

matisms and bad digestion of a spiritual dyspeptic, he knows no more of than of the plague or the Jewish leprosy. But take the heart out of a man's religion, and it becomes the most pitiable penance, and the dreariest of drudgeries.

Perhaps, too, we may find in this very spot the reason why so many awakened and once anxious sinners have never yet found the Saviour. They only sought the infinite blessing with but a fraction of the heart. God was in earnest when he invited them; they were not. The Spirit of grace was in earnest when he strove with them; they were not. A fragment of the heart—a few hours of the Sabbath—an occasional fitful thought—they were willing to give to Christ if he would insure them a safe escape from perdition. But the very least and lowest terms which the blessed Savior could offer them were, "Ye shall seek me and find me when ye search for me *with all your heart.*"

Unconverted reader! does not this touch the very "sore spot" with you? Is not this your very sin and danger? You ask everything from God; you will not give everything to him. Just as surely as the day of judgment comes and finds you hopeless and Christless, you will take up a bitter lamentation in words like these, "I am lost—lost forever. I might have been saved. I often came near to heaven; I was more than once at the threshold. Others passed by and went in. My intimate friend went in. A brother entered in at my very side; my wife—with a tearful pleading to me to follow her—passed through the open door. I might have gone. Conscience bade me go. Reason urged it. A crucified Savior, with pierced hand, opened wide the gate. I expected to come in ere it should close. The Spirit strove with me to give God my heart. But the conditions of salvation were, 'Ye shall seek me and find me when ye search for me *with all the heart.*' This I would not give. I kept back what God asked, and I have lost everything!" To sink into perdition is a fearful doom at best; but infinitely more harrowing and awful for the soul that remembers that it fell there from the very threshold of heaven!—*Independent.*

### Household Worship.

BY REV. LEONARD SWAIN, D. D.

Perhaps there never was a clearer duty growing out of the very nature of the case itself, than that of household worship.

The family is God's first institution. It was founded in Eden, and will last to the end of the world. All other institutions come after it, cluster around it, grow out of it, and have the deepest roots both of their strength and their weakness in it. The school is what the family makes it. The

church is what the family makes it. The state is what the family makes it. So is it with communities and nations. So is it with universal human society and with the whole race of man. They are all but so many streams of which the family is the fountain, circles of which it is the centre, superstructures of which it is the foundation, branches of which it is the root. What it is, they are and must be. Its spirit makes their life. Its fibres shape their boughs. Its juices feed their leaves and fill their fruit. All other institutions of society are to be formed and reformed, generated and regenerated, only through the family itself.

And if the family is the institution of all others which stands nearest to God, then, of all others, it ought first to acknowledge God. If he should be recognized in the school, the state, the church, the world, then before all, and as an introduction to all, he should be recognized in the household; recognized not in spirit only, but in form, and by a regular order and system of service. There can be no true spiritual acknowledgement of God in the family without this form and order of service, any more than there could be in a Christian church without public prayer and praise. If there is to be family religion there must be family worship: the homage of the household daily and directly addressed to God, in the audible reading of his Word, and the offering up to him morning and evening of audible prayer and thanksgiving. The family thus recognizes God's will as its law, God's Word as its guide, his service as its work, his throne of grace as its great fountain of strength, his presence, providence, indwelling, and approbation as its best bond of order and peace, its only true life, light, joy, and salvation.

But every family owes it to itself as well as to God to maintain this daily worship. There is an influence flowing out of such a habit of worship over the whole household life, which is of the utmost power and consequence, and which cannot be replaced or supplied by any other influence in the world.

Look at the influence on the mere education of a family. The Bible is the greatest of all classics. There is more in it to form the mind, to fire the imagination, to fill the thoughts—nay, even to fashion the style and furnish the tongue with all the resource of strong and beautiful speech, than in any other book. Now the mere fact of growing up from childhood in the daily habit of hearing this book read at the family devotions, connected as it is with all the most sacred and touching associations which life can furnish through its successive stages from the cradle to the grave, this of itself is an element of incalculable power in developing the mind, in giving it direction, tone, and shape, in forming its tastes, in building that inward habitation in which it is to dwell,