

# THE COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

"BUILT UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER STONE. . . . . Eph. 2 c. 20 v.

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### PRAYER.

As soon, then, as your prayer is ended, pause awhile, be silent and quiet in yourselves, not suffering other things to come into your head, nor your heart to go out to other things, but reflect upon what you have been doing, and observe these three things.

1. The manner. 2. The matter. 3. The returns of your prayers.

**I. The manner.**  
1. The imperfections and distractions and vain imaginations—what thoughts the devil suggested and yourselves indulged.

2. The communications of God's grace to you, as you are to consider what the devil did against you, so likewise what God did for you—what influences of His spirit, incomes of His grace, and discoveries of His glory He vouchsafed to you—be humbled under the former, and thankful for the latter.

**II. The matter, wherein**

1. Confession, which is part of prayer, Deut. 9 4 and as we are to confess the sins that were committed by us, that God might pardon them, so we are to remember the sins that were confessed by us, that we may forsake them; without which we may confess our sins to God, but God will never pardon them to us, Prov. 28. 13: and truly without this, the confession of our sins unto God, will be but the aggravation of our sins against Him.

2. Petition. As we are to consider what sins we have confessed before Him, so likewise what mercies we have desired of Him: that so

1. We may expect them from Him, Ps. 5. 3.—What archer is there that will shoot, and not observe whether his arrow hit the mark? What merchant that will trade, and not look for the return of his ships? Or husbandman, that will sow, and not expect the harvest? And why should a Christian, of all people, work, and not expect a blessing? Certainly, to desire a mercy of God, and never to look for it from Him, is but to mock God, pretending we would have such a thing, when we care not whether we would have it or no.

2. Leave Providence in the use of means, for the attainment of what thou desirest. Though God hath promised to give mercies to His praying people, yet He never promised to work miracles; and it would be a miracle for God to give mercies without means, when he hath appointed means for the attainment of them. God wrought a miracle for St. Peter in opening the prison door, because there was none else to do it; but St. Peter must knock when he comes where the disciples were met, Acts 12. 10, 13.

3. Thanksgiving. Remember what mercies thou gavest God thanks for with thy mouth, that so thou mayest perfect His praise for them in thy life: and from this consideration of our reflecting upon what we have desired, I think may be urged the use of a form of prayers, especially for those of weaker memories, who cannot remember half the things they prayed for, unless they have the prayer before them to consider afterwards.

**III. The returns.** Whether God give unto thee what thou desirest of Him or no; and if upon diligent search thou findest God hath given thee the mercy thou desirest of Him.

1. Look upon it as the return of prayer.

2. Be thankful for it, Ps. 107.

3. As thou receivedst it from God's mercy, so improve it for His glory, 1 Sam. 1. 28.

4. Be encouraged thereby to be more frequent and constant in thy addresses to the throne of grace. Ps. 3. 26.

If upon diligent inquiry, thou canst not find thy

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petitions granted, there are some things I would have thee not to do, as

1. Take not every delay for a denial.  
2. Think not God hath not heard thy prayer, because thou dost not find He hath; thou mayst have the mercy and yet not know it.

3. Look not upon the not receiving every mercy thou desirest of God, as a denial of the prayer thou madest to Him: though He doth not give thee the mercy thou desirest, He may give thee a mercy thou more lackest, 2 Cor. 12, 8.

And some things there are thou shouldst do, as

1. Consider the matter thou prayedst for; perhaps it might not be for God's glory, and thy good; and if so, God answered thy prayers in not giving thee the thing thou prayedst for, Ps. 66. 18.

2. Consider the manner of thy praying, perhaps thou didst not pray for the mercy thou thinkest thou didst; thou mightst desire it with thy mouth, but thy heart might be against it, ready to call back thy words again: or perhaps whilst thy mouth was speaking the words, thy heart was about other matters and so though thou didst ask the mercy of God, yet thou didst not pray for it to Him, for prayer is the wish of the soul, the raising of the heart to Heaven, and of the mind to God; and therefore thou canst not expect God should ever hear thy prayers, when thou never madest them.

