

graces of the Spirit, put a query, O my soul! art thou adorned as the bride of Christ with this chain of pearl? hast thou thy certificate for heaven ready? will not thy graces be to seek when thou shouldst have them to show? Thus should a Christian, in his retirements, parley often with his heart.

For want of this examination, meditation doth evaporate and come to nothing. For want of examination joined with meditation, many are strangers to their own hearts; though they live known to others, they die unknown to themselves. Meditation is like a perspective glass by which we contemplate heavenly objects; but self-examination is like a looking-glass by which we see into our own souls, and can judge how it is with us. Meditation joined with examination, is like the sun on the dial, which shows how the day goes; it shows us how our hearts stand affected to spiritual things.

*Rule 5.* Shut up meditation with prayer; pray over your meditations. Prayer sanctifies everything; without prayer they are but unhallowed meditations; prayer fastens meditation upon the soul; prayer is a tying a knot at the end of meditation, that it doth not slip; pray that God will keep those holy meditations in your mind for ever, that the savour of them may abide upon your hearts; "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people," 1 Chrôn. xxix. 18. So let us pray, that when we have been musing on heavenly things, and our hearts have waxed hot within us, we may not cool into a sinful tepidness and lukewarmness, but that our affections may be as the lamp of the sanctuary, always burning.

*Rule 6.* The last rule is, let meditation be reduced to practice; live over your meditation. "Thou shalt meditate in this book, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein," Josh. i. 8. Meditation and practice, like two sisters, must go hand in hand. Cassian saith, that the contemplative life cannot be perfected without the practice. We read that the angels had wings, and hands under their wings, Ezek. i. 8, it may be an hieroglyphical emblem of this truth; Christians must not only fly upon the wing of meditation, but they must be active in obedience; they must have hands under their wings. The end of meditation is