

Charles Wesley.



HOPE

FAITH

THE
PRACTICE
OF PIETY:
Directing a Christian
how to walke that he
may please God.
Amplified by the Author
PIETY hath the Promise
1 Tim: 4. 8.

REDEEM THE
TIME BEV.

WATCHE Maner

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IOSUAH

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Spirit

Flesh

Faith

Prayer

Fasting

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1. N. 125

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**MEDITATIONS OF THE TRUE MANNER OF
PRACTISING PIETY ON THE
SABBATH-DAY.**

Almighty God will have himself worshipped, not only in a private manner by private persons and families, but also in a more public sort, of all the godly joined together in a visible church; that by this means he may be known not only to be the God and Lord of every Singular person, but also of the creatures of the whole universal world.

Question—But why do not we Christians under the New, keep the Sabbath on the same seventh day on which it was kept under the Old Testament?

I answer—Because our Lord Jesus, who is the Lord of the Sabbath ([Matt. xii. 8](#)), and whom the law itself commands us to hear ([Deut. xviii. 18, 19](#)), did alter it from that seventh day to this first day of the week on which we keep the Sabbath. For the holy evangelist notes, that our Lord came into the midst of the holy assembly on the two first days of the two weeks immediately following his resurrection, and then blessed the church, breathed on the apostles the Holy Ghost, and gave them the ministerial keys, and power of binding and remitting sins ([John xx. 22, 23](#).) And so it is most probable he did in a solemn manner every first day of the week, during the forty days he continued on earth between his resurrection and ascension (for the fiftieth day after, being the first day of the week, the apostles were assembled;) during which time he gave commandments unto the apostles, and “spake unto them those things which appertain to the kingdom of God,” ([Acts i. 2, 3](#)),⁵⁰ that is, instructed them how they should, throughout the churches which were to be converted, change the Sabbath to the Lord’s day; the bodily sacrifices of beasts, to the spiritual sacrifices of praise, prayer, and contrite hearts; the Levitical priesthood of the law, to the Christian ministry of the gospel ([Heb. vii. 11, 12](#);) the Jewish temples and synagogues, to churches and oratories; the old sacraments of circumcision and passover, to baptism and the Lord’s Supper, &c. as may appear by the like phrase ([Acts xix. 8](#); [xxviii. 23](#); [Col. iv. 11](#)), put for the whole sum of Paul’s doctrine, by which were wrought all these changes, where it took effect. So that as Christ was forty days instructing Moses in Sinai, what he should teach, and how he should rule the church under the law; so he continued forty days teaching his disciples in Sion, what they should preach, and how they should govern the church under the gospel ([Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12](#).) And seeing it is manifest, that within those forty days Christ appointed what ministers should teach, and how they should govern his church to the world’s end, it is not to be doubted but that within those forty days he likewise ordained on what day they should keep their Sabbath, and ordinarily do the works of their ministry; especially seeing that under



50 Cyril bids us note, that St. John doth not simply set down the manner of Christ’s appearing to Thomas, but also the circumstance of the time (post dies octo), whence he concludes thus: Diem igitur octavum Dominicam diem esse necesse est.—Cyril in Johan. lib. xii. cap. 58.

the Old Testament, God shewed himself as careful, both by his moral and ceremonial law, to prescribe the time, as well as the matter of his worship. Neither is it a thing to be omitted, that the Lord, who hath times and seasons in his own power ([Acts i. 7](#)), appointed this first day of the week to be the very day in which he sent down from heaven the Holy Ghost upon the apostles ([Acts ii. 1](#), &c.), so that upon that day they first began, and ever after continued the public exercising of their ministry, in the preaching of the word ([Acts ii. 1, 4](#)), the administration of the sacraments ([Acts ii. 38, 41, 42](#)), and the loosing of the sins of penitent sinners ([Acts ii. 38](#).) Upon these, and the like grounds, Athanasius plainly affirms that the Sabbath-day was changed by the Lord himself.⁵¹

As, therefore, our communion is termed the Lord's Supper, because it was instituted of the Lord, for the remembrance of his death; so the Christian Sabbath is called the Lord's day ([Rev. i. 10](#)), because it was ordained of the Lord, for the memorial of his resurrection.⁵² And as the name of the Lord ([1 Cor. xi. 10](#)) honours the one, so does it the other; and as the Lord of the Sabbath, by his royal prerogative, and transcendent authority, could, so he had also reason to change the holy Sabbath from the seventh day to this, on which we keep it; for as concerning the seventh day, which followed the six days in which God finished the creation, there was no such precise institution, or necessity of sanctifying it perpetually, but such as by the same authority, or upon greater reason and occasion, it might very well be changed and altered to some other seventh day; for the commandment does not say, Remember to keep holy the seventh day next following the sixth day of the creation, or this or that seventh day; but indefinitely, Remember that thou keep holy a seventh day.⁵³ And to speak properly, as we take a day for the distinction of time, called either a day natural, consisting of twenty-four hours, or a day artificial, consisting of twelve hours, from sun rising to sun setting; and withal consider the sun standing still at noon, in Joshua's time ([Josh. x. 12, 43](#)) the space of a whole day; and the sun going back ten degrees ([2 Kings xx. 11](#)), viz. five hours, almost half an artificial day, in Ezechiah's time; the Jews themselves could not keep their Sabbath upon that precise and just distinction of time, called at the first the seventh day from the creation.

Add to this, that in respect of the diversity of meridians, and the unequal rising and setting of the sun, every day varies in some places a quarter, in some half, in others a whole day. Therefore the Jewish seventh day cannot precisely be kept at the same instant of time every where in the world.

51 Athan. in frontispicio hom. de sent.

52 The Scripture of the New Testament gives not this honourable title to anything but only to the blessed Sabbath and holy Supper: For as he substituted the Lord's Supper instead of the Passover, so did he the Lord's day in the Jewish Sabbath's room.

53 Legis substantia est sex diebus, terrenis negotiis incumbere; septimâ, divino cultui dare operam.

Now our Lord Jesus having authority as Lord over the Sabbath ([Matt. xii. 8](#)), had likewise now far greater reason and occasion to translate the Sabbath from the Jewish seventh day to the first day on which Christians keep the Sabbath.

1. Because that by his resurrection from the dead, there is wrought a new spiritual creation of the world, without which all the sons of Adam had been turned to everlasting destruction, and all the works of the first creation had ministered no consolation to us ([Isa. lxxv. 17](#), &c.; [lxxvi. 22](#); [Psal. xc. 2](#).)

2. And in respect of this new spiritual creation, the Scripture saith, “That old things are passed away, and all things are become new,” ([2 Cor. v. 17](#))—new creatures ([Gal. vi. 15](#)), new people ([1 Pet. ii. 10](#)), new men ([Eph. iv. 24](#)), new knowledge ([Col. iii. 10](#)), new testament ([Matt. xxvi. 28](#)), new commandment ([John xii. 13](#)), new names ([Rev. ii. 17](#)), new way ([Heb. x. 10](#)), new song ([Rev. iii. 9](#)), new garment ([Luke v. 36, 37](#)), new wine, new vessels ([Rev. xxi. 2](#)), new Jerusalem ([2 Pet. iii. 13](#)), new heaven, and a new earth ([Isa. lxxvi. 22](#)) And therefore of necessity there must be, instead of the old, a new Sabbath-day ([Heb. iv. 9](#)), to honour and praise our Redeemer, and to meditate upon the work of our redemption, and to shew the new change of the Old Testament.

3. Because that on this day Christ rested from all the sufferings of his passion, and finished the glorious work of our redemption. If, therefore, the finishing of the work of the first creation, by which God mightily manifested himself to his creatures, deserved a sabbath to solemnize the memorial of so great a work, to the honour of the worker, and therefore calls it “mine holy day,” ([Isa. lxxviii. 13](#);) much more does the new creation of the world, effected by the resurrection of Christ, whereby he mightily declared himself to be the Son of God ([Rom. i. 4](#)), deserve a sabbath, for the perpetual commemoration of it, to the honour of Christ, and therefore worthily called the Lord’s day ([Rev. i. 10](#).) For, as the deliverance out of the captivity of Babylon, being greater, took away the name from the deliverance out of the bondage of Egypt ([Jer. xxiii. 7, 8](#);) so the day on which Christ finished the redemption of the world did more justly deserve to have the Sabbath kept on it, than on that day on which God ceased from creating the world. As, therefore, in the creation, the first day wherein it was finished, was consecrated for a sabbath; so in the time of redemption, the first day wherein it was perfected must be dedicated to a holy rest; but still a seventh day kept according to God’s moral commandment. The Jews kept the last day of the week, beginning their Sabbath with the night ([Gen. ii. 2](#); [Lev. xxiii. 32](#); [Neh. xiii. 19](#)), when God rested; but Christians honour the Lord better, on the first day of the week ([Matt. xxviii. 1](#)), beginning the Sabbath with the day when the Lord arose ([Acts xx. 7, 11](#).) *They* kept their Sabbath in remembrance, of the world’s creation; but *Christians* celebrate it in memorial of the world’s redemption; yea, the Lord’s day being the first of the creation and redemption, puts us in mind, both of the making of the old, and redeeming of the new world.

As, therefore, under the Old Testament, God, by the glory consisting of seven lamps, seven branches, &c. ([Exod. xxv. 31](#)), put them in remembrance of the creation, light, and Sabbath's rest; so, under the New Testament, Christ, the true light of the world, appears in the midst of the seven lamps, and seven golden candlesticks ([Rev. i. 13](#)), to put us in mind to honour our Redeemer in the light of the gospel of the Lord's seventh day of rest. And seeing the redemption, both for might and mercy, so far exceeds the creation, it stood with great reason that the greater work should carry the honour of the day. Neither does the honourable title of the Lord's day diminish the glory of the Sabbath; but rather, being added, augments the dignity of it; as the name Israel, added to Jacob, made the patriarch the more renowned ([Gen. xxxii. 28.](#))

The reason taken from the example of God's resting from the work of the creation of the world continued in force till the Son of God ceased from the work of the redemption of the world, and then the former gave place to the latter.

4. Because it was foretold in the Old Testament that the Sabbath should be kept under the New Testament on the first day of the week.

