

## THE FOURTH PART OF THE CATECHISM.

## OF PRAYER.

*Son.* Our preacher and also our catechist hath declared unto us divers definitions of prayer.

*Father.* Let me hear one or two of them. *Son.* Prayer is a lifting up of a pure mind unto God, in the which we ask somewhat of him according to his will. Or thus: Prayer is an earnest talk with God, proceeding from a very inward, deep, and brenning or fervent affection of the heart, craving somewhat at the hand of God. Or else thus: Prayer is a mourning, or a longing and a desire, of the spirit to God-ward, for that which she lacketh; as the sick mourneth and sorroweth in his heart, longing for health.

*Father.* Of these definitions of prayer I learn three things. First, that prayer is the work and exercise of the mind, heart, or spirit, I mean, the inward man. Secondly, that in our prayer we must ask and crave somewhat. Thirdly, that that thing which we desire to have, we must require it at the hand of God. *Son.* Truth.

*Father.* How provest thou, that prayer is the work of the spirit? *Son.* I am so taught by the word of God. Our Saviour Christ saith: "The hour cometh, and now it is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for the Father seeketh such that should worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." St Paul also saith: "God is my witness, whom I worship in my spirit." Likewise saith the psalmograph: "O my soul, praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me, praise his holy name. O my soul, praise thou the Lord, and forget not all his benefits." Again: "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise." The history of Moses, when he led the people of Israel out of Egypt, declareth manifestly, that prayer is the work and exercise of the spirit. For when he by reason saw no way how to escape either from the bloody hands of that most bloody tyrant Pharao, or else from drowning, he only groaned and lamented in his heart unto God, desiring his help for their safe deliverance; and God said unto him, "What criest thou unto me?" His crying was not the voice of the mouth, but the affection of the heart. He cried with a sorrowful mind unto God, and he was heard, although the mouth kept silence, and obtained that he desired. Likewise Anna the wife of Helcana, when she had been long barren, prayed unto God for to give her children. But what saith the scripture of her prayer? "She spake in her heart: her lips only moved, but her voice was heard nothing at all." Who seeth not now, that prayer is the work of the mind, heart, spirit, and inward man? Not without a cause, therefore, saith the blessed apostle St Paul: "Speak among yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord."

*Father.* What sayest thou then of those prayers, which are only uttered with the lips and tongue, yea, and that without the affection of the spirit? *Son.* Even that, which Christ speaketh in the gospel, alleging it out of the prophet Esay: "This people," saith he, "draweth nigh unto me, and honoureth me with their lips, howbeit their heart is far from me; but in vain do they honour me."

*Father.* Dost thou then utterly contemn and condemn prayers that come from the mouth, tongue, and lips? *Son.* If they proceed from the heart, and rise of the affection of the mind, they are not to be discommended, but rather commended, inasmuch as the tongue doth nothing but utter the fervent desire of the mind, the prayer still remaining the work of the inward man. The outward speaking or singing of prayers, the kneeling or prostrating of ourselves, the lifting up of hands and eyes, the knocking of the breast, and such other like gestures in praying, are not discommendable, so long as they spring of the fervent affection of the mind. For all these things have many godly men used in their prayers heretofore, and yet do. "Let us," saith the prophet Jeremy, "lift up our hearts with our hands to the Lord even unto the heavens." St Paul also saith: "I will that men pray in every place, lifting up pure hands without

What prayer is.

Prayer is the work of the spirit. John iv.

Rom. i.

Psal. ciii.

Psal. lvii.

Exod. xiv.

1 Sam. i.

Eph. v.

Isai. xxix.

Matt. xv.

Mouth prayer proceeding from the heart is also commendable.

Lam. iii.

1 Tim. ii.

wrath and contention." The psalmograph saith: "I will magnify the Lord at all times: his praise shall be always in my mouth." Moses and the prophets, Christ and his apostles, prayed with expressed words, as the scripture doth declare. Moreover, we read that Christ fell flat upon the ground, when he prayed. Paul and so many as were with him kneeled at a certain time, when they prayed. The publican knocked his breast, when he prayed.

