

the efficacy of prayer ; and some desiring a *reform* in prayer. In the last number of the *Magazine* has appeared one that comes under this latter character. SEMAJ, the author, requests that you or some of your correspondents will take up the subject, and, as I suppose, not only correct those errors to which he alludes, but also to lay down a correct and perfect model of prayer for Christians to be guided by in their devotional exercises. Does he forget that our blessed Lord and Saviour has laid down a correct and perfect model of prayer? Does he forget that the holy apostles prayed, and that by inspiration too, which, to say the least of it, ought to be a model for us?

There are many pious individuals, who are, to speak after the manner of men, uninstructed as to correct forms of prayers : and as to a proper use of words, never will be instructed ; and whose prayers, although their language may be broken and vulgar, are of much avail in the sight of the Heavenly Father. But, begin to instruct them about such niceties and particulars as SEMAJ would have you or some other person to do, and you will run the risk of ensnaring them ; lay a foundation for the enemy of souls to work upon ; and, perhaps, "break the bruised reed."

But lest we should be mistaken upon this important subject, and write and speak rashly, let us observe a few instances of prayer as they are recorded in the New Testament. First, our adorable Saviour says to his disciples, "After this manner therefore pray ye : Our Father which art in heaven, &c." Here our Lord is undoubtedly addressing the Father, and he instructs his disciples to do so too. In one part of this admirable prayer we find it thus, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;" or, as our Saviour expresses it in a subsequent verse,—

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you." In this petition we are instructed to pray to the Father for the forgiveness of sins or trespasses, not binding us to make use of the phrase "for the sake of thy son," though I believe we may say so with great propriety ; because it is only for the sake of his son that he can forgive us our sins. For Jesus by his death made it possible for God to be "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Secondly, when our blessed Lord was hanging upon the cross, and his compassionate heart yearning with pity for his murderers, he said, "Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do." Here our Lord prays to his Father to forgive his murderers ; undoubtedly with the understanding that they could not be forgiven, but through the infinite merits of his own sacrificial death. But not one word on the subject. He does not say, "Father forgive them," for my sake. It was unnecessary to mention it, because it was implied in the prayer : forgiveness of sins can only be obtained through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. And we may or we may not, use the words of reference, provided we keep the eye of faith steadfastly fixed upon Christ Jesus as the only sacrifice for sin, and medium of approach unto the Father.

Thirdly. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Stephen invokes the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit ; the Lord Jesus could not receive his spirit but only through his own infinite merits ; therefore Stephen invokes the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit for the sake of the Lord Jesus, although he does not make use of the latter words. Stephen kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge," i. e. Lord forgive