For, first, in the 110th Psalm, which is a prophecy of Christ and his kingdom, it is plainly foretold that there should be a solemn day of assembling, wherein all Christ's people should willingly come together in the beauty of holiness ([Psal. cx. 3;](#)) insomuch that no rain (of peace) shall be upon those families that in that feast will not go up to Jerusalem (the church) to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts ([Zech. xiv. 17.](#)) Now on what day this holy feast and assembly should be kept, David shews plainly in [Psalm cxviii.](#), which was a prophecy of Christ, as appears, [Matt. xxi. 42;](#) [Acts iv. 11;](#) [Eph. ii. 20.](#) as also by the consent of all the Jews, as Jerome witnesses. For, shewing how Christ, by his ignominious death, should be as a stone rejected of the builders, or chief rulers of Judea, and yet, by his glorious resurrection, should become the chief stone of the corner, he wishes the whole church to keep holy that day upon which Christ should effect this wonderful work, saying, "This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." ([Psal. cxviii. 24.](#)) And seeing that upon this day that which Peter says of Christ appears to be true, that "God made him both Lord and Christ." ([Acts ii. 36.](#)) Therefore the whole church under the New Testament must celebrate the day of Christ's resurrection. Rabbi Bachay also saw, by the fall of Adam on the sixth day, that on the same day Messiah should 'finish the work of man's redemption; and, alluding to the speech of Boaz to Ruth, "sleep unto the morning," that Messiah should rest in his grave all their Sabbath-day. And he gathers from that speech ([Gen. i.](#)) on the first day, "Let there be light," that the Messiah should rise on the first day of the week from death to life, and cause the spiritual light of the gospel to enlighten the world, that lay in the shadow of darkness and death. The Hebrew author of the book called Sedar Olam Rabbi (cap. 7) records many memorable things which were done upon the first day of the week, as so many types that the chief worship of God should, under the New Testament, be celebrated upon

this day: As, that on this day the cloud of God's majesty first sate upon his people; Aaron and his children first executed their priesthood; God first solemnly blessed his people; the princes of his people first offered publicly unto God; the first day wherein fire descended from heaven; the first day of the world, of the year, of the month, of the week, &c.; all shadowing that it should be the first and chief holy day of the New Testament. St. Augustine proves, by divers places and reasons out of the holy Scripture, that the fathers, and all the holy prophets under the Old Testament, did foresee and know that our Lord's day was shadowed by their eighth day of circumcision, and that the Sabbath should be changed from the seventh day to the eighth, or first day of the week. And Junius, out of Cyprian, says, that circumcision was commanded on the eighth day, as a sacrament of the eighth day, when Christ should arise from the dead. The council Foro Juliense affirms, that Isaiah prophesied of the keeping of the Sabbath upon the first day of the week. If this mystery was so clearly seen by the Fathers under the shadows of the Old Testament, surely the god of this world has deeply blinded their minds who cannot see the truth of it under the shining light of the gospel (2 Cor. iv. 4.) Therefore this change of the Sabbath-day under the New, was nothing but a fulfilling of that which was prefigured and fore-prophesied under the Old Testament.

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5. According to their Lord's mind and commandment, and the direction of the Holy Ghost, which always assisted them in their ministerial office, the apostles, in all the Christian churches which they planted, ordained that the Christians should keep the holy Sabbath upon that seventh day, which is the first day of the week: "Concerning the gathering for the saints, as I have ordained in the churches of Galatia, so do ye also. Every first day of the week," &c. (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.) "When ye come together in the church (being the Lord's day) to eat the Lord's Supper,⁵⁴ to remember and shew the Lord's death till he come," &c. (1 Cor. xi. 20, 25, 26.) In which words note—

- (1.) That the apostle ordained this day to be kept holy: therefore a divine institution.
- (2.) That the day is named the first day of the week: therefore not the Jewish seventh, or any other.
- (3.) Every first day of the week, which shews a perpetuity.
- (4.) That it was ordained in the churches of Galatia, as well as of Corinth, and he settled one uniform order in all the churches of the saints: therefore it was universal.
- (5.) That the exercises of this day were collections for the poor (which appears by Acts ii. 42, and Justin Martyr's testimony, Apolog. ii.⁵⁵), which were gathered in the holy assembly

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54 The Syriac translation hath, "Quum congregamini, non, sicut justum est, in die Domini nostri comeditis et bibitis." The Arabian translation also hath thus: "Non comeditis et bibitis prout verè diebus Domini nostri dicet." And Beza witnesses, that in one ancient Greek copy there is read, την κυριακην, the Lord's day, added to every first day, &c.

55 As the phrase of "breaking of bread" comprehends all other exercises of religion (Acts xx. 7;) so this phrase of "laying by in store" comprehends all the other exercises of the Sabbath: And why should the apostle require

after prayer, preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments: therefore it was spiritual.

(6.) That he will have the collection, though necessary, removed against his coming; lest it should hinder his preaching; but not their holy meeting on the Lord's day, for it was the time ordained for the public worship of the Lord, which argues a necessity.

And in the same Epistle St. Paul protests, that he delivered them none other ordinance or doctrine but what he hath received of the Lord (1 Cor. xi. 23.) Insomuch that he charges them, that "if any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. xiv. 37.) But he wrote unto them, and ordained among them to keep their Sabbath on the first day of the week: therefore to keep the Sabbath on that day is the very commandment of the Lord; and how can he be either a true prophet, or have any grace of God's Spirit in his heart, who, seeing so clearly the Lord's day to have been instituted and ordained by the apostles, will not acknowledge the keeping holy of the Lord's day to be a commandment of the Lord?

The Jews confess this change of the Sabbath to have been made by the apostles (Peter Alphon *in Dialog, contra Judæos*, tit. 12); they are therefore more blind and sottish than the Jews, who profanely deny it.

At Troas likewise St. Paul, together with seven of the chief evangelists of the church, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timotheus, Tychicus, and Trophimus (Acts xx. 4, 5, &c.), and all the Christians that were there, kept the holy Sabbath on the first day of the week, in praying, preaching, and receiving the Lord's Supper.

And it is a thing to be noted, that Luke saith not, that the disciples were sent to hear Paul preach, but the disciples being come together to break bread upon the first day of the week, that is, to be partakers of the holy communion, at what time the Lord's death was by the preaching of the word shewed (1 Cor. xviii. 26), Paul preached unto them, &c. And that none kept those meetings but Christians, who are called disciples (Acts xi. 26.) But at Philippi, where as yet there was no disciples, Paul is said to go on their Sabbath day to the place where the Jews and their proselytes were wont to pray, and there preached unto them (Acts xvi. 12, 13.) So that it is as clear as the sun, that it was the Christians' usual manner to pass over the Jewish seventh day (Acts xxi. 4, &c.), and to keep the Sabbath and their holy meetings on the first day of the week. And why does St. John call this the Lord's day, but because it was a day known to be generally kept holy throughout all the churches which the apostles planted to the honour of the Lord Jesus, who rose from death to life upon that day; which St. John called the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10), the rather to stir up Christians to a thankful remembrance of their redemption by Christ's resurrection from the dead. And with the day,

the collections to be made on the first day of the week, but because that on this day the holy assembly was held in the apostles' time?

the blessing of the Sabbath is likewise translated to the Lord's day; because all the sanctification belonging to this new world is in Christ ([Heb. ii. 5](#)), and from him conveyed to Christians: and because there cannot come a greater authority than that of Christ and his apostles, nor the like cause as the new creation of the world; therefore the Sabbath can never be altered from this day to any other whilst this world lasts. Add to this, how the Scripture notes, that in the first planting and settling of the church, nothing was done but by the special order and direction of the apostles ([1 Cor. xi. 34](#); [xiv. 36, 37](#); [Tit. i. 5](#); [Acts xv. 6, 24](#)), and the apostles did nothing but what they had warrant for from Christ ([1 Cor. xi. 23](#).)

To sanctify, then, the Sabbath on the seventh day is not a ceremonial law abrogated, but the moral and perpetual law of God perfected; so that the same perpetual commandment which bound the Jews to keep the Sabbath on that seventh day, to celebrate the world's creation, binds Christians to solemnize the Sabbath on this seventh day, in memorial of the world's redemption; for the fourth commandment being a moral law, requires a seventh day to be kept holy for ever. And the morality of this, as of the rest of the commandments, is more religiously to be kept of us under the gospel, than of the Jews under the law; by how much we, in baptism, have made a more special covenant with God to keep his commandments; and God has covenanted with us to free us from the curse, and to assist us with his Spirit to keep his laws. And that this commandment of the Sabbath, as well as the other nine, is moral and perpetual, may plainly appear by these reasons:—



Ten Reasons demonstrating the Commandment of the Sabbath to be moral.

1. Because all the reasons of this commandment are moral and perpetual; and God has bound us to the obedience of this commandment with more forcible reasons than to any of the rest—First, because he foresaw that irreligious men would either more carelessly neglect, or more boldly break this commandment than any other; secondly, because that in the practice of this commandment the keeping of all the other consists; which makes God so often complain that all his worship is neglected or overthrown, when the Sabbath is either neglected or transgressed ([Jer. xv. 22](#); [Ezek. xx. 19, 20, 21, 24](#); [xxiii. 38](#); [Neh. ix. 4.](#)) “It would make a man amazed,” saith Mr. Calvin, “to consider how oft, and with what zeal and protestation God requireth all, that will be his people, to sanctify the seventh day; yea, how the God of mercy mercilessly punisheth the breach of this commandment with cruel death, as though it were the sum of his whole honour and service.”

And it is certain, that he who makes no conscience to break the Sabbath, will not, to serve his turn, make any conscience to break any of the other commandments, so he may do it without discredit of his reputation or danger of man’s law. Therefore God placed this commandment in the midst of the two tables, because the keeping of it is the best help to the keeping of all the rest. The conscionable keeping of the Sabbath is the mother of all religion and good discipline in the church. Take away the Sabbath, and let every man serve God when he listeth; and what will shortly become of religion, and that peace and order ([1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40](#)) which God will have to be kept in his church? The Sabbath-day is God’s market-day, for the week’s provision; wherein He will have us to come to him, and buy of him without silver or money ([Isa. lv. 1, 2](#)), the bread of angels, and water of life, the wine of the sacrament, and milk of the word to feed our souls; tried gold to enrich our faith ([Rev. iii. 18](#);) precious eye-salve, to heal our spiritual blindness; and the white raiment of Christ’s righteousness, to cover our filthy nakedness. He is not far from true piety, who makes conscience to keep the Sabbath-day; but he who can dispense with his conscience to break the Sabbath for his own profit or pleasure, his heart never yet felt what either the fear of God or true religion means; for, of this commandment may that speech of St. James be verified, “He that faileth in one, is guilty of all.” ([James ii. 10.](#)) Seeing, therefore, that God has fenced this commandment with so many moral reasons, it is evident that the commandment itself is moral.