*Father.* The second thing, which I noted in the definitions of prayer, is that whosoever intendeth to pray with fruit, he must in his prayer ask somewhat. *Son.* It is truth. For unto what end should we pray, if in our prayer we ask nothing? Is not the office of prayer to ask that which we lack? Which of the godly ever prayed, not setting before the eyes of their mind the cause of their prayer? Otherwise to pray is nothing else than to mock and scorn God.

*Father.* Yet many there are, which persuade themselves to pray, yea, and to merit greatly for their praying, when they, notwithstanding, neither know what nor wherefore they pray. *Son.* The ignorancy and blindness of such is greatly to be lamented. And if at the day of judgment, as Christ affirmeth, we shall render an accompts of every idle word that we have spoken, what is then to be thought of those words, which be not only vainly and idly, but also superstitiously and dissemblingly, uttered in prayer? To pretend to pray, and not to pray, is double wickedness, and deserveth the greater damnation.

*Father.* I gather also of the definitions of prayer, that whensoever we ask any thing, we must ask it of God only. *Son.* Is it not meet and right so to do? Whither should the sick man go for counsel, but unto the physician? Whither shall the thirsty hart repair to slake her thirst, but unto the water-brooks? So likewise, whither shall we go to obtain any good thing by prayer, but unto God, which is the fountain and well-spring of all goodness? "Every good gift and every perfect gift," saith St James, "is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." Unto whom prayed all the holy patriarchs and the godly men, which lived under the old testament, but unto God? as David saith: "Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted in thee, and thou deliveredst them. They cried unto thee, and they were saved: they trusted in thee, and they were not confounded." And as all the godly of the old testament directed their prayers only unto God, so likewise did all the holy men of the new testament. We also in every age ought to make our prayers unto God alone, according to their example; yea, according to the doctrine of the holy scripture. "Call upon me," saith God, "in the day of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt honour me." "When I was in trouble," saith David, "I cried unto the Lord; and he graciously heard me." Again: "Mine eyes are continually unto the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the snare." Item: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are bent unto their prayers."

*Father.* Notwithstanding, some there are, which offer their prayers unto creatures, and crave of them all good things necessary both for the body and for the soul.

*Son.* These walk a wrong way, and may right well be resembled, likened, and compared to the priests of Baal, which cried continually unto their idol, "O Baal, hear us, O Baal, hear us;" and yet notwithstanding they were not heard. "Take heed," saith the psalmograph, "ye unwise among the people: O ye fools, when will ye understand? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? Or he that made the eye, shall he not see? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man." He that fieth unto any creature, either in heaven or in earth, for succour, or asketh remission of his sins and everlasting life, or whatsoever good thing it be besides, except of God alone, he is a thief, and robbeth God of his honour, and grievously offendeth against the first commandment of God, and is of the number of those, against whom God complaineth by the prophet on this manner: "Be astonied, O ye heavens, be afraid and abashed at such a thing, saith the Lord. For my people have done two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of the water of life, and digged them pits, yea, vile and broken pits, that can hold no water." "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God (saith Moses), and him alone shalt thou serve." Can there be any greater service done, or more honour shewed unto God, than in the time of adversity to fly unto his holy

Matt. xxvi.  
Acts xx.  
Luke xviii.

Matt. xii.

Matt. xxiii.

Of God only  
all good  
things are to  
be asked.

James i.

Psal. xxii.

Psal. l.

Psal. cxx.

Psal. xxv.

1 Kings xviii.

Psal. xciv.

Jer. ii.

Deut. vi.  
Matt. iv.  
Mark i.  
Luke iv.

name for succour, by faithful and earnest prayer, as unto a strong tower? Again, in the time of prosperity, to praise and to magnify his glorious name for the benefits received? as the psalmograph saith: "What reward shall I give unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me? I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows in the presence of all his people." Psal. cxvi.

*Father.* Thou holdest then, that whatsoever good thing we have need of, appertaining unto the body or unto the soul, we ought to ask it only of God, the alone fountain of all goodness. *Son.* Yea, verily, and that in the name only of his most dear Son Jesus Christ, our alone Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor. "For there is one Lord of all, which is plentifully rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever doth call on the name of the Lord, he shall be safe." "God is able," saith St Paul, "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." "The hand of the Lord is not so shortened, that it cannot help: neither is his ear so stopped, that it cannot hear:" nor yet are his eyes so dim, that they can no more see. "Blessed is the man, that putteth his trust in the name of the Lord, and regardeth not vanities and false imaginations." "Thou, O God, art our Father," saith the prophet Esay: "Abraham knoweth us not; neither is Israel acquainted with us. But thou, Lord, art our Father and Redeemer, and thy name is everlasting." 1 Tim. ii. 1 John ii. Rom. viii. Joel ii. Rom. x. Acts ii. xxii. Eph. iii. Isai. lix. Psal. xciv. Psal. xl. Isai. lxiii.

