

Gatherings.

What we win by prayer, we *may* wear with comfort, and *must* wear with praise. 1 Sam. ii.

Prayer is heart's ease to a gracious soul: the seed of Jacob have often found it so, being confident that God will never say unto them, "*Seek ye me in vain.*"

Though God seems long to forget his people's burthens, troubles, cares, and prayers; yet, he will at length make it to appear that they are not out of his mind.

When anything disturbs us, it is our interest, as well as our duty, to show God our trouble; and he gives us leave to be humbly free with him. 1 Sam. viii.

It is sin against God, not to pray for the Israel of God, especially for those of them that are under our charge: and good men are afraid of the guilt of omissions. 1 Sam. xii.

Those that have acquaintance and communion with Christ, must closely and conscientiously adhere to holy ordinances, must join themselves to his people, and attend to his ministers. Solomon's Song i.

The ordinances of Christ are the ornaments of the church; the graces, gifts and comforts of the Spirit are the adorning of every believing soul, and beautify it: these render it, *in the sight of God, of great price.*

The graces of God's Spirit, in the hearts of believers, are exceeding precious in themselves, and pleasing to Christ; and his presence in ordinances draws them out into act and exercise.

God's people reckon their sacred things their most delectable things. Rob them of holy ordinances and the means of grace, and you *lay waste all their pleasant things.* What have they more? Isa. lxiv.

God will be served and honoured in the way that he has appointed, in the ordinances of his own institution, which are the proper vehicles for those spiritual offerings. Isa. lxvi.

Gospel ordinances are the fields and valleys where the sheep of Christ *shall go in and out, and find pasture,* (John x. 9,) and where they are *made to lie down,* (Ps. xxiii. 2,) as Israel's herds in the valley of Achor. (Eos. ii. 15.) Isa. lxv.

Church censures, duly administered, strike an awe upon men's consciences; the word (the weapons of her warfare) *casts down imaginations,* (2 Cor. x. 5) and even an unbeliever is convinced and judged by the solemnity of holy ordinances. (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.) Solomon's Song vi.

That which has been preached, and heard before, may yet very profitably be preached and heard again; but then it should be preached and heard better, and with new affections. What Paul had said before, he said again, *weeping.* Philip. iii. 1, 18.

God's church on earth is a tabernacle, which though it may be shifted from one place to another, shall not be taken down while the world stands. For in every age, Christ will have a seed to serve him. The promises of the covenant are its stakes, which shall never be removed; and the ordinances and institutions of the gospel are its cords, which shall never be broken. Isa. xxxiii.

Those that aim to ruin the church can never do that; but will infallibly ruin themselves. Isa. xxxiv.

It is some ease to a troubled spirit, to give vent to its griefs, especially to give vent to them at the throne of grace, where we are sure to find one who is afflicted in the afflictions of his people, and is troubled with a feeling of their infirmities. Thither we have boldness of access by faith, and there we have freedom of speech. Ps. xiii.