2. Because it was commanded of God to Adam in his innocency: whilst holding his happiness, not by faith in Christ’s merits, but by obedience to God’s law, he needed no ceremony shadowing the redemption of Christ. A Sabbath, therefore, of a seventh day cannot be simply a ceremony, but an essential part of God’s worship, enjoined to man, when there was but one condition of all men. And if it was necessary for our first parents to have a Sabbath-day, to serve God in their perfection; much more need their posterity to keep the



Sabbath in the state of {heir corruption. And seeing God himself kept this day holy, how can that man be holy that wilfully profanes it?

3. Because it is one of the commandments which God spake with his mouth, and twice wrote with his own fingers in tables of stone, to signify their authority and perpetuity ([Exod. xxxiv. 1](#), &c.) All that God wrote, were moral and perpetual commandments, and those are reckoned ten in number ([Deut. iv. 13](#).) If this were now but an abrogated ceremony, then there were but nine commandments. The ceremonial that was to be abrogated by Christ, were all written by Moses ([Deut. iv. 2](#).) But this of the Sabbath, with the other nine, written by God himself, were put into the ark; no ceremonial law was put, to shew that they should be the perpetual rules of the church, yet such as none could perfectly fulfil and keep, but only Christ ([1 Kings viii. 9](#); [Heb. ix. 4](#).)

4. Because Christ professes, “that he came not to destroy the moral law,” ([Matt. v. 17](#)), and that the least of them should not be abrogated in his kingdom of the New Testament. Insomuch, that “whosoever breaketh one of the least of these ten commandments, and teacheth men so, he should be called the least in the kingdom of heaven,” ([Matt. v. 19](#);) that is, he should have no place in his church. Now the moral law commands one day of seven to be perpetually kept a holy Sabbath. And Christ himself expressly mentions the keeping of a Sabbath among his Christians, at the destruction of Jerusalem, about forty-two years after his resurrection. By which time, all the Mosaical ceremonies, except eating of blood, and things strangled ([Acts xv. 19, 20, 21, 24, 28](#)), were by a public decree of all the apostles quite abolished, and abrogated in Christian churches. And therefore Christ admonished his disciples, “to pray that their flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath-day.” ([Matt. xxiv. 20](#).) Not in the winter; for by reason of the foulness of the ways and weather, their flight then should be more painful and troublesome to them: not upon the Sabbath; because it would be more grievous to their hearts, to spend that day in toiling to save their lives, which the Lord had commanded to be spent in holy exercises, to comfort their souls. Now if the sanctifying of the Sabbath on this day had been but ceremonial, it had been no grief to have fled on this day, any more than on any other day of the week; but in that Christ doth tender so much this fear and grief of being driven to fly on the Sabbath-day, and therefore wisheth his followers to pray to God to prevent. such an occasion, he plainly demonstrates that the observation of the Sabbath is no abrogated ceremony, but a moral commandment, confirmed and established by Christ among Christians. If you would know the day whereupon Christ appointed Christians to keep the Sabbath, St. John will tell you, that it was on the Lord’s day ([Rev. i. 10](#).) If you will know on what day of the week *that* was, St. Paul will tell you, that it was on every first day of the week ([1 Cor. xvi. 1](#).)

As Christ admonished, so Christians prayed, and according to their prayers, God, a little before the wars began, warned by an oracle all the Christians in Jerusalem to depart



thence, and to go to Pella, a little town beyond Jordan; and so to escape the wrath of God, that should fall upon that city and nation.⁵⁶ If, then, a Christian should not without grief of heart, fly for the safety of his life on the Lord's day; with what joy or comfort can a true Christian neglect the holy exercise of God's worship in the church, to spend the greatest part of the Lord's day in profane and carnal sports, or servile labour? And seeing the destruction of Jerusalem was both a type ([Matt. xxiv. 35](#)) and an assurance of the destruction of the world, who seeth not, but that the holy Sabbath must continue till the very end of the world?

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5. Because all the ceremonial law was enjoined to the Jews only, and not to the Gentiles; but this commandment of the holy Sabbath, as matrimony, was instituted of God in the state of innocency, when there was but one state of all men, and therefore enjoined to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. So that all magistrates and householders were commanded to constrain all strangers, as well as their own subjects and family, to observe the holy Sabbath ([Isa. lvi. 6](#)), as appears by the fourth commandment, and the practice of Nehemiah ([Neh. xiii. 19](#), &c.) All the ceremonies were a partition-wall to separate Jews and Gentiles ([Eph. ii. 14](#);) but seeing the Gentiles are bound to keep this commandment as well as the Jews, it is evident that it is no Jewish ceremony. And seeing the same authority is for the Sabbath that is for marriage, a man may as well say that marriage is but a ceremonial law, as the Sabbath. And remember, that whereas marriage is termed but once the covenant of God ([Prov. ii. 17](#)), because instituted by God in the beginning ([Matt. xix. 6, 8](#)), the Sabbath is everywhere called "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," because ordained by God in the same beginning, both of time, state, and perpetuity: therefore not ceremonial.

6. The corruption of our nature found in the manifest opposition of wicked men,⁵⁷ and in the secret unwillingness of good men to sanctify sincerely the Sabbath, sufficiently demonstrates that the commandment of the Sabbath is spiritual and moral.

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7. Because that as God, by a perpetual decree, made the sun, the moon, and other lights in the firmament of heaven ([Gen. i. 18](#); [Job ix. 9](#); [xxxviii. 31](#); [Amos v. 8](#)), not only to divide the day from the night, but also to be for signs⁵⁸ and for seasons,⁵⁹ and for days⁶⁰ and for years;⁶¹ so he ordained in the church on earth, the holy Sabbath to be not only the appointed season for his solemn worship, but also the perpetual rule and measure of time. So that as seven days make a week, four weeks a month, twelve months a year; so seven years make a

56 Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 1. iii. c. 5—It is probable that this oracle was that voice (*migremus hinc*) which, with an earthquake, was heard by night in the temple, mentioned by Josephus, *de Bello Judaico*, lib. vii. c. 12.

57 *Nitimur in vetitum.*—Ovid.

58 To distinguish between spring and harvest, summer and winter, and to foreshew judgments to come.

59 *Moadim sig.* Sacred times appointed for God's holy worship, having special significations and promises.

60 One of the seven days of the week from the other.

61 Solar, Sabbatarian, and jubilee ([Exod. xiii. 11, 12.](#))

Sabbath of years; seven Sabbaths of years make a jubilee; eighty jubilees, or four thousand years, or, after Ezekiel, four thousand cubits, the whole time of the Old Testament, till Christ by his baptism and preaching began the state of the New Testament. Neither can I here pass over without admiration, how the sacrament of circumcision continued in the church thirty-nine jubilees from Abraham, to whom it was first given, until the baptism of Christ in Jordan; which was just so many jubilees (after Bucholcers's account) as the world had continued before from Adam to the birth of Abraham. Moses began his ministry in the eightieth year of his age: Christ enters upon his office in the eightieth jubilee of the world's age. Joseph was thirty years old when he began to rule over Egypt ([Gen. iv. 1, 46](#)), and the Levites began to serve in the tabernacle at thirty years old: so Christ likewise, to answer these figures, began his ministry in the thirtieth jubilee of Moses, and when he began to be thirty years of age ([Luke iii. 23](#)) in the midst of Daniel's last week; and so (continuing his ministry on earth three years and a half) finished our redemption and Daniel's period, by his innocent death upon the cross. The most of all the great alterations and strange accidents which fell out in the church, came to pass either in a sabbatical year, or in a year of jubilee. For example:—

The seventy weeks of Daniel, beginning the first year of Cyrus, and the 3439th year of the world, contain so many years as the world did weeks of years until that time, and so many weeks of years as the world had lasted jubilees. Daniel's seventy weeks of years contain four hundred and ninety single years; the world before that time four hundred and ninety weeks or Sabbaths of years; Daniel's period seventy weeks, the world's seventy jubilees: so that, to comfort the church for their seventy years' captivity, which they had now, according to Jeremiah's prophecy, endured in Babylon ([Jer. xxv. 11, 12](#)), Gabriel tells Daniel, that at the end of seventy weeks or Sabbaths of years, that is, seventy times seven years, or four hundred and ninety years, their eternal redemption from hell should be effected by the death of Christ, as sure as they were now redeemed from the captivity of Babylon. This period of Daniel, containing seventy Sabbaths or ten jubilees of years, began at the first liberty granted the Jews by Cyrus, in the first year of his reign over the Babylonians, mentioned [Ezra i. 1](#), and ends just at the time that Christ died upon the cross. From the death of Christ, or the last end of Daniel's weeks, to the seventy and one year of Christ, the world is measured by seven seals ([Rev. v. 1](#)), or seven Sabbaths of years, making one complete jubilee. From the end of those seven seals, the world is measured to its end by seven trumpets ([Rev. viii. 2; ix. 7](#)), each containing two hundred and forty years (as some conjecture, about four hundred and forty years hence the truth will appear.) Enoch, the seventh from Adam, having lived so many years as there are days in the year, three hundred and sixty-five, was translated of God in a sabbatical year. Moses, the seventh from Abraham, as another Enoch, is buried of God, but born in a sabbatical year of the world, two thousand three hundred and seventy-seventh year since the flood (according to Broughton's computation, A.M. 1430. [Deut. xxx. 4](#)), is saved, as a new Noah, in a reed-ark, and lived builder of the church so long as Noah



was building the ark, one hundred and twenty years. The promise was made to Abraham in a sabbatical year, being the two thousand and twenty-third year of the world. The sixth year of Joshua, being two thousand five hundred years from the creation of the world, wherein the land was possessed, and divided among the children of Israel, was a sabbatical year, and the fiftieth jubilee from the creation of the world. At this year Moses begins his jubilee, by which, as with a chain of thirty links, he tieth the parting of Canaan's possession to the Israelites by Joshua to the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers by Jesus. And so carries the church of the Jews, by a joyful stream of jubilees,⁶² from the type to the substance, from Canaan to heaven, from Joshua to Jesus: For Christ, at the end of Moses's thirty jubilees, and the beginning of the thirtieth year of his age, at his baptism openeth heaven, and gives the clearest vision of the blessed Trinity that was seen since the world began; and by the silver trumpet of his gospel proclaims, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, eternal redemption to all that repent and believe in him (*Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18.*)