*Father.* We have talked sufficiently for this present concerning the definition of prayer. Let me hear now, how we ought to address and prepare ourselves unto the exercise of prayer, that we may pray with fruit; seeing it is written, "Before thou prayest, prepare thy soul, and be not as one that tempteth God:" lest, if we pray unworthily, we be found in the number of those, to whom God speaketh on this manner by the prophet: "When ye hold out your hands, I will turn mine eyes from you; and when ye make many prayers, I will not hear you; for your hands are full of blood." *Son.* Prayer is a precious treasure in the sight of God, and easily obtaineth whatsoever it asketh, so that it be made according to the will of God. But if it be framed contrary to the good pleasure of God, it bringeth not salvation but destruction, not pleasure but displeasure, not commodity but incommodity, not favour but wrath, not life but death, yea, and finally everlasting damnation. If God could not abide that the Jews should presume to receive the law, which notwithstanding is "the ministration of death," which also accuseth, judgeth, condemneth, woundeth, killeth, yea, and casteth down headlong into the dungeon of hell-fire all men without exception for their imperfection and wickedness, if they were not delivered from that damnation by faith in the blood of Christ, before they were sanctified and cleansed; is it to be thought, that God will hear our prayer, although proceeding from a corrupt, filthy, and unpure heart? Can that prayer be accepted of God, and obtain good things at the hand of God, which cometh from an heart void of faith, charity, mercy, &c. and overwhelmed with all beastly and carnal affects? The psalmograph saith: "If I incline unto wickedness with my heart, the Lord will not hear me." "We be sure," saith the blind man, "that God heareth not sinners: (he speaketh of the unpenitent sinners, and of such as glory in their sin, and delight when they have done evil.) But if any man be a worshipper of God, and obedient to his will, him heareth he." St Paul also straitly chargeth us, that we "lift up pure hands" unto God. And our Saviour Christ saith, that "they which will worship God the Father must worship him in spirit and truth." Hereunto appertaineth the saying of the psalmograph: "The Lord is nigh unto all that call on him, yea, unto all that call on him in truth." Eccelus. xviii. Isai. i. The virtue of prayer. 2 Cor. iii. Rom. vii. Psal. lxxv. John ix. Prov. i. 1 Tim. ii. John iv. Psal. cxlv.

*Father.* Seeing then that wickedness must be cast out of our heart, seeing pure hands must be lifted up unto God, seeing God heareth not sinners, but such labour to be obedient unto his holy will, seeing God must be worshipped in spirit and truth, in fine, seeing that God is not otherwise to be called upon, but as he hath prescribed in his holy word; come off, tell me, what is to be done, that we may not come altogether unworthily unto the throne of God's majesty, but rather offer up such prayers unto his glorious name, as he shall be well content to accept them for his Psal. lxxv. 1 Tim. ii. John ix. John iv. Psal. cxlvi.

How we shall  
prepare our-  
selves to pray.

mercy's sake in the blood of Christ. *Son.* That we may not altogether unworthily come with our prayers unto the gracious and merciful throne of God's majesty, it shall not be unprofitable to mark these few things, which I shall now rehearse.

The cause  
which mov-  
eth us to pray  
is diligently  
to be con-  
sidered.

First of all, if we will pray with fruit, we must diligently and earnestly consider, weigh, and ponder the cause, which moveth us to pray. For whosoever addresseth himself unto prayer, not having an urgent, grave, weighty, and necessary cause to pray, doth none other thing, than after the manner of the popinjay recite a multitude of words without the affection of the mind and the desire of the heart; and so is his prayer a very derision and mocking of God: yea, it is nothing else than hypocrisy and feigned holiness, and therefore also double wickedness.

