

the understanding and with the heart," and with some degree of propriety and taste, all must feel better prepared for the other services of God's house. The family is a part of the Church of God; it is believing families assembled in one place that constitute the Church of God; and what is so suitable and necessary to the Church cannot be inapplicable or unsuitable to the several parts of which the Church is composed. Let this elevating exercise form part of your family devotions. Remember that God has said, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." "God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praise with understanding." "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High. To show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning and thy faithfulness every night." "Sing unto the Lord; bless his name, show forth his salvation from day to day." "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever." "I will sing unto my God while I have my being." But

2. Family worship comprises reading of the Scriptures.

It may be remarked, that in those families where the worship of God is stately observed, the Scriptures are generally read; and in most families where this important and ennobling duty is observed, they are regularly and consecutively read. This is an important exercise, nay, it is almost essential to obtaining a right knowledge of the truth of God. It is true that there are parts of the truth of God, the Scriptures, that are more suitable to certain states or circumstances of the family, or to certain times and occasions, than are other parts; but all Scripture is important; "all Scripture is given by inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, and instruction in righteousness." The Scriptures should be read in the family, and read in faith, love, and self-application, with a desire both to know and do the will of God. The Word of God is not like an arranged or classified system of truths. It is not divided into dissertations on this doctrine and that duty, on this theory and that fact. We do not find all the precepts comprised in one book, and its promises in another. But we find in almost every part of the Scriptures, doctrines, precepts, and promises, combined with, or followed by, warnings against sin and exhortations to duty. The Scriptures are thus presented, divinely arranged and adapted for our instruction and comfort. Now, in reading the Word of God in our families at domestic worship, whatever may be the portion read, or what may be called the lesson of the day, it should be read in such a way, whether by one or by all in turns, that all may understand the truths stated, the doctrines or precepts taught, and a lively faith exercised in the truths read. To illustrate our meaning. Is the portion of Scripture to be read, history? That is fraught with instruction to the wise and attentive reader. It is a record of God's providential dealings with his people. Therein we may see both "the goodness and severity of God, to them that fell severity, but to thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness." There we may learn his faithfulness to his servants and to their children's children. History records the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promises. Do we read the Evangelists' narratives of the life and acts, sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ? What heavenly truths, what holy lessons do they contain? There are truths and lessons fraught with that "wisdom which cometh down from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." These statements of the Evangelists and Apostles never grow stale and unprofitable, like a twice-told tale. They never pall on the spiritual appetite, if it has but once tasted of the hidden manna which they contain. They are always palatable and delicious, sweeter than honey, yea, than the honey-comb. Thus we should read all Scripture—its warnings, with attention and solicitude; its threatenings, with self-examination, application, and prayer; its consolations and promises, with hope and gratitude; its examples, with a firm purpose, that, by God's grace and Spirit enabling us, we shall be followers of those who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises. But,

3. Prayer is essential to family worship.