And the year of our Saviour Christ's birth, being the three thousand nine hundred and forty-eighth of the world, was at the end of a sabbatical year, and the five hundred and sixty-fourth septenary of the world. Moses makes the common age of all men to be ten times seven (*Psal. xc*), and every seventh year commonly produces some notable change or accident in man's life: and no wonder; for, as Hippocrates affirms, a child in his mother's womb, on the seventh day of his conception, has all his members finished, and from that day grows to the perfection of birth, which is always either the ninth or seventh month. At seven years old, the child casts his teeth, and receives new. And every seventh year after, there is some alteration or change in man's life, especially at nine times seven, the climacteric year, which by experience is found to have been fatal to many of those learned men who have been the chiefest lights of the world;⁶³ and if they escaped that year, yet most of them have departed this life in a septenary year. Lamech died in the year of his life seven hundred and seventy-seven. Methusalem, the longest liver of the sons of men, died when he began to enter his nine hundred and seventieth year. Abraham died when he had lived twenty-five times seven years; Jacob when he had lived twenty-one times seven years; David, after he had lived ten times seven years. So did Galen, so did Petrarch, who (as Bodin notes) died on the same day of the year that he was born: so did Queen Elizabeth, of blessed memory. Hippocrates died in the fifteenth septenary; Hierom and Isocrates in their thirteenth; Pliny, Bartolus, and Caesar, in their eighth septenary; and Johannes *de temporibus*, who lived three hundred and sixty-one years, died in the fifty-third septenary of his life. The like might be observed of innumerable others. And, indeed, the whole life of a man is measured by the Sabbath; for



62 Jubilee some derive of trumpets or rams'-horns, wherewith the jubilee was sounded; others from jubal, a stream, because they carry us to the death of Christ, the author of our eternal rest and joy.

63 Aristotle, Cicero, Bernard, Bocace, Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon, Sturmius.

how many years soever a man lives here, yet his life is but a life of seven days multiplied: so that in the number of seven there is a mystical perfection, to which our understanding cannot attain.

All which divine disposition of admirable things, so oft by sevens, calls upon us to a continual meditation of the blessed seventh day Sabbath, in knowing and worshipping God in this life; that so from Sabbath to Sabbath, we may be translated to the eternal glorious Sabbath of rest and bliss in the life which is to come.

By which consideration any man that looks into the holy history may easily perceive, that the whole course of the world is drawn and guided by a certain chain of God's providence, disposing all things in number, measure, and weight. All times are therefore measured by the Sabbath: so that time and the Sabbath can never be separated. And the angel swears that this measure of time shall continue till time shall be no more ([Rev. x. 6.](#)) And as the Sabbath had its first institution in the first book of the Scriptures, so has it its confirmation in the last; and as this book authorizes this day, so this day graces the book: in that the matter thereof was revealed upon so holy a day—the Lord's revelation upon the Lord's day ([Rev. i. 10.](#)) As well, therefore, may they pull the sun, moon, and stars, out of the heavens, as abolish the holy Sabbath, time's mete-rod, out of the church; seeing the Sabbath is ordained in the church, as well as the sun and moon in the firmament, for the distinction of times.

8. Because that the whole church, by an universal consent, ever since the time of the apostles, have still held the commandment of the Sabbath to be the moral and perpetual law of God, and the keeping of the Sabbath on the first day of the week to be the institution of Christ and his apostles.

The synod called Synodus Coloniensis saith, that the Lord's day hath been famous in the church ever since the apostles' time. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, living in St. John's time, saith, "Let every one that loveth Christ keep holy the Lord's day, renowned by his resurrection, which is the queen of days, in which death is overcome and life is sprung up in Christ." Justin Martyr, who lived not long after him, shews that the Christians kept their Sabbath on the Lord's day, as we do. Origen, who lived about one hundred and eighty years after Christ, shews the reason why the Sabbath is translated to the Lord's day. Augustine saith, "That the Lord's day was declared unto the church by the resurrection of the Lord upon that day: *Et ex illo cepit habere festivitatem suam*; and by Christ it was first ordained to be kept holy." And in another place, "That the apostles appointed the Lord's day to be kept with all religious solemnity, because that upon that day our Redeemer rose from the dead, which also is therefore called the Lord's day."

As, therefore, David said of the city of God ([Psal. lxxxvii. 3](#)), so may I say of the Lord's day, "Glorious things are spoken of the day of the Lord;" for it was the birthday of the world—the first day in which all creatures began to have being. In *it* light was given out of darkness. In *it* the law was given on Mount Sinai. In *it* the Lord rose from death to life. In

it the saints came out of their graves ([Matt. xxvii. 52](#)), assuring that on it Christians should rise to newness of life. In *it* the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles. And it is very probable that on the seventh day, when the seven trumpets have blown ([Rev. x. 7](#)), the cursed Jericho of this world shall fall ([Josh. vi. 13](#)), and our true Jesus shall give us the promised possession of the heavenly Canaan.

He that would see the uniform consent of antiquity, and practice of the primitive church in this point, let him read Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, lib. 4. cap. 23; Tertullian, lib. de Idololatria, cap. 14; Chrys. Serm. 5. de Resurrectione Constitut.; Apol. l. cap. 37; Cyril in Johan. l. 12, c. 58. Of this judgment are all the sound new writers; see Fox on [Rev. i. 10](#); Bucer in [Matt. xii. 11](#); Gualt. in [Malach. iii.](#) hom. 23; Fulke on the Rhemish Testament, [Apoc. i. 10](#); Chem. Exam. Cone. Trid. par. 4. de Diebus Festis; Wolph. Chron. lib. 2. cap. 1; and innumerable others. Learned Junius shall speak for all—"Quamobrem cum dies dominicus," &c.—"Wherefore seeing the Lord's day is both by the fact of Christ (viz. his resurrection and often appearing to his disciples upon that day), by the example and institution of the apostles, and by the continual practice of the ancient church, and by the testimony of Scripture, observed and substituted into the place of the Jewish Sabbath, *Ineptè faciunt*, they do foolishly who say that the observation of the Lord's day is of tradition and not from the Scripture, that by this means they might establish the traditions of men." And again, "The cause of this change is the resurrection of Christ, and the benefit of the restoring of the church by Christ, the remembrance of which benefit did succeed into the place of the memory of the creation. *Non humana traditione, sed Christi ipsius observatione et instituto*: Not by the tradition of man, but by the observation and appointment of Christ, who both on the day of his resurrection and on every eighth day after, until his ascension into heaven, did appear unto his disciples and came into their assemblies."

9. Because that the Lord himself expounded the end of the Sabbath, to be a sign and document for ever, between him and his people, that he is Jehovah, by whom they are sanctified ([Exod. xxxi. 13, 14, &c.](#); [Ezek. xx. 12, 20](#)), and therefore must only of them be worshipped ([Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2, 3, &c.](#);) and upon the pain of death, charges his people for ever to keep this memorial unviolated ([Exod. xxxv. 2.](#)) But this end is moral and perpetual; what God hath perpetually sanctified, let no man ever presume to make common or profane ([Acts x. 15.](#)) Upon this ground it is, that the commandment terms this day, the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. And God himself calls it his holy day ([Isa. lviii. 13.](#)) And upon the same ground likewise the Old Testament consecrated all their Sabbaths and holy days to the 'worship and honour of God alone. To dedicate, therefore, a Sabbath to the honour of any creature, is gross idolatry. For the first table makes it a part of God's worship to have a Sabbath to his honour; so doth [Lev. xxiii. 3, 37, 38, &c.](#); and [Ezek. xx. 20](#); [Neh. ix. 14](#); the Sabbath is put for the whole worship of God. And our Saviour teaches, that we must worship the Lord God only, [Matt. iv. 10](#); and therefore keep a Sabbath to the only honour of God.

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The Holy Ghost notes it as one of Jereboam's greatest sins, that he ordained a feast from the device of his own heart, [1 Kings xii. 33](#). And God threatened to visit Israel for keeping the days of Baalim; that is, of lords, as papists do of saints, [Hos. ii. 13](#); but saith, that such forget him. And so, indeed, none are less careful in keeping the Lord's Sabbath, than they who are most superstitious observers of men's holy days. The Church of Rome therefore commits gross idolatry—First, in taking upon her to ordain Sabbaths, which belongs only unto the Lord of the Sabbath to do; Secondly, in dedicating those holy days to the honour of creatures, which in effect is to make them sanctifying gods; Thirdly, in tying to these days, God's worship, prayers, fasting, and merit; Fourthly, in exacting on these days of men's invention, a greater measure of solemnity and sanctification, than upon the Lord's day, which is God's commandment: which in effect is to prefer antichrist before Christ. Our church hath justly abolished all superstitious and idolatrous feasts; and only retains a few holydays to the honour of God alone, and easing of servants, [Deut. v. 14](#); though long custom forces to use the old names, for civil distinction; as Luke used the profane names of Castor and Pollux, [Acts xxviii. 11](#); and Christians of Fortunatus, [1 Cor. xvi. 17](#); Mercurius,⁶⁴ [Rom. xvi. 14](#); and Jews of Mardocheus' day, [2 Mac. xv. 36](#).

10. Lastly, the examples of God's judgments on Sabbath-breakers, may sufficiently seal to them whose hearts are not seared, how wrathfully Almighty God is displeased with them who are wilful profaners of the Lord's day.

The Lord, who is otherwise the God of mercy, commanded Moses to stone to death the man who, of a presumptuous mind, would openly go to gather sticks on the Sabbath day ([Num. xv. 32](#).) The fact was small: true, but his sin was the greater, that, for so small an occasion, he would presume to break so great a commandment.

Nicanor, offering to fight against the Jews on the Sabbath day, was slain himself, and 35,000 of his men ([2 Mac. viii. 21](#).)