*Father.* Few observe this order. *Son.* Few therefore pray before God.

*Father.* Many think that they do God good service when they pray after this manner, although they know not what nor wherefore they pray. *Son.* Such do nothing less than pray. The godly both of the old and new testament never addressed themselves unto prayer, before some grave and weighty matter provoked them to pray, as divers examples in the holy scripture evidently declare.

Gen. xx.

Gen. xxiv.

Gen. xxv.

Gen. xxx.

Gen. xxxii.

Exod. viii.

xvii. xxxii.

&c.

Josh. x.

1 Sam. i.

2 Sam. vii.

Psal. li.

*Father.* Rehearse me some of them. *Son.* Abraham, the father of the faithful, prayed for Abimelech and for his household, that God would turn away his wrath from them. He prayed also for the life of his son Ismael. Abraham's servant prayed for a good and prosperous journey. Isaac prayed that his wife Rebecca might be fruitful and bring forth children. Lia and Rachel, the wives of Jacob, prayed that their barrenness might be taken from them, and that they might become fruitful. Jacob prayed that he might be delivered from the tyranny of his brother Esau. Moses prayed divers times for divers sundry causes. Josua prayed that the sun and the moon might stand still by the space of an whole day, until he was revenged of his enemies. Anna, the wife of Helcana, prayed that she might conceive and bring forth children. The Israelites prayed for victory against their enemies. David oftentimes prayed, yea, and that for sundry purposes. I pass over the residue of the godly, both men and women of the old testament, (lest I should seem to be too long,) which always prayed unto God, when they had an urgent and necessary cause.

Matt. viii.

Matt. ix.

Matt. xv.

Matt. xviii.

Luke xviii.

John xvii.

Acts iv.

Acts vii.

Rom. i.

Col. i.

1 Thess. i.

What shall I speak of them which are remembered in the new testament? The lepers prayed that they might be cleansed from their leprosy: the blind that they might be restored to their sight: the woman of Canaan for her daughter: the centurion for his servant: the publican for remission of his sins: Christ himself for his disciples, and for the whole congregation: the apostles for the good success of the gospel: St Stephen for his enemies. The congregation of Christ prayed for the deliverance of Peter out of prison. St Paul prayed for the churches of Christ, that they might abide constant and stedfast in the faith of Christ unto the coming of Christ. To be short, none of all the godly at any time attempted to pray unto God, but provoked with some urgent, grave, weighty, and necessary cause, which compelled them to fly unto God for aid, help, and succour. After their examples ought we to behave ourselves.



Matt. vi.

Therefore, before we pray, let us consider wherefore we will pray, and what moveth us to offer up our prayers unto God, lest that we become like unto those hypocrites, which think that they shall be heard for their much babbling sake, howsoever they pray, although they neither know what or wherefore they pray. Let us diligently ponder our necessity, and weigh our cause, and warely aforesee, that our cause, which moveth us to pray, be godly, righteous, and honest, yea, and in all points such as shall not be thought unworthy the ears of God's majesty; I mean, made unto this end, that God thereby may be glorified, we ourselves comforted, and our neighbour not endangered.

Now, as concerning the causes which ought to move us for to pray, they be infinite and innumerable, whether we respect the body or the mind. If we consider also our state, vocation, or calling, causes many shall abundantly offer themselves unto us, which justly and necessarily ought to provoke us unto prayer. If we weigh the great company of our adversaries, which daily and hourly go about like ravening wolves to devour us; if we ponder our infirmity and weakness, and how unable

we be to stand against their power, &c. we shall find abundance of causes wherefore we ought to pray; so that we need not to come slackly and dissolutely, but rather diligently and earnestly, unto prayer.

*Father.* This then is thy counsel, that, before we attempt to pray, we first of all diligently consider with ourselves, wherefore we will pray, and unto what end we will direct our prayer, that we seem not rather to mock God than to pray God: again, that the cause, which moveth us to pray, be godly, just, honest, and not unworthy the ears of God. *Son.* So is it.

