feeling, to discern and relish his sweetness and excellence in the creatures; my tongue, to proclaim his praise, and commend his ways and service; my hands to help his people; and my feet to walk in paths pleasing to him.

Q. How do you resign your enjoyments and comforts to the Lord?

A. I resign my time, my health, my talents, my opportunities, my relations, my gifts, my interest, my power, my wisdom, my substance, my honour, my reputation, and all I have in the world, unto the Lord, to be employed and disposed of by him for his glory, as he thinks proper.

Q. What view have you now of sin and of those sins you once esteemed as your right hand and right eye?

A. I see and abhor them as the enemies and crucifiers of my Lord Jesus, and as the very nails and spear that pierced him, and desire to throw them out of my heart, and to cut off every right hand and pluck out every right eye, and to renounce all ungodliness and all beloved lusts, and count no sins too dear to part with for Jesus Christ my Lord.

Q. What do you think now of companions in sin and their solicitations?

A. I am convinced of their folly, and resolve never to follow the multitude to do evil, nor to join them in any of the common sins of the age, and steadfastly (through grace) to avoid the snares,

and resist the temptations of evil company; saying, with the Psalmist, depart from me, ye evil doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God.

Q. What thoughts have you of the people of God, and those who bear his image?

A. I look upon them as God's precious jewels, the excellent ones of the earth, and the most desirable company in the world.

Q. But what do you think of them when you see them few and despised?

A. I resolve through grace, to join Christ's little flock, his praying, and sin-hating flock, though they be few in number: I desire to love them above all others, and to accept of them as my fellow travelers to the heavenly Zion, and that notwithstanding of their being despised or reproached by the world.

Q. But what do you think of the cross, and of sharp persecution, that sometimes attend the owning of Christ?

A. I desire to take Christ with his cross, as well as with his crown: and to welcome the world's hatred, reproaches, injuries, or any kind of trouble or persecution I may meet with for owning Christ, his truth and ways.

Q. What think you of the Holy Scriptures?

A. I believe they are indicted by God's Holy Spirit, I value them above all books, I accept of them thankfully as a guide through the wilderness, a light to my feet, and a lamp to my paths, and a treasure of comforts and cordials suitable for me in all cases and difficulties, which I desire always to search into and study to be acquainted with.

Q. What do you think of the Lord's day?

A. I regard it as holy and honourable, and as a standing testimony of the perfection of Christ's sacrifice; I look upon it as the best day of the week, as being Christ's weekly market-day for

needy souls, which I resolve to improve carefully for getting provisions for my soul through the rest of the week.

Q. What do you think of gospel ordinances?

A. I look upon the word, sacraments, prayer and praise, to be God's institutions, and means of conveying grace to souls. I thankfully accept of them, as needful helps in the way to heaven, and as meeting places betwixt God and my soul: and desire to make it my main errand in attending them to meet with him therein.

Q. What do you think of the Lord's supper that you have in view?

A. I look upon it as Christ's banqueting-house and spiritual feast, which in his love he hath provided for refreshing and strengthening his people's souls, while travelling through this wilderness. I desire to bless God for it, and to accept of it as a rare privilege, a quickener of grace, a memorial of redeeming love, and a pledge of Christ's second coming.

Q. What do you think of the duty of prayer?

A. I look upon it not only as my great duty, but also as an honourable privilege, seeing hereby I have access to converse with God; and therefore I resolve through grace to live a life of prayer and acquaintance with God, in and through Christ, all my days, and that I will always go to God and consult with him in all cases and difficulties.

Q. What do you think of the rest of the duties of Christianity, and of those which the moral law enjoins?

A. I look upon the law, (which Christ hath adopted into the covenant of grace, as a rule of life to his people,) to be holy, just, and good: and the duties enjoined by it to be most reasonable, calculated for the glory of God and his people's good. The gospel, which is the doctrine of grace,

doth strongly enforce this law, by teaching us sobriety with respect to ourselves, righteousness with respect to our neighbour, and godliness with respect to God. And the love of Christ doth mightily constrain us to the diligent performance of all these moral duties.