A husbandman grinding corn upon the Lord's day, had his mill burned to ashes.⁶⁵

Another, carrying corn on this day, had his barn, and all his corn therein, burnt with fire from heaven the next night after.⁶⁶

Also a certain nobleman profaning the Sabbath, usually in hunting, had a child by his wife with a head like a dog, with ears and chaps, and which cried like a hound.⁶⁷

A covetous flax-woman at Kingstat in France, anno 1559, using with her maids to work at her trade on the Lord's day, it seemed to them that fire issued out of the flax, but did no harm: the next Sabbath it took fire indeed, but was quickly quenched; but not taking warning

64 Hermes.

65 Cent. Magdeb. xii. c. 6.

66 Disp. de Tempore, Ser. 117.

67 Tho. Cantiprat. lib. ii. de apid. Timpil. admiran vindict. div. Thea. Hist.

by this, the third Sunday after it took fire again, burnt the house, and so scorched the wretched woman, with two of her children, that they died the next day; but through God's mercy, a child in the cradle was taken out of the fire alive and unhurt.⁶⁸

On the 13th of January, anno dom. 1582, being the Lord's day, the scaffolds fell, in Paris garden, under the people, at a bear-baiting, so that eight were suddenly slain, innumerable hurt and maimed: A warning to such, who take more pleasure on the Lord's day to be in a theatre, beholding carnal sports, than to be in the church serving God with the spiritual works of piety.⁶⁹

Many fearful examples of God's judgments by fire, have in our days been shewed upon divers towns, where the profanation of the Lord's day hath been openly countenanced.

Stratford-upon-Avon was. twice on the same day twelvemonth, being the Lord's day, almost consumed with fire; chiefly for profaning the Lord's Sabbaths, and for contemning his word in the mouth of his faithful ministers.

Teverton, in Devonshire (whose remembrance makes my heart bleed) was oftentimes admonished by her godly preacher that God would bring some heavy judgment on the town for their horrible profanation of the Lord's day, occasioned chiefly by their market on the day following.⁷⁰ Not long after his death, on the third of April 1598, God, in less than half an hour, consumed, with a sudden and fearful fire, the whole town, except only the church, the court-house, and the alms-houses, or a few poor people's dwellings; where a man might have seen four hundred dwelling-houses all at once on fire, and above fifty persons consumed with the flames. And now again, since the former edition of this book, on the fifth of August last, 1612 (fourteen years since the former fire), the whole town was again fired, and consumed, except some thirty houses of poor people, with the school-house and alms-houses. They are blind who see not in this the finger of God. God grant them grace, when it is next built, to change their market-day, and to remove all occasions of profaning the Lord's day. Let other towns remember the tower of Siloam ([Luke xiii. 4](#)), and take warning by their neighbours' chastisements, fear God's threatening ([Jer. xvii. 27](#)), and believe God's prophets, if they will prosper ([2 Chron. xx. 20](#).)

Many other examples of God's judgments might be alleged; but if these are not sufficient to terrify thy heart from the wilful profanation of the Lord's day, proceed in thy profanation; it may be, the Lord will make thee the next example, to teach others to keep his Sabbaths better.

68 Johan. Finc. lib. iii. De Miraculis.

69 Stow's Abridgment, An. 1582. Disciti jam moniti Dominum non temnere Christum.

70 While the preachers cried in the church, Profaneness! profaneness! gain would not suffer them to hear: therefore, when they cried Fire! fire! in the street, God would not suffer any to help.

He punishes some in this life, to signify how he will plague all wilful transgressors of his Sabbaths at the last day.

Thus we have proved that the commandment of the Sabbath is moral, and that the change of it from the seventh to the first day of the week was instituted by the authority of Christ and of his apostles. But as, in promulgating the law, divers ceremonies peculiar to the Jews were annexed, the rather to bind that people to the more careful performance thereof: as to the first commandment, their deliverance from Egypt, shadowing their redemption from hell; to the fifth commandment, length of days in Canaan, typifying eternal life in heaven; to the sixth commandment, abstaining from blood and things strangled, figuring the care to abstain from all kind of murder; and to the whole law, the ceremony of parchment lace ([Numb. xv. 38](#)), putting them in mind to keep within the limits of the law: So likewise to the fourth commandment were added some ceremonies which peculiarly belonged to the Jews, and to no other people; as, First, the double sacrifices appointed for them on the Sabbath day ([Num. xxviii. 9, 10](#)), shadowing how God will be served on the Sabbath with greater obedience than on the week days: Secondly, the rigid and strict ceasing from making of fire ([Exod. xxxv. 2, 3](#)), dressing of meat ([Exod. xvi. 23](#)), and all bodily labour, both remembering them of their full deliverance by Moses's conduct from the fiery furnaces, and slavery of Egypt, upon that day ([Deut. v. 16](#)),⁷¹ as also shadowing to them the eternal redemption of their souls from hell by the death of Christ: Thirdly, the keeping of the Sabbath upon the precise seventh day in order of the creation; shadowing to the Jews that Christ by his death, and resting on their Sabbath in the grave, should bring them rest and ease from the burden and yoke of the legal ceremonies, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear ([Acts xv. 10](#); [Col. ii. 16, 17](#).)

And howsoever in Paradise, before man's fall, the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day of the creation was not a ceremony, but an argument of perfection: yet after the fall it became ceremonial, and subject to change, in respect of the restoration by Christ: As man's life, before the fall, being immortal, became afterwards mortal; and nakedness, being an ornament before, became afterwards a shame; and marriage became a type of the mystical union between Christ and his church ([Ephes. v.](#)) And to fulfil, the ceremonies added, for the Jews' sake, to the Sabbath, Christ at his death rested in the grave all the Jewish Sabbath day, and by that rest fulfilled all those ceremonial accessories. Now, as the ceasing of the ceremonies annexed to the first, fifth, and sixth commandments, and to marriage, did not abolish those commandments and marriage, nor cause them to cease from being the perpetual rules of God's worship and man's righteousness, no more did the abrogation of the ceremonies annexed to the Sabbath abolish the morality of the commandment of the Sabbath:

71 It was the Sabbath-day on which Moses and the children of Israel sang to God, when Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the sea ([Exod. xv.](#))—See Trem. & Jun. Notes on [Deut. v. 15](#), and on [Exod. xii. 15](#).

so that, though the ceremonies be abolished by the access of the substance, and the shadow overshadowed by the body, which is Christ; yet the holy rest which was commanded and kept before either the Jews were a people, or those ceremonies annexed to the Sabbath, still continues as God's perpetual law, whereby all the posterity of Adam are bound to rest from their ordinary business, that they may wholly spend every seventh day in the solemn worship and only service of God, their Creator and Redeemer; but in the substance of the fourth commandment there is not found one word of any ceremony.

The chief objections against the morality of the Sabbath are three:—

Obj. 1. That of Paul to the Galatians: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years," &c. ([Gal. iv. 10.](#)) But there the apostle condemns not the moral Sabbath (which we call the Lord's day, and which he himself ordained, according to Christ's commandment, in the same churches of Galatia and Corinth, and kept himself in other churches, [1 Cor. xvi. 2](#); [xiv. 37](#); [Acts xx. 7](#);) but he speaks of the Jewish days, and times, and years, and the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day from the creation, which he terms "shadows of things to come" ([Col. ii. 17](#)), abolished now by Christ the body; and in the law are called Sabbaths ([Lev. xxiii. 37, 38](#)), but distinguished from the moral Sabbaths.

Obj. 2. That of Paul to the Colossians: "Let no man therefore condemn you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days" ([Col. ii. 16.](#)) But here the apostle means the Jewish ceremonial Sabbaths, not the Christians' Lord's day, as before.

Obj. 3. That of the same apostle to the Romans: "This man esteemeth one day above another day, and another counteth every day alike," &c. ([Rom. xiv. 5.](#)) But St. Paul makes no such account. For the question *there* is not between Jews and Gentiles, but between the stronger and weaker Christians ([Rom. xv. 1.](#)) The stronger esteemed one day above another, as appears, in that there was a day both commanded and received in the church, everywhere known and honoured by the name of the Lord's day. And therefore Paul saith here, that he that observed this day, observed it unto the Lord; the observation whereof, because of the change of the Jewish seventh day, some weak Christians (as many now a-days) thought not so necessary: so that if men, because the Jewish day is abrogated, will not honour and keep holy the Lord's day, but count it like other days, it is an argument, saith the apostle, of their weakness, whose infirmity must be borne till they have time to be further instructed and persuaded. Other objections are frivolous, and not worth the answering.

THE TRUE MANNER OF KEEPING HOLY THE LORD'S DAY.

Now the sanctifying of the Sabbath consists in two things—First, In resting from all servile and common business pertaining to our natural life; Secondly, In consecrating that rest wholly to the service of God, and the use of those holy means which belong to our spiritual life.

For the First.

1. The servile and common works from which we are to cease are, generally, all civil works, from the least to the greatest ([Exod. xxxi. 12, 13, 15, &c.](#)) More particularly—

First, From all the works of our calling, though it were reaping in time of harvest ([Exod. xxxiv. 21.](#))

Secondly, From carrying burdens, as carriers do ([Neh. xiii. 15; Jer. xvii. 21, 22, 27;](#)) or riding abroad for profit or for pleasure. God hath commanded that the beasts should rest on the Sabbath day, because all occasions of travelling or labouring with them should be cut off from man. God gives them that day a rest ([Deut. v. 14;](#)) and he that without necessity deprives them of their rest on the Lord's day, the groans of the poor tired beasts shall in the day of the Lord rise up in judgment against him ([Rom. viii. 22; Deut. xxv. 4; 1 Cor. ix. 9.](#)) Likewise such as spend the greatest part of this day in trimming, painting, and pampering of themselves, like Jezebels, do the devil's work upon God's day.

Thirdly, From keeping of fairs or markets ([Neh. xiii. 15, 16, 19;](#)) which for the most part God punishes with pestilence, fire, and strange floods.