*Father.* What is requisite more unto the worthy preparation unto prayer? *Son.* Secondly, after that we have diligently considered our necessity, and pondered the cause that moveth us to pray, and have found it good, godly, just, honest, necessary, and not unworthy the hearing of God, so that we find in ourselves, whether we respect the body or the mind, plenty of causes, which justly ought to provoke us to fly unto God, and by faithful and earnest prayer to crave help and succour at his hand, that we may either be delivered from so great evils, or else endued with such benefits from God, as we greatly desire, hunger, and thirst after; it shall be expedient, that we straightways set before the eyes of our mind the commandment of God, which willeth and commandeth us to pray, to call upon his glorious majesty, and to fly unto his holy name, as unto a strong tower and mighty fortress in all our necessities, troubles, adversities, and miseries. The commandment of God to pray.

This commandment of God to pray is earnestly to be weighed, pondered, and considered. For although we have never so many and necessary causes, yea, and those godly, good, righteous, honest, &c., yet, if we had not a commandment from God to pray, who durst so much as once be bold to open his lips for to pray unto God, which is "a consuming fire," which hateth both the wicked and his wickedness, which hath prepared hell-fire to be a reward unto such as transgress his holy law; of the which number we all are without exception, being worthy for our disobedience not only not to be heard, but also to have our miseries increased, and finally to be rewarded with the torments of that "lake which brenneth with fire and brimstone?" Deut. iv. Heb. xii. Rev. xxi.

Come off, tell me, what traitor is so without all shame, that he dare appear in the presence of that prince, and to crave pardon of him, whom he hath most traitorously offended, and whose honour he hath sought utterly to deface and obscure? Yea, rather fleeth not that traitor from the face of that prince so far as his legs are able to bear him, and wisheth that that prince were dead, that by this means he might be free from that punishment which he most righteously hath deserved for his wicked and abominable treason? Now was there never traitor that hath at any time so grievously offended his prince, as we (ah, wretches that we are!) through our infidelity and wicked conversation have offended the Lord our God, that Prince of Glory, yea, that "King of kings, and Lord of lords." How then dare we be bold to shew ourselves before that God, which is "a consuming fire," whom we have so often most grievously offended, and to offer and to present unto his most excellent majesty our prayers for pardon and remission of our sins, or to ask any thing at all of him? Verily, if God had not given us a commandment to pray unto him, we would sooner have put our heads in a bush with Adam, or taken us unto our legs with Caim, or have hanged up ourselves with that traitor Judas, than we would once have opened our lips to pray unto him. An example. I Tim. vi. Rev. xvii. xix. Deut. iv. Heb. xii. Gen. iii. Gen. iv. Acts i. Matt. xxvii. And who therefore seeth not here the exceeding great, marvellous, and unspeakable kindness of the Lord our God toward us vile and wretched sinners, which, being hedged round about with the thorns both of so many miseries and wickednesses, and not knowing how to be delivered from them, are notwithstanding commanded of this our most gentle God boldly to come unto him, frankly to lament our miseries unto him, largely to pour out the sighings and groanings of our heavy hearts before him, and frankly and with a good courage to ask all good things of him? O the deep and bottomless seas of God's wonderful mercies toward mankind!

All the commandments therefore of God, wherewith we are provoked unto prayer, are to be embraced as most precious jewels, and to be reposed in the lowest part of our memory as incomparable treasures, that we never forget them; of the which

Psal. l. sort these are that follow. "Call upon me," saith God, "in the time of thy trouble." Here have we a commandment of God to fly unto him with our prayers  
 Matt. vii. in all our troubles, necessities, and miseries. Christ our Saviour saith also: "Ask:"  
 Matt. xxvi. "Seek:" "Knock." Again: "Watch and pray, that ye fall not into temptation."  
 Col. iv. St Paul also saith: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."  
 1 Thess. v. Again: "Pray continually: in all things give thanks; for this is the will of God."

For no man is able to express what great consolation and comfort, what joy and gladness these commandments to pray bring to troubled and weak consciences. For who now will be afraid even with a good courage to go unto the throne of God's majesty with his prayers, seeing he hath so many commandments to stir him up and to prick him forward to pray; yea, and that out of the mouth of God, which is "faithful in all his words and holy in all his works;" which is not only true, but also the self truth?

Psal. cxlv.

John xiv.