Q. What do you think of the rods and afflictions which attend the children of God?

A. I believe they are fatherly chastisements for our good, and that they are wisely and seasonably ordered by him who hedges up his people's ways with thorns, that they may not find their crooked paths, and therefore, I desire to submit to the rod, as the needful discipline of Christ's house, and to welcome his convictions and reproofs, as well as his comforts and smiles; and to bless him for afflictions as well as for mercies.

Q. What do you think of the life of faith?

A. I believe it to be the most happy life, and that it ought to be the daily life of God's people while in this world. And I desire to study and learn this noble life of faith, and of dependence upon the Son of God, and to make daily use of his blood and righteousness to cover my guilt, and of his grace and strength to enable me to perform duty, conquer sin, resist temptation, and bear affliction.

Q. What do you think of the spiritual warfare which Christ calls you to?

A. I look upon that war as just and honourable; and therefore do come in, a volunteer at the sound of the gospel trumpet, to enlist myself a soldier under Christ's banner; I do for ever abandon the devil's camp, and am willing to swear allegiance to Christ Jesus, to take up arms for him, and to fight against his enemies, the world, the devil, and the flesh, all the days of my life. I resolve never to make peace with these enemies, nor agree to a

cessation of arms. I will never wittingly rest nor give harbour to these bosom traitors, indwelling lusts and corruptions: but under the conduct of my glorious Captain, and in his strength I will carry on the war, till I attain to that complete victory which is promised to all believers in Christ.

Q. What do you think of those who are deserters and runaways from Christ's standard?

A. I look upon them as guilty of the greatest madness, and exposed to the greatest wrath, seeing Christ's soul can take no pleasure in those who draw back from him; and therefore I propose, through grace, to keep close by my Captain, and to adhere to his cause and interest all the days of my life.

Q. In whose strength is it, that you engage to all these parts and articles of the covenant?

A. Only in the strength of Jesus Christ my head and surety, who hath undertaken for me, and promised to make his grace forthcoming for me. Wherefore I altogether distrust my own strength and resolution, and betake myself to borrowed strength. I resolve never to trust in my promise to Christ, but in Christ's promise to me, that he will never leave me nor forsake me.

Q. Will you satisfy yourself with a public profession and engaging to these things before men?

A. No: I will through grace profess and declare all these things also in secret before God. And I will give consent to all the parts and articles of God's covenant of grace in the most serious and self-denied manner: and I will, by grace, bind and engage myself to them by entering into secret transaction, or personal covenant with God through Christ, before I come to take the seal of God's covenant. And afterwards I will adventure, in his strength, to approach to his holy table, to ratify and seal this bargain, before men and angels.

An example of a young Communicant's secret transacting and covenanting with God, before his approach to the Lord's Table.

ALMIGHTY GOD, and Creator of all things, Thou didst make man at first upright and happy: but by the fall he is become most sinful and miserable. I acknowledge, that by nature I am an enemy to thee, a child of wrath, and a slave to sin and Satan. I have been a transgressor of thy laws from the womb; and it is a wonder of thy patience that thou hast not made me a monument of thy wrath in hell, long before this time. Oh! what will become of me to all eternity, if I abide in this state?

I have heard there is mercy in God to lost sinners through the blood of a crucified Jesus, which revives my drooping soul. O can this mercy reach the like of me! But surely the viler sinner I am, thou hast the fairer opportunity of showing the freeness of thy love and the efficacy of thy Son's blood, and if I be a sharer of it, eternal hallelujahs will be sung to the Lamb of God on my account. I do therefore come and cast myself down at the feet of infinite mercy, and plead for it according to thy promise through Jesus Christ thy dear Son.

O Father of mercies, and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, I am now sensible of my sin and folly, in rebelling against thee, and going over to Satan's camp; I desire to return as a penitent prodigal to my heavenly Father, confessing my guilt, and willing to join myself unto the Lord in an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten. O Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy child: but happy would I think myself if I were admitted to the meanest station or room in thy family. I desire to magnify thy free love and infinite wisdom in contriving a way of salvation to lost sinners through a mediator, and in sending thy eternally beloved Son to be the mediator and surety for satisfying thy justice for them, and for purchasing grace and glory for them. According to thy command, I desire to put honour upon thy Son, and heartily approve of this device of salvation, as every way worthy of God, and to fall in with it in all respects. O pity thy own creature, the work-

manship of thy hands ; go over thy work again, and upon Christ's account create me anew after thine own image, that I may be fitted for thy service and glory .