Fourthly, From studying any books of science but the holy Scriptures and divinity: for our study must be to be ravished in spirit upon the Lord's day ([Rev. i. 10.](#)) In a word, thou must on that day cease in thy calling- to do thy work, that the Lord by his calling may do his work in thee: for whatsoever is gotten by common working on this day shall never be blessed of the Lord; but it will prove like Achan's gold, which being got contrary to the Lord's commandment, brought the fire of God's curse upon all the rest which he had lawfully gotten. And if Christ scourged them out as thieves who bought and sold in his temple, which was but a ceremony shortly to be abrogated, is it to be thought that he will ever suffer those to escape unpunished who, contrary to his commandment, buy and sell on the Sabbath day, which is his perpetual law? Christ calleth such, sacrilegious thieves; and as well may they steal the communion cup from the Lord's table, as steal from God the chiefest part of the Lord's day to consume it in their own lusts. Such shall one day find the judgments of God heavier than the opinions of men.

Fifthly, From, all recreations and sports, which at some other times are lawful: for if lawful works be forbidden on this day, much more lawful sports; which do more steal away our affections from the contemplation of heavenly things ([Isa. lix. 13, 14,](#)) than any bodily work or labour. Neither can there be to a man that delighteth in the Lord ([Psal. xxxvii. 4,](#)) any greater delight or recreation than the sanctifying of the Lord's day. For can there be any



greater joy for a person condemned than to come to his prince's house to have his pardon sealed?—for one that is deadly sick to come to a physician that can cure him?—or for a prodigal child that fed on the husks of swine to be admitted to eat the bread of life at his father's table?—or for him who fears for sin the tidings of death, to come to hear from God the assurance of eternal life? If thou wilt allow thyself or thy servants recreation, allow it in the six days which are thine, not on the Lord's day, which is neither thine nor theirs. No bodily recreation, therefore, is to be used on this day, but so far as it may help the soul to do more cheerfully the service of God.

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Sixthly, From gross feeding, liberal drinking of wine or strong drink ([Eph. v. 18, 19](#)), which may make us either drowsy or unapt to serve God with our hearts and minds ([Rom. xii. 11](#); [Deut. xxviii. 47](#).)

Seventhly, From all talking about worldly things, which hindereth the sanctifying of the Sabbath more than working: seeing one may work alone, but cannot talk but with others.

He that keeps the Sabbath only by resting from his ordinary work, keeps it but as a beast. But rest on this day is so far commanded to Christians, as it is an help to sanctification; and labour so far forbidden, as it is an impediment to the outward and inward worship of God.

If, then, those recreations which are lawful at other times, are on the Sabbath not allowed; much more those that are altogether at all times unlawful. Who without mourning can endure to see Christians keep the Lord's day, as if they celebrated a feast rather to Bacchus, than to the honour of the Lord Jesus, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world? For, having served God but an hour in outward shew, they spend the rest of the Lord's day in sitting down to eat and drink, and rising up to play; first ballasting their bellies with eating and drinking, and then feeding their lusts with playing and dancing ([1 Cor. x. 7](#); [Exod. xxxii. 6, 18, 19](#).) Against which profanations all holy divines, both old and new, have in their times most bitterly inveighed: insomuch, that Augustine affirms, "that it was better to plough than to dance on the Sabbath day."

Now in the names of Almighty God, who rested, having created heaven and earth, and of his eternal Son Jesus, the Redeemer of his church, who shall shortly come, on the dreadful day of doom, to judge all men according to the obedience which they have shewed to his commandments ([Acts xvii. 31](#); [Rom. ii. 12](#), &c.; [2 Thess. ii. 8](#), &c), I require thee who readest these words, as thou wilt answer before the face of Christ and all his holy angels at that day, that thou better weigh and consider whether dancing, stage-playing, masking, carding, dicing, tabling, chess-playing, bowling, shooting, bear-baiting, carousing, tippling, and such other fooleries of Robin Hood, morrice-dances, wakes, and May-games, be exercises that God will bless and allow on the Sabbath day. And seeing that no action ought to be done that day, but such as whereby we either bless God, or look to receive a blessing from God; how darest thou do those things on that blessed day, on which thou darest not to pray to God to

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bestow a blessing on it to thy use? Hear this and tremble at this, O profane youth of a profane age!

O heart all frozen and void of the feeling of the grace of God! that having every day in six—every hour in every day—every minute in every hour, so tasted the sweet mercy of thy God in Christ, without which thou hadst perished every moment; yet canst not find in thy corrupt and irreligious heart to spend in thy Master's service that one day of the week, which he hath reserved for his own praise and worship. Let men in defence of their profaneness object what they will, and answer what the devil puts in their mouths, yet I could wish them to remember, that seeing it is an ancient tradition in the church that the Lord's second coming shall be upon the Lord's day,⁷² how little joy they should have to be overtaken in those carnal sports, to please themselves, when their Master should find them in spiritual exercises serving him: the profanest wretch would then wish rather to be taken kneeling at prayers in the church, than skipping like a goat in a dance. If this cannot move, yet I would wish our impure gallants to remember, that whilst they thus amuse themselves on the Lord's day, contrary to the Lord's commandment, they do but dance about the pit's brink, and they know not which of them shall first fall therein: into which being once fallen without repentance, no greatness can exempt them from the vengeance of that great God, whose commandment, contrary to their knowledge and conscience, they do thus presumptuously transgress. If, then, God's commandment cannot deter thee, nor God's word advise thee, I say no more but what St. John said before me, "He which is filthy let him be filthy still."⁷³



For the Second.

2. The consecration of the Sabbath's rest consists in performing three sorts of duties:—First, Before; Secondly, At; Thirdly, After, the public exercises of the church.

The Duties to be performed before the Public Exercises, are—

1. To give over working betimes on the eve, that thy body may be the more refreshed, and thy mind the better fitted to sanctify the Sabbath on the next day. For want of this preparation, thyself and thy servants being tired with labour and watching the night before, are so heavy, that when you should be serving God, and hearing what his Spirit saith unto the church for your souls' instruction, you cannot hold up your heads for sleeping; to the dishonour of God, the offence of the church, and the shame of yourselves: therefore the Lord commands us not only to keep holy, but also to remember beforehand" the Sabbath day—to keep it holy, by preparing our hearts, and removing all business that might hinder

72 Lactan. I. 7, c. l.

73 This was the last and heaviest curse that St. John wished spiritual Babylon.

us to consecrate it as a glorious day unto the Lord (*Isa. lvi. 2, &c.; lviii. 13, &c.*) Therefore whereas the Lord, in the other commandments, does but either bid or forbid, he does both in this commandment, and that with a special memorandum: As if a Master should charge his servant to look well unto ten things of great trust, but to have a more special care to remember one of those ten, for divers weighty reasons; should not a faithful servant, that loves his master, shew a more special care unto that thing above all other businesses?



Thus Moses taught the people over night to remember the Sabbath (*Exod. xvi. 23, &c.*) And it was a holy custom among our forefathers, when, at the ringing to prayer on the eve before, the husbandman would give over his labour in the field, and the tradesman his work in the shop, and go to evening prayer in the church, to prepare their souls; that their minds might more cheerfully attend God's worship on the Sabbath day.

2. To rise up early in the morning on the Sabbath day. Be careful, therefore, to rise sooner on this day than on other days: by how much the service of God is to be preferred before all earthly business. For there is no master to serve so good as God; and in the end, no work shall be better rewarded than his service.

3. When thou art up, consider with thyself what an impure sinner thou art, and into what an holy place thou goest to appear, before the most holy God, who seeth thy heart, and hateth all impurity and hypocrisy. Examine thyself, therefore, before thou goest to Church, what grievous sins thou hast committed the week past; confess them to God, and earnestly pray for the pardon and forgiveness of them, and so reconcile thyself with God in Christ. Renew thy vows to walk more conscionably, and pray for an increase of those graces which thou hast, and a supply of those which thou wantest. But especially pray that thou mayest have grace to hear the word of God read and preached with profit; and that thou mayest receive the holy sacrament with comfort, if it be communion day; that God by his Holy Spirit would assist the preacher to speak something that may kill thy sin, and comfort thy soul;—which thou mayest do in this or the like sort:—



A Morning Prayer for the Sabbath-day.

O Lord most high, O God eternal, all whose works are glorious, and whose thoughts are very deep: there can be no better thing, than to praise thy name, and to declare thy loving-kindness in the morning, on thy holy and blessed Sabbath day! For it is thy will and commandment, that we should sanctify this day in thy service and praise: and in the thankful remembrance, as of the creation of the world by the power of thy word; so of the redemption of mankind by the death of thy Son. Thine, O Lord, I confess, is greatness and power, and glory and victory, and praise; for all that is in heaven and earth is thine: thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou excellest as head over all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and strength; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give grace unto all. Now, therefore, O my God, I praise thy glorious name, that whereas I, a wretched sinner, having so many ways provoked thy majesty to anger and displeasure; thou, notwithstanding, of thy favour and goodness, passing by my profaneness and infirmities, hast vouchsafed to add this Sabbath again to the number of my days. And vouchsafe, O heavenly Father, for the merits of Jesus Christ thy Son, whose glorious resurrection thy whole church celebrateth this day, to pardon and forgive me all my sins and misdeeds. Especially, O Lord—[Here thou mayest confess whatsoever sin of the last week clogs thy conscience]—cleanse my soul from those filthy sins, with the blood of thy most pure and undefiled Lamb, which taketh away the sins of the world. And let thy Holy Spirit more and more subdue my corruptions, that I may be renewed after thy own image, to serve thee in newness of life, and holiness of conversation. And as of thy mercy thou hast brought me to the beginning of this blessed day; so I beseech thee make it a day of reconciliation between my sinful soul and thy divine majesty. Give me grace to make it a day of repentance unto thee, that thy goodness may seal it to be a day of pardon unto me; and that I may remember that the keeping holy of this day is a commandment which thy own finger hath written; that on this day I might meditate on the glorious works of our creation and redemption, and learn how to know and keep all the rest of thy holy laws and commandments. And when anon, I shall, with the rest of the holy assembly, appear before thy presence in thy house, to offer unto thee our morning sacrifice of praise and prayer, and to hear what thy Spirit, by the preaching of thy word, shall speak unto thy servant, O let not my sins stand as a cloud to stop my prayers from ascending unto thee, or to keep back thy grace from descending by thy word into my heart. I know, O Lord, and tremble to think, that three parts of the good seed falls upon bad ground. O let not my heart be like the highway, which through hardness, and want of true understanding, receives not the seed, till the evil one cometh and catcheth it away: nor like to the stony ground, which heareth with joy for a time, but falleth away as soon as persecution ariseth for the Gospel's sake: nor like the thorny ground, which by the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choketh the word