Let no man object his indignity or unworthiness to pray. Our unworthiness ought to be no let unto us, that we should not be bold to call upon God, so that we repent and turn unto God with full purpose from henceforth to train our life according to the rule of God's word. For God neither for our worthiness nor for our unworthiness heareth us; but for his commandment and promise sake. He hath commanded us to pray; therefore ought we to pray. For if we should never pray till we were worthy of ourselves before God to pray, so should we never pray: but we therefore pray, because God hath commanded us so to do. Our worthiness is the humble confession of our unworthiness; and our obedience unto the commandment of God to pray maketh us most worthy.

Exod. xx.  
Deut. v.

Matt. vii.

He that will not pray, because he thinketh himself unworthy to pray, might with the same reason be a thief or an adulterer all his life-time, and excuse himself by saying on this manner: I am not worthy to keep these commandments of God, "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not commit adultery." But all men are bound to keep all the ten commandments of God: so likewise are they bound to observe and keep this commandment of praying: "Ask:" "Seek:" "Knock:" &c. For as he falleth into the danger of everlasting damnation, which violateth and breaketh this commandment, "Thou shalt have no strange gods in my sight;" so likewise doth he make himself the son of Satan and the inheritor of hell-fire, which neglecteth and transgresseth this commandment of God, "Watch and pray." For he that said, "Thou shalt not steal;" the same saith also, "Thou shalt pray:" and we owe like obedience to both commandments; and the transgression or breaking of any of these commandments deserveth like pain. He that killeth a man, or he that defileth his neighbour's wife, sinneth not more before God, than he which prayeth not. For as this commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is a precept negative; so likewise is this commandment, "Thou shalt pray," a precept affirmative; and God requireth the same and like obedience to all his commandments. Let us therefore, when we intend to pray, not be discouraged from prayer, although we feel in ourselves an unworthiness to pray; but rather consider the commandment of God, which willeth us to pray, and according to his will fall to prayer, and ask all good things of him, which is both the only fountain of all goodness, and also the alone horn of plenty.

The promise  
to hear.

*Father.* What is more to be done? *Son.* Thirdly, we must consider the loving gentleness of the Lord our God toward us, which hath not only commanded us to pray, but hath also promised most graciously to hear us. And this maketh unto our great consolation and comfort, that we are not only commanded to pray, but also promised to be heard. Therefore, when we intend to pray, as we set before our eyes the commandment of God, wherein we are willed to pray, that by this means we may with the better courage come unto the throne of God's majesty with our prayers; so likewise must we call to remembrance the most loving, sweet, and comfortable promises of God, which he hath annexed and joined to his commandment, having ever this consideration in ourselves, that we are both commanded to pray, and also promised to be heard.

And here again appeareth the singular and exceeding great goodness of God toward us. For what should it have profited us to pray, if we had not been heard? [The pro-

mises therefore, which God hath made unto us, that he will hear us, are most earnestly to be considered; of the which sort these are: "Call on me," saith God, "in the time of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Here have we a commandment of God both to call on him, and also a promise that he will hear us. Again, by the prophet Hieremy he saith: "Call on me, and ye shall live: Jer. xxix. pray unto me, and I will graciously hear you: seek me, and ye shall find. When ye shall seek me with all your heart, I will be found of you, saith the Lord." And our Saviour Christ saith: "Ask, and it shall be given unto you. Seek, and ye shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For whosoever asketh receiveth; and whosoever seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Here have we to every commandment a promise annexed. We are commanded to ask; and we are promised to have. We are commanded to seek; and we are promised to find. We are commanded to knock; and we are promised to be let in. It followeth: "Is there any man among you (saith Christ) which, if his son ask bread, will offer him a stone? or he if he ask fish, will he proffer him a serpent? If ye then, when ye are evil, can give your children good gifts; how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things, if ye ask of him!" In another place Christ also saith: "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be perfect." Matt. vii. Luke xi. John xvi.

These and such other comfortable promises are diligently to be retained in memory, both against the assaults of Satan, and against the infirmities of our flesh. For whensoever we intend earnestly to pray (I speak of experience, God comfort me!) Satan on the one side, and the flesh on the other side, saith unto us: Tush, man, what wilt thou do? Wilt thou pray unto God? Thou labourst in vain. Thou comest, or thou be welcome. Knowest thou not these words of the scripture? "God heareth not sinners." Again: "Salvation is far from sinners." Hast thou not sinned? If thou deniest it, thy conscience shall bear witness against thee. Thy conscience shall accuse thee, prove thee guilty, and condemn thee. If thou confessest that thou art a sinner, then mayest thou be well assured that God will not hear thee; for the scripture saith: "God heareth not sinners." If thou then, seeing thou art a sinner, lookest for help at the hand of God, thou art utterly deceived. For the scripture, which is the word of truth, and cannot lie, saith: "Salvation is far from sinners." O subtle Satan! O frail flesh!