3. Consider whether thou hast made use of the right means that God hath appointed for the attainment of it.

4. If thou findest all things right and yet thou hast not the mercy, wait and pray, and pray and wait, till God bestows it upon thee; and if thou canst do so, be sure thy prayers are answered, though perhaps thou hast not the thing desired; for thou hast received a mercy, as great a mercy as thou canst desire of God, or God can bestow upon thee on this side Heaven, even an holy, praying, and waiting frame of spirit.

From these directions I observe—

1. How few there be in the world that ever pray.

2. How seldom they that pray the o'tenest, do pray; every saying of our prayers is not prayer.

3. What short prayers the best of God's people make; they may say many words, yet alas; they pray but a little;—if we should take out of them every imperfect and distracted petition, how little would there be left behind, that could be called a prayer? Watch therefore; watch unto, watch in, watch after prayer, so shall thy prayers come up before God.

### DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH.

#### Chap. 4.

#### DIVINITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

The Divinity of the Holy Ghost may be proved from Scripture in the same manner that we have proved the Divinity of Christ. But the proofs of the former having been so fully considered, little need be said in support of the latter; as the arguments in both cases are much the same, — as many of them apply equally to both, and especially, as those who admit the Divinity of the Son, admit also the Divinity of the Third Person in the adorable Trinity.

Our fifth article thus expresses the sense of the Church on this point:—"the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, of the same majesty and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God." And in the Nicene Creed we profess to believe that He is "the Lord and Giver of life, who with the Father and the Son together, is worshipped and glorified." In proof of which we might easily show, that all the names, titles, attributes and operations of God are ascribed to the Holy Ghost, and that religious worship and adoration are paid to Him in the Scriptures. Thus "to lie to the

Holy Ghost," is said to be lying unto God. "The Temple of the Holy Ghost," is called the temple of God,—to be "born of the Spirit," is to be born of God.

Omniscience is ascribed to Him: for "who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught Him?"

"The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Omnipresence,—for "whither," asks the psalmist, "shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Through Him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

A plain intimation of the several distinct offices which these three Divine Persons sustained in the scheme of salvation. The Son through whom, the Spirit by whom, and the Father to whom, we have access. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities," which he could not do, unless He were omnipresent. Omnipotence is ascribed to the Holy Ghost,—for he is "the power of the Highest." And Eternity, for He is "the eternal Spirit." Creating power is evidently ascribed to Him; for by His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens." "Thou sendest forth the Spirit," says the psalmist, "and they are created." In like manner Job,—"the Spirit of God hath made me."

Not only is Divine worship given to the Spirit of God, but his personality is distinctly recognized in that apostolic benediction—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."—And still more clearly and forcibly is it implied in this last commission of our Saviour to his Apostles—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" evidently meaning, by this solemn dedication of christians to the worship and service of each, that equal honors should be paid them. Now if the Holy Ghost were only a divine power, or energy, or quality, as some pretend, and not a person,—why are we required to be baptized in his name, as well as that of the Father and Son. But an uncontrovertible proof of the personality of the Holy Ghost is contained in that declaration of Christ, "when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come."—And again,—"when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

From all which texts,—and there are many others that might be mentioned, we infer that the blessed Spirit is properly a "Divine Person," equal with the Father and the Son, who, together are worshipped and glorified; and who together, form 'one very and eternal God.' Hence it is that our Church teaches us, in her inimitable Litany, thus to pray—"O God the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us miserable sinners!" And at the conclusion of the Psalms, as also in many other parts of her service, directs us to ascribe equal and undivided glory to the Father, and to the Father, and to the Holy Ghost.

Nor is this a subject of doubtful importance, or of mere speculative interest; it is intimately connected with our dearest hopes. "It is the pillar and ground of which 'Jesus Christ Himself is the Chief Corner Stone,' and in which is built the 'Church of

The practical improvement to be made of this article of our Creed,—its effects on the hearts and lives of believers, will be seen when we consider more particularly the important office which the Holy Spirit sustains in the mysterious scheme of salvation.