which it heareth, and makes it altogether unfruitful; but that like unto the good ground, I may hear thy word, with an honest and good heart understand it, and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience, in that measure that thy wisdom shall think meet for thy glory, and mine everlasting comfort. Open likewise, I beseech thee, O Lord, the door of utterance unto thy faithful servant, whom thou hast sent unto us to open our eyes, that we may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: that we may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ. And give me grace to submit myself unto his ministry, as well when he terrifieth me with judgments, as when he comforteth me with thy mercies; and that I may have him in singular love for his works' sake; because he watcheth for my soul as he that must give an account for the same unto his master. And give me grace to behave myself in the holy congregation with comeliness and reverence, as in thy presence, and in the sight of thy holy angels: keep me from drowsiness and sleeping, and from all wandering thoughts, and worldly imaginations. Sanctify my memory, that it may be apt to receive, and firm to remember, those good and profitable doctrines which shall be taught unto us out of thy word. And that through the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, I may put the same lessons in practice for my direction in prosperity, for my consolation in misery, for the amendment of my life, and the glory of thy name. And that this day which godless and profane persons spend in their own lusts and pleasures, I, as one of thy obedient servants, may make my chief delight to consecrate to thy glory and honour, not doing mine own ways, nor seeking mine own will, nor speaking a vain word; but that, ceasing from the works of sin as well as from the works of my ordinary calling, I may, through thy blessing, feel in my heart the beginning of that eternal Sabbath, which in unspeakable joy and glory I shall celebrate with saints and angels, to thy praise and worship, in thy heavenly kingdom for evermore. All which I humbly crave at thy hands, in the name and mediation of my Lord Jesus, in that form of prayer which he hath taught me:—"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

Having thus in private prepared thy own soul, if thou hast the charge of a family, call all thy household together, read a chapter, and pray as in the week-days: but remember so to despatch these private preparations and duties, as that thou and thy family may be in the church before the beginning of prayers; else your private exercises are rather a hindrance than a preparation. And as thou and thy household do go in all reverence towards the church, let every one meditate thus with himself:—



Things to be meditated on as thou goest to the Church.

1. That thou art going to the court of the Lord, and to speak with the great God by prayer; and to hear his majesty speak unto thee by his word; and to receive his blessing on thy soul, and thy honest labour, in the six days past.

2. Say with thyself by the way—“As the hart brayeth for the rivers of water, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, even for the living God: When shall I come and appear before the presence of God? For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tabernacles of wickedness. Therefore I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercies, and in thy fear will I worship toward thine holy temple.”

3. As thou enterest into the church, say—“How fearful is this place! This is none other but the house of God; this is the gate of heaven. Surely the Lord is in this place: God is in this people indeed.” And prostrating with thy face downward ([1 Cor. xiv. 25](#)), being come to thy place, say—“O Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honour dwelleth: One thing, therefore, have I desired of thee, that I will require, even that I may dwell in thy house all the days of my life, to behold thy beauty, and to visit thy temple: Therefore will I offer in thy tabernacle sacrifices of joy, I will sing and praise the Lord. Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry; have mercy also upon me, and hear me. Doubtless, kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell for ever in the house of the Lord.” And this is that preparation, or looking to our feet, to which Solomon advises us before we enter into the house of God ([Eccl. v. 1.](#))

The Second sort of Duties which are to be performed at the time of the holy Assembly.

When prayers begin, lay aside thy own private meditations, and let thy heart join with the minister and the whole church, as being one body of Christ ([1 Cor. xii. 12.](#)) and because that God is the God of order, he will have all things to be done in the church with one heart and accord ([Acts ii. 46.](#)) and the exercises of the church are common and public ([chap. iv. 32.](#)) It is therefore an ignorant pride, for a man to think his own private prayers more effectual than the public prayers of the whole church. Solomon therefore advises a man not to be rash to utter a thing in the church before God. Pray, therefore, when the church prayeth, sing when they sing; and in the action of kneeling, standing, sitting, and such indifferent ceremonies (for the avoiding of scandal, the continuance of charity, and in testimony of thine obedience), conform thyself to the manner of the church wherein thou livest ([Ezek. xlvi. 10.](#) [Psal. cx. 3.](#))

Whilst the preacher is expounding and applying the word of the Lord, look upon him; for it is a great help to stir up thine attention, and to keep thee from wandering thoughts: so the eyes of all that were in the synagogue are said to have been fastened on Christ whilst

he preached, and that all the people hanged upon him when they heard him. Remember that thou art there as one of Christ's disciples, to learn the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins, through the tender mercy of God ([Luke i. 77.](#))

Be not, therefore, in the school of Christ, like an idle boy in a grammar-school, that often hears, but never learns his lesson; and still goes to school, but profiteth nothing. Thou hatest it in a child—Christ detesteth it in thee. To the end, therefore, that thou mayest the better profit by hearing, mark—

1. The coherence and explication of the text.
2. The chief sum or scope of the Holy Ghost in that text.
3. The division or parts of the text.
4. The doctrines; and in every doctrine the proofs, the reasons, and the uses thereof.

A method, of all others, easiest for the people (being accustomed to it), to help them to remember the sermon; and therefore all faithful pastors, who desire to edify their people in the knowledge of God, and in his true religion, much wish it to be put in practice.

If the preacher's method be too curious or confused, then labour to remember—

1. How many things he taught which thou knewest not before; and be thankful.
2. What sins he reprov'd, whereof thy conscience tells thee that thou art guilty; and therefore must be amended.
3. What virtues he exhorted unto, which are not so perfect in thee; and therefore endeavour to practise them with more zeal and diligence.

But in hearing, apply every speech as spoken to thyself, rather by God than by man ([Isa. ii. 3](#); [Acts x. 33](#); [Gal. iv. 14](#); [1 Thess. ii. 13](#);) and labour not so much to hear the words of the preacher sounding in thine ear, as to feel the operation of the Spirit working in thy heart. Therefore it is said so often, "Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit speaks to the church," ([Rev. ii. 7](#);) and, "Did not our hearts burn within us whilst he opened unto us the Scriptures?" ([Luke xxiv. 32.](#)) And thus to hear the word, hath a blessing promised to it ([Luke xi. 28.](#)) It is the most acceptable sacrificing of ourselves unto God ([Rom. xv. 16.](#)) It is the surest note of Christ's saints ([Deut. xxxiii. 3](#);) the truest mark of Christ's sheep ([John x. 4](#);) the most apparent sign of God's elect ([John viii. 47](#); [xviii. 37](#);) the very blood, as it were, which unites us to be the spiritual kindred, brethren and sisters of the Son of God ([Luke i. 21](#); [Mark iii. 35.](#)) This is the best art of memory for a good hearer.

When the sermon is ended—

1. Beware thou depart not like the nine lepers, till, for thine instruction to saving health, thou hast returned thanks and praise to God by an after prayer, and singing of a psalm. And when the blessing is pronounced, stand up to receive thy part therein, and hear it as if Christ himself (whose minister he is) did pronounce the same unto thee: For in this case it is true, "He that heareth you heareth me," ([Luke x. 16](#);) and the Sabbath day is blessed, because God hath appointed it to be the day wherein by the mouth of his ministers he will bless his people



which hear his word and glorify his name ([Num. vi. 23, 27.](#)) For though the Sabbath day in itself be no more blessed than the other six days, yet, because the Lord hath appointed it to holy uses above others, it as far excels the other days of the week as the consecrated bread which we receive at the Lord's table does the common bread which we eat at our own table.

2. If it be a communion-day, draw near to the Lord's table in the wedding garment of a faithful and penitent heart, to be partaker of so holy a banquet.

And when baptism⁷⁴ is to be administered, stay and behold it with all reverent attention, that so thou mayest—First, Shew thy reverence to God's ordinance; Secondly, That thou mayest the better consider thine own ingrafting into the visible body of Christ's church, and how thou performest the vows of thy new covenant; Thirdly, That thou mayest repay thy debts, in praying for the infant which is to be baptized (as other Christians did in the like case for thee), that God would give him the inward effects of baptism, by his blood and Spirit; Fourthly, That thou mayest assist the church in praising God for grafting another member into his mystical body; Fifthly, That thou mayest prove whether the effects of Christ's death killeth sin in thee, and whether thou be raised to newness of life by the virtue of his resurrection; and so to be humbled for thy wants, and to be thankful for his graces; Sixthly, To shew thyself to be a freeman of Christ's corporation, having a voice or consent in the admission of others into that holy society.

If there be any collection for the poor, freely without grudging bestow thine alms, as God hath blessed thee with ability ([1 Cor. xvi. 1](#); [2 Cor. ix. 5, 6, 7, &c.](#))

And thus far of the duties to be performed in the holy assembly.

Now of the Third sort of Duties after the holy Assembly.

As thou returnest home, or when thou art entered into thy house, meditate a little while upon those things which thou hast heard. And as the clean beasts which chew the cud ([Lev. xi. 3](#)), so must thou bring again to thy remembrance that which thou hast heard in the church. And then kneeling down, turn all to prayer, beseeching God to give such a blessing to those things which thou hast heard, that they may be a direction to thy life, and a consolation unto thy soul ([Psal. cxix. 11.](#)) For till the word be thus made our own, and, as it were, close hidden in our hearts, we are in danger lest Satan steal it away, and we shall receive no

74 I cannot refrain from remarking the careless and indifferent manner in which too often this divine ordinance is administered, as well as witnessed. And it is a fact, evident to the most common observer, that, generally, the minister who lays the greatest stress upon the regenerating efficacy of the mere rite itself, is the most remarkable for the indevout and regardless manner in which he performs the sacred service; so that spectators who knew no better might well suppose that he was hurrying over some unmeaning and distasteful ceremony, destitute of divine sanction, which had been imposed upon him, instead of dispensing a holy ordinance, necessary to salvation, commanded by Christ himself.



profit thereby ([Matt. xiii. 19.](#)) And when thou goest to dinner, in that reverent and thankful manner before prescribed, remember, according to thy ability, to have one or more poor Christians, whose hungry bowels may be refreshed with thy meat; imitating holy Job, who protested that he did never eat his morsel alone, without the good company of the poor and fatherless ([Job xxxi. 17, 18:](#)) that is the commandment of Christ our Master ([Luke xiv. 13.](#)) Or at leastwise, send some part of thy dinner to the poor who lies sick in the back-lane, without any food ([Esth. ix. 22;](#)) for this will bring a blessing upon all thy works and labours ([Deut. xv. 10, &c.;](#)) and it will one day more rejoice thy soul than it doth now refresh his body, when Christ shall say unto thee, “O blessed child of God! I was an hungered, and thou gavest me meat,” &c. And, “forasmuch as thou hast done it for my sake to the least of these my brethren, I take it in as good part as if thou hadst done it to my own self.”