Indeed it is most true, that God heareth not sinners; but those sinners are unpenitent, unfaithful, and obstinate or stubborn sinners. Salvation also without doubt is far from sinners; but yet from such sinners as have cast away both God and the study of all godliness. If sinners repent, believe, and amend, although they be never so notable and grievous sinners, yet God receiveth them into favour for Christ's sake. If they pray, God heareth them. If they seek salvation at the hand of God, they shall surely find it. For to such sinners are all the comfortable promises of God made, which are found in the holy scripture. Are not these the words of Christ our Saviour? "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance." Again: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that was lost." Whom calleth Christ unto him in these words, but sinners? "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy loaden, and I shall refresh you." St Paul also saith: "This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Matt. ix. Luke xix. Matt. xi. 1 Tim. i.

Against these assaults therefore of Satan, and against the weakness of the flesh, it shall not a little profit always to set before the eyes of our mind the most sweet and comfortable promises of God in hearing us, although never so great sinners, when in faith we repent and pray unto him; and to consider that God heareth not us for our dignity and innocency, but for his promise sake, for his faith and truth's sake, that he may be found faithful in all his words, and such a God as neither will nor can lie. No: "let God be true, and all men liars."

All the saints in time past, both of the old and new testament, whensoever they did pray, did not set before their eyes and consider their own dignity and worthiness, their own works and merits, but the commandment and promise of God, which both commanded them to pray, and also promised to hear them, and to grant them their

Why God  
heareth our  
prayers.

Rom. iii.  
Psal. cxvi.

petitions. They depended wholly on the most loving and merciful promises of God; and being comforted and encouraged with them, they feared not to have access with their prayers unto the glorious throne of God's most glorious majesty. Hear what Dan. ix. Daniel saith, both in his own name, and in the name of all the godly: "Not in our own righteousness," saith he, "lay we forth our prayers before thy face, but in thy great and manifold mercies." David also prayeth on this manner: "Help us, O Psal. lxxix. God our Saviour, and for the glory of thy name, O Lord, deliver us, and forgive our sins for thy holy name's sake." Again: "For thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin; for it is great." Jacob, in his prayer unto God for his deliverance from the hand of his brother Esau, confesseth that he is "unworthy of all the mercies Gen. xxxii. which God had shewed unto him:" notwithstanding, setting before his eyes the promises which God had made him, he feareth nothing even to ask greater things of him, which he also obtained.

A Christian, although never so unworthy in his own sight, may be bold to ask whatsoever God hath commanded and promised. For God giveth not us any thing for our worthiness, but for his promise, name, mercy, and truth's sake, that this sentence of David may for ever and ever abide true and constant: "All the ways Psal. xxv. of the Lord are mercy and truth." It is the great and infinite mercy of the Lord, that he freely and without our merits and deserts promiseth unto us so many and so great good things. It is the truth of the Lord, in that he performeth truly and faithfully those things which he mercifully hath promised.

Let us therefore, whensoever we intend to pray, diligently consider the promises of God, and embrace them as most precious treasures and heavenly jewels, and depend wholly upon them, and not upon our worthiness and innocency, not upon our merits and good works, not upon our satisfactions and works of supererogation, nor upon the mediations and intercessions of saints in heaven. For whosoever, in asking any thing of God, dependeth upon any creature, either in heaven or in earth, but upon the merciful promise of God alone, he shall obtain nothing of God, although he prayeth so earnestly that he sweateth drops of blood.

*Father.* Blessed be God for his sweet and comfortable promises that he hath made us; and God give us grace to enjoy them! *Son.* Amen.

*Father.* Is there none other thing to be considered, when we intend to pray, but only the commandment and promise of God? *Son.* Fourthly, it is required of us, if we will pray with fruit, that we give an earnest