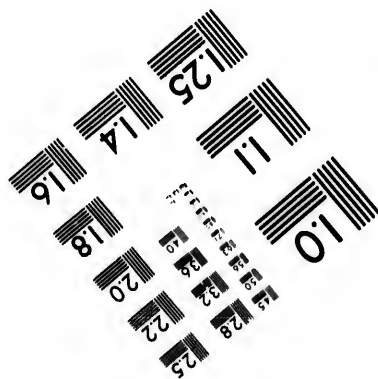
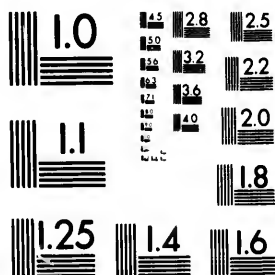


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



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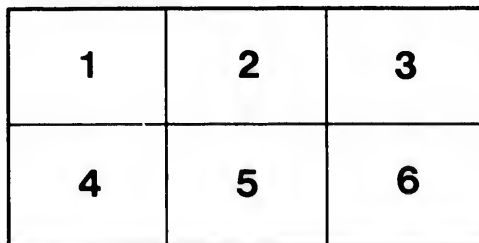
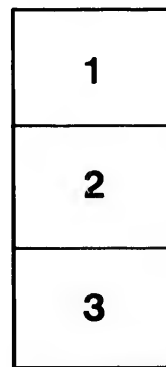
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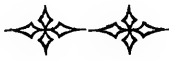
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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA.



Third Pastoral Letter.

PASTOR'S STUDY,
September 13th, 1896.

DEARLY BELOVED :

In a Pastoral Letter addressed to you sometime since, your attention was called to the great importance of sustaining the Family Altar. In connection therewith, a slip, similar to the one you find herewith enclosed, was sent out with a view to learning to what extent this invaluable means of grace is employed or neglected among us. It is gratifying to know that some who, from diffidence or peculiar circumstances, had not had family prayer up to that time, were led by the exhortation then given to resolve upon omitting it no longer. Others, who had allowed the fire upon the Family Altar to become almost or quite extinguished, had it rekindled. There was large response to the questions asked, although many, probably from regret that they could not report favorably, returned no answer.

Upwards of two years have gone since that epistle came to you, and it is fitting that inquiry should again be made about the same matter, that we may know what improvement, if any, has come within this period. How many who once had Family Worship simply on Sundays, have now come to make it a daily exercise? How many who once permitted circumstances a little out of the ordinary to push aside Bible reading and prayer with the members of the household, have so far advanced as to allow nothing to displace what is fraught with so much of spiritual blessing? How many fathers and mothers who were made to realize anew by our former communication that a Family Altar ought to be erected for their own good and their children's, have had the faith to set themselves to the discharge of this duty? And of those who then began to assemble their families in order to bend the knee before God,

how many have held on in this good way to the present time? These questions are asked for the purpose of giving fresh stimulus to a religious exercise which cannot be neglected or half-heartedly performed without serious loss.

If the Lord be willing, I will soon address the congregation on a Sunday morning upon this important theme. But let a further word be added here which may incite the heads of families to some reflection, and thus prepare them to profit the more by what may be brought to their minds hereafter.

It is morning time. By the unfailling care of the Heavenly Father, you have been preserved through the night. He has given the sleep which has fitted you for another day's demands. He has sheltered you from storm and prevented fire from seizing upon your dwelling. He has kept sickness from you, and sore trial; or, if otherwise, he has been at hand to give support and comfort. You have been granted the privilege of looking again into the faces of loved ones. His table is spread for the supply of temporal necessities. Before you lies the day with its pleasures and cares, its temptations and uncertainties. Satan is abroad to lead young feet astray and to cause those who are older to go counter to God's will. Into what difficult situations you and yours may be unexpectedly thrust before nightfall, none can foretell. Many opportunities of usefulness will certainly be furnished—opportunities you cannot rightly employ save by being under Divine guidance. How desirable, therefore, nay, needful, that, in addition to private devotions, before there is dispersion to the several spheres for the day, the family come together to hear a message from God's Word, and to bow down before the loving Lord, not only to express gratitude for what has been received, but also to seek such a supply of grace as will ensure triumph to each soul, no matter what the day may bring.

It is inexpressibly sad that there are in our city so many homes, where the parents profess to love God, in which no such a thing as a Family Altar exists. The fathers and mothers who are bringing up their boys and girls without the

stimulating and restraining influences of this means of grace know not how terrible is the wrong they are inflicting upon their offspring by this neglect. "As a power of restraint to keep a young man from evil ways," wrote the late Dr. Austin Phelps, "give me first and above all others of human origin the memory of family prayers."

Will you kindly fill out the accompanying slip and return to me very soon. Even though you have answered these questions before, please take the trouble to reply to them again. Let none take it for granted that their pastor knows the facts already. If there has been improvement in the matter of family prayer within these two years, we desire to know it, that we may praise God for it and go farther in the same desirable direction. If not, we want to know that too, that we may be led to humble ourselves and to make use of such means, public and private, as will bring about the change so imperatively demanded.

With prayer is this epistle sent you. The Lord grant you needed grace to commence what you have thus far omitted, or to continue with growing profit to yourself and others what you have been steadily sustaining. "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

My love be with you in Christ Jesus.

Affectionately,

Your pastor,

A. C. CHUTE.

[FOR THE PASTOR ONLY.]

Do you sustain Family Worship in your home?.....

If so, when did you begin?.....

.....

How often do you have it?.....

.....

If but once a day, at what time?.....

.....

If you do not, what is the chief obstacle in the way
of so doing?.....

.....

.....

Have you a desire to establish a Family Altar?.....

.....

Do you think you will be ABLE to do so?.....

.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

REMARKS :.....

.....

.....