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When dinner is ended, and the Lord praised, call thy family together;⁷⁵ examine what they have learned in the sermon ([Acts xvii. 11;](#) [Heb. v. 14;](#)) commend them that do well, yet discourage not them whose memories or capacities are weaker, but rather help them, for their wills and minds may be as good. Turn to the proofs which the preacher alleged, and rub those good things over their memories again ([Deut. vi. 7.](#)) Then sing a psalm or more ([Matt. xxvi. 30;](#) [Jam. v. 13.](#)) If time permit, thou mayest teach and examine them in some part of the catechism ([Heb. vi. 1](#)), conferring every point with the proofs of the holy Scripture. This will both increase our knowledge and sharpen our memory; seeing by experience we find, that in every trade they who are most exercised are ever most expert ([Heb. v. 14.](#)) But in anywise, remember so to dispose all these private exercises, as that thou mayest be with the first in the holy congregation at the evening exercise; where behave thyself in the like devotion and reverence as was prescribed for the holy exercise of the morning.

After evening prayer, and at thy supper, behave thyself in the like religious and holy manner as was formerly prescribed. And either before or after supper, if the season of the year and weather do serve—

1. Walk into the fields and meditate upon the works of God; for in every creature thou mayest read, as in an open book, the wisdom, power, providence, and goodness of Almighty God ([Psal. xcii. 5;](#) [xix. 1, &c.;](#) [viii. 1, 3, &c.;](#) [Rom. i. 19, 20;](#)) and that none is able to make all these things in the variety of their forms, virtues, beauties, life, motions, and qualities, but our most glorious God ([Isa. xl. 26.](#))

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2. Consider how gracious he is that made all these things to serve us ([Psal. viii.](#))

3. Take occasion hereby to stir up both thyself and others to admire and adore his power, wisdom, and goodness; and to think what ungrateful wretches we are, if we will not, in all obedience, serve and honour him.

⁷⁵ If thou be a private man, either perform these holy duties by thyself, or join with some godly family in the performance of them.

4. If any neighbour be sick, or in any heaviness, go to visit him ([Jam. v. 14](#), &c.) If any be fallen at variance, help to reconcile them.

To conclude, three sorts of works may lawfully be done on the Sabbath day.

1. Works of piety, which either directly concern the service of God, though they be performed by bodily labour; as, under the law, the priests laboured in killing and dressing of sacrifices, and burning them on the altar ([Matt. xii. 5](#).) And Christians under the Gospel when they travel far to the places of God's worship, it is but a Sabbath day's journey ([Acts i. 12](#)), like to that of the Shunamite, who travelled from home to hear the prophet on the Sabbath day, because she had no teaching near her own dwelling ([2 Kings iv. 22](#).) And the preacher, though he labours in the sweat of his brow to the wearying of his body, yet he doth but a Sabbath day's work. For the holy end sanctifieth the work, as the temple did the gold, or the altar the gift thereon;—or else such bodily labour, whereby the people of God are assembled to his worship, as the sounding of trumpets under the law ([Numb. x. 2, 3](#)), or the ringing of bells under the gospel.

2. Works of charity, as to save the life of a man ([John v. 9](#); [Mark iii. 4](#)), or of a beast ([Matt. xii. 11](#);) to fodder, water, and dress cattle ([Luke xiii. 15](#);) to make honest provision of meat and drink ([Matt. xii. 1](#);) to refresh ourselves, and to relieve the poor, to visit the sick, to make collections for the poor, and such like ([1 Cor. xvi. 1](#).)

3. Works of necessity, not feigned, but present and imminent, and such as could not be prevented before, nor can be deferred to another day—as to resist the invasion of enemies, or the robberies of thieves; to quench the rage of fire, and for physicians to stanch or let blood, or to cure any other desperate disease; and for midwives to help women in labour; mariners may do their labour; soldiers, being assailed, may fight; and such like. On these or the like occasions, a man may lawfully work. Yea, and when they are called, they may, upon any of these occasions, go out of the church, and from the holy exercises of the word and sacraments: provided always, that they be humbled that such occasions fall out upon that day and time; and that they take no money for their pains on that day, but only for their stuff, as in the fear of God, and conscience of his commandment.

When the time of rest approaches, retire thyself to some private place; and knowing that in the state of corruption no man living can sanctify a Sabbath in that spiritual manner that he should, but that he commits many breaches thereof, in his thoughts, words, and deeds, humbly crave pardon for thy defects, and reconcile thyself to God, with this or the like evening sacrifice:—



A private Evening Prayer for the Lord's day.

O holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth! Suffer me, who am but dust and ashes, to speak unto thy most glorious majesty. I know that thou art a consuming fire; I acknowledge that I am but withered stubble: my sins are in thy sight, and Satan stands at my right hand to accuse me for them. I come not to excuse but to judge myself worthy of all those judgments which thy justice might most justly inflict upon me, a wretched creature, for my sins and transgressions. The number of them is so great, the nature of them is so grievous, that they make me seem vile in my own eyes; how much more loathsome in thy sight? I confess they make me so far from being worthy to be called thy son, that I am altogether unworthy to have the name of thy meanest servant; and if thou shouldst but recompense me according to my desert, the earth, as weary of such a sinful burden, should open her mouth and swallow me up, like one of Dathan's family, into the bottomless pit of hell. For if thou didst not spare the natural branches, those angels of glorious excellency, but didst hurl them down from the heavenly habitations into the pains of hellish darkness, to be kept unto damnation, when they sinned but once against thy Majesty, and didst expel our first parents out of paradise when they did but transgress one of thy laws; alas! what vengeance may I expect, who have not offended in one sin only, heaping daily sin upon sin without any true repentance, drinking iniquity as it were water, ever pouring in but never pouring out any filthiness, and have transgressed not one, but all thy holy laws and commandments? Yea, this present day which thou hast straitly commanded me to keep holy to thy praise and worship, I have not so religiously kept and observed, nor prepared my soul in that holiness and purity of heart, as was fit to meet thy blessed Majesty in the holy assembly of the saints. I have not attended to the preaching of thy word, nor to the administration of thy sacraments, with that humility, reverence, and devotion that I should: for though I was present at those holy exercises in my body, yet, Lord, I was overtaken with much drowsiness; and when I was awake my mind was so distracted and carried away with vain and worldly thoughts, that my soul seemed to be absent and out of the church. I have not so duly, as I should, meditated with myself, nor conferred with my family upon those good instructions which we have heard and received out of thy holy word by the public ministry: for default of which, Satan hath stolen the most part of those instructions out of my heart, and I, wretched creature, have forgotten them as though they had never been heard. And my family doth not thrive in knowledge and sanctification under my government, as they should. Though I know where many of my poor brethren live in want and necessity, and some in pain, and comfortless; yet I have not remembered to relieve the one with my alms, nor the other with consolations; but I have feasted myself and satisfied my own lusts. I have spent the most part of the day in idle talk and vain exercises; yea, Lord, I have, &c.—[Here confess whatsoever fault thou hast done that day by omission or commission, and then fetching from thy heart a deep sigh, say]—and

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for all these my sins, my conscience cries guilty, thy law condemns me, and I am in thy hand to receive the sentence and the curse due to the wilful breach of so holy a commandment. But what if I am by thy law condemned? yet, Lord, thy gospel assures me that thy mercy is above all thy works; that thy grace transcends thy law; and thy goodness delighteth there to reign where sins do most abound. In the multitude of thy mercies, and for the merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, I beseech thee, O Lord, who despisest not the sighings of a contrite heart, nor desirest the death of a penitent sinner, to pardon and forgive me all those my sins, and all the errors of this day and of my whole life, and free my soul from that curse and judgment which is due unto me for them. Thou that didst justify the contrite publican for four words of confession, and receive the prodigal child, when he had spent all the stock of thy grace, into favour upon his repentance; pardon my sins likewise, O Lord, and suffer me not to perish for my transgressions. O spare me, and receive me into thy favour again. Wilt thou, O Lord, who hast received all publicans, harlots, and sinners, that upon repentance sued to thee for grace, reject me? shall I alone be excluded from thy mercy? Far be it from me to think so: for thou art the same God of mercy to me that thou wast to them, and thy compassions never fail. Wherefore, O Lord, deal not with me after my merits, but according to thy great mercy; execute not thy severe justice against me a sinner, but exercise thy long-sufferance in forbearing thy own creature. I have nothing to present unto thee for a satisfaction, but only those bloody wounds, bitter death and passion, which thy blessed Son, my only Saviour, hath suffered for me. Him, in whom only thou art well pleased, I offer unto thee for all my sins wherewith thou art displeased: him, my Mediator, the request of whose blood, speaking better things than that of Abel, thy mercy can never gainsay. Illuminate my understanding and sanctify my heart with thy Holy Spirit, that it may bring to my remembrance all those good and profitable lessons which this day and at other times have been taught me out of thy holy word; that I may remember thy commandments to keep them—thy judgments to avoid them—and thy sweet promises to rely upon them, in time of misery and distress. And now, O Lord, I resign myself to thy most holy will: O receive me into thy favour, and so draw me by thy grace unto thyself, that I may as well be thine by love and imitation as by calling and creation. And give me grace so to keep holy thy Sabbaths in this life, that when this life is ended, I may, with all thy saints and angels, celebrate an eternal Sabbath of joy and praise to the honour of thy most glorious name, in thy heavenly kingdom for evermore. Amen.

And then calling thy family together, shut up the Sabbath with the meditations and prayers before prescribed for thy family. And the Lord will give thee that night a more sweet and quiet rest than ordinary, and prosper thee the better in all the labours of the week following.

Thus far of the ordinary practice of piety, both in private and public: Now follows the extraordinary practice of piety, whereby God is glorified in our lives.



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