

intended and his example recorded for instruction and encouragement. We read also of the Church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, which probably means their christian family : and of a Church in the house of Nymphas, and also a Church in the house of Philemon, Peter (1 Pet. 3: 7.) exhorts to fidelity in the discharge of the reciprocal duties of husband and wife, "that their prayers be not hindered." The example of the Godly in all ages demonstrates the propriety and necessity of family religion.

Let us now consider the advantages of Family Religion, some of which are as follows :

1. The regular observance of family worship is eminently fitted to promote personal piety in the household. Every morning and every evening brings fresh occasion of thanksgivings and prayer. The offering up of the morning and evening sacrifice conveys to every bosom an admonition respecting the vast importance of religion. A reverence for divine things is infused into every mind which is exceedingly valuable. By this service every religious affection is exercised, the mind is soothed and tranquilized, the heart is improved by having its tenderest feelings awakened ; and the most endearing associations, heighten the devotions of each. The family tribute of homage is not less interesting and intense than that of public worship. Here parents put in practice the lessons they have taught their children : the children see how much the parents are in earnest about their temporal and spiritual welfare : the word of God is read in circumstances the best fitted to make a salutary impression on the young mind ; and upon the readings and prayers of the family many a powerful influence has been received and which never has been effaced from the heart.

2. Family religion consolidates family government—order is indispensably necessary to the successful management of all the concerns of the household : order implies government. One must preside—God has invested the father with an authority, to rebel against which is a sin which God will punish, perhaps even in the present life. Nothing is more favorable to filial obedience than piety. The father presiding in the devotion of the family appears as the priest of the community, the minister of Christ and their intercessor ; and never does he appear in a more dignified and venerable attitude. Such an appearance cannot fail to strengthen his authority and procure an affectionate compliance with all his wishes.

3. In answer to family prayers, God may bestow many blessings ; many of the promises are addressed to men, not as individuals, but in their social capacity. The family circle may claim for itself all these promises. How large is the range that God sets before his people for their petitions ;—"whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do." With the promise "whatsoever ye shall ask" before them, how high must appear the Christian's privilege, and how great the loss sustained by a prayerless family !

B. B.