O blessed Jesus, I admire thy love in undertaking to be the surety and sacrifice for lost sinners, and in making offer of thy blood, to wash the like of me: Welcome, Lord Jesus! I do here disclaim all other ways of salvation, and betake myself to thee as my only mediator and Saviour, to be saved, taught and ruled by thee , I accept of thee as my great High Priest, to atone for my soul, and plead my cause with the Father, by thy meritorious death and powerful intercession: I renounce all my own righteousness and worthiness in the business of justification and acceptance with God, and avouch thee alone as the Lord my righteousness. I accept of thee as my great Prophet, and give up myself to thy teaching and instruction, that I may be conducted by thee through this wilderness, and brought safe to heaven at last: O for wisdom to follow thy directions! I do accept of thee as my King, swear allegiance to thee, and heartily consent to thy laws and government. Let thy throne be set up in my soul, and all thy enemies there made thy footstool: I accept of thee for my husband, and consent to the marriage covenant in all its articles: I accept of thee as my captain, and enlist myself as a soldier under thy banner, to fight in thy strength, against all thine enemies ; I go in with all thy gospel terms, and am well pleased with the self-denying way of salvation proposed therein. I am content to be an eternal debtor to free-grace, and that the glory of my salvation be for ever ascribed to Jesus Christ my surety.

O holy Spirit, I thankfully accept of thee as the applier of my Redeemer's purchase and do welcome thee to do thine office in my soul, to work faith in me to believe the gospel, to bring about the change of the new birth, and to renew all my faculties. To thee I am beholden for all the good motions and inclinations excited in them. O let them be continued, and the good work carried forward in me to perfection. I do choose thee for my quickener, sanctifier, and my director through all my pilgrimage ; I yield myself to thy influences and conduct, and desire carefully to attend all thy motions and convictions, both in performing my

duty, and in abstaining from sin ; O work grace in me for that effect, and enable me always to study and choose the things that are pleasing to thee.

According to my baptismal vows, I do here renounce and abandon all the enemies of the holy Trinity, the devil, the world, and the flesh ; and I do here surrender myself unto thee, Father, Son, and Spirit, one God, to be thine, and thine only ; thine, and not the devil's, thine and not the world's, thine and not my lust's, thine and not my own ; I desire with my whole heart to choose and avouch thee to be my God and everlasting portion, and also to devote and dedicate my soul and body and all that belongs to me, to be instruments of thy glory, and to be disposed of for thy use and service. O do thou henceforth set thy mark upon me, as a child born to thee, and formed for thy praise ; stamp me with thy image, that I may be distinguished, set apart, and consecrated for thy service and glory all my days.

And seeing, above, thou requirest the heart, I do here make an offer and surrender of my heart to thee. Lord, take it, and form it for thyself, make it entirely new, make it soft, tender, pliable, and holy : put thy fear in it, and write thy laws on it, that I may serve thee continually, and never depart from thee. Lord, I here give my consent to thy entering in, and taking possession of the throne in my soul ; be therefore cast open, all ye doors of my soul, that the King of glory may enter in and dwell for ever. I have found my heart very corrupt, wicked, and deceitful, and will no longer pretend to manage it ; but give it up to thee, to bring every thought and inclination in subjection to thee.

I see the world is nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit ; I will never any more set my heart upon it, but endeavour to conquer it and subdue my inclinations to it ; I place my happiness only in the enjoyment of God. I view heaven as my country and dwelling-place, and I will henceforth set my face heavenward, and spend my life here in God's service and in communion with him, that I may be meet for the heavenly state.

I will always look upon sin as the enemy of God, and the crucifier of Jesus Christ my Saviour, and will pursue it to death : I will never follow a multitude to do evil, but will join myself to the people of God, though

they be despised or persecuted ; I take Christ with his cross, as well as with his crown, and I cheerfully submit to the rod and discipline of his house. Lord if thou wilt undertake that thy grace shall be sufficient for me, I shall think nothing too difficult to attempt, or too much to suffer for thee. I desire to learn the life of faith and prayer ; O teach me it, that I may make daily use of Christ my surety, both for justification and sanctification, for strength to perform duty, bear the cross, and resist temptation. I look unto thee to send forth the Spirit into my soul, to assist and strengthen me for every good word and work. Heavenly Father, I take thee for my Father, I take Christ for my life, I take the Spirit for my guide, I take thy word for my rule, thy promises for my encouragement, thy testimonies for my counsellors, thy Sabbath for my delight, thy ordinances for my meeting place, thy people for my companions, thy glory for my end, holiness for my way, and heaven for my home.

Lord I have no might or strength to keep or perform any thing I have engaged, but undertake all in my surety's strength, depending upon his promise, that he will never leave nor forsake me. In the Lord Jesus only have I righteousness and strength ; O Lord, be surety for thy servant for good ; give always what thou requirest, and then demand what thou pleasest.

And as an evidence of my sincerity in this solemn profession, dedication and engagement, I am willing to subscribe with my hand unto the Lord, as I am warranted. Isa. xlv. 5.

Now I am thine, Lord save me.

QUESTIONS AND COUNSEL FOR YOUNG CONVERTS.

QUESTIONS.

1. Have you seen yourself to be, by nature and by practice, a lost and helpless sinner? Have you not only seen the sinfulness of particular acts of transgression, but also that your heart is the seat and fountain of sin? That in you, naturally, there is no good thing? Has a view of this led you to despair of help from yourself? To see that you must be altogether indebted to Christ for salvation, and to the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit for strength and ability rightly to perform any duty?

2. On what has your hope of acceptance with God been founded? On your reformation? on your sorrow for your sins? on your prayers? on your tears? on your good works and religious observances? or has it been on Christ alone, as your all in all? Has Christ ever appeared very precious to you? Do you mourn that he does not appear more so? Have you sometimes felt great freedom to commit your soul to him? In doing this (if you have done it) has it been, not only to be delivered from the punishment due to your sins, but also from the power, pollution, dominion and existence of sin in your soul?

3. As far as you know yourself, do you hate and desire to be delivered from all sin—without any exception of a favourite lust? Do you pray much to be delivered from sin? Do you watch against it, and against temptation to it? Do you strive against it, and in some good degree get the victory over it? Have you so repented of it as to have your soul really set against it?

4. Have you counted the cost of following Christ or of being truly religious? That it will cut you off from vain amusements, from the indulgence of your lust, and from a sinful conformity to the world? That it may expose you to ridicule and contempt? possibly to more serious persecution? In the view of all these things, are you willing to take up the cross, and to follow Christ

whithersoever he shall lead you? Is it your solemn purpose, in reliance on his grace and aid, to cleave to him, and to his cause and people, to the end of life?

5. Do you love holiness? Do you love a holy God, and because he is holy? Do you earnestly desire to be more and more conformed to God, and to his holy law? To bear more and more the likeness of your Redeemer? Do you seek, and sometimes find, communion with your God and Saviour?

6. Are you resolved in God's strength, to endeavour conscientiously to perform your whole duty—to God, to your neighbour, and to yourself? Do you perform common and relative duties conscientiously, as part of the duty which you owe to God?

7. Do you make conscience of secret prayer daily? Do you sometimes feel a backwardness to this duty? Do you at other times feel a great delight in it? Have you a set time, and place, and order of exercises, for performing this duty?

8. Do you daily read a portion of the Holy Scriptures, in a devout manner? Do you love to read the Bible? Do you ever perceive a sweetness in the truths of the Holy Scriptures? Do you find them adapted to your necessities, and see at times, a wonderful beauty, excellence and glory in God's word? Do you make it the man of your counsel, and endeavour to have both your heart and life conformed to its doctrines and requisitions?

9. Have you ever attempted to covenant with God? To give yourself away to him, solemnly and irrevocably, hoping for acceptance through Christ alone; and taking God, in Christ, as the covenant God, and satisfying portion of your soul?

10. Does the glory of God ever appear to you as the first, greatest and best, of all objects? Do you desire to promote the glory of God, as the chief object of life?

11. Do you feel a love to mankind—such as you did not feel before you became religious? Have you a great desire that the souls of men should be saved, by being brought to a genuine faith and trust in the Redeemer? Do you love God's people with a peculiar attachment, because they bear their Saviour's image? and because they love and pursue the objects, and delight in the exercises which are most pleasing and delightful to

yourself? Do you, from your heart, forgive all your personal enemies, and refuse to cherish or entertain any sentiments of hatred or revenge? If you have injured any person, have you made reparation; or are you ready and willing to make it?

12. Do you feel it very important to adorn religion, by a holy, exemplary, amiable and blameless walk and conversation? Do you fear to bring a reproach on the cause of Christ? Does this appear to you extremely dreadful? Are you afraid of backsliding, and of being left to return to a state of carelessness and indifference in religion?

13. Do you desire and endeavour to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ your Saviour, more and more? Are you willing to sit at his feet as a little child, and to submit your reason and understanding, implicitly, to his teaching; imploring his Spirit to guide you into all necessary truth, to save you from all fatal errors, to enable you to receive his truth in the love of it, and to transform you, more and more, into a likeness to himself?

COUNSEL.

1. Remember that these questions are intended to point your attention to subjects of inquiry the most important. Do not, therefore, content yourself with a careless, or cursory reading of them. Read and deliberate, and examine yourself closely on the questions under each head: and let your heart be lifted up to God, while you are considering each particular question; in earnest desires that he may show you the very truth. You cannot ordinarily go over all these questions at one time. Divide them, therefore, and take one part at one time, and another at another. But try to go over the whole in the course of a week: and do this every week for some months. When you find yourself doubtful or deficient in any point, let it not discourage you: but note down that point in writing, and bend the attention of your mind to it, and labour and pray till you shall have made the attainment which will enable you to answer clearly. It is believed that you cannot fail to see how each question ought to be answered.

2. Remember that secret prayer, reading the word

of God, watchfulness, and self-examination, are the great means of preserving comfort in religion, and of growing in grace. In proportion as you are exact and faithful in these, such, usually, will be your inward peace, and the safety of our state. Unite them all together, and never cease to practice them while you live. Think often of the character of Enoch, and try to walk with God. Read Mason's little book on self-knowledge, I recommend it as excellent.

3. Besides the Bible, have constantly in reading at your leisure hours, some author of known piety and excellence. Read Owen's works, Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, Doddridge's works, Watt's works, Witherspoon's works, Newton's works, Scott's works, Venn's *whole Duty of Man*, *The Christian Observer*, &c. &c.

4. Do not suppose that any evidence which, at present, you may think you possess, of a gracious state, will release you from the necessity of maintaining a constant vigilance in time to come; nor from repeated examinations and trials of yourself even to the end of life. Many marks and evidences of a gracious state are set down by pious writers. But they must all come to this—to ascertain what is your prevalent temper and character—whether, on the whole, you are increasing in sanctification, or not? If you are, you may be comforted; if not, you have cause to be alarmed. It is only he that endureth to the end that shall be saved.

I think it of very great importance to warn you not to imagine that true religion is confined to the closet or to the church; even though you apprehend that you have great comfort and freedom there. Freedom and comfort there, are indeed most desirable; but true religion reaches to every thing. It alters and sweetens the temper. It improves the manners. It goes into every duty, relation, station and situation of life. If you have true religion, you will have a better spirit, you will be better sons, better scholars, better friends, better members of society, and more exemplary in the discharge of every duty: as the sure consequence of this invaluable possession; and if your religion does not produce these effects, although you may talk of inward comforts, and even of raptures, you have great reason

to fear that the whole is a delusion, and that the root of the matter is not in you.

“Herein (said the Saviour) is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples.”

6. Be careful to avoid a gloomy, and to cherish a cheerful temper. Be habitually cheerful; but avoid levity. Mirth and laughter are not always sinful; but let your indulgence in them be clearly innocent, not very frequent, and never of long continuance. Be very humble. Be not talkative. Before experienced Christians be a hearer, rather than a talker. Try in every way, however, to promote religion among your relatives and friends. Win them to it by your amiable temper and exemplary deportment. “Flee youthful lusts.” Shun every excitement of them. Guard against dissipation; it extinguishes piety. Be not disconcerted by ridicule and reproach. Your Saviour bore much of these for you. Think of this, and be ashamed of nothing, so much as of being ashamed of him. Trust in his protection, live to his praise, and you will spend an eternity in his blissful presence.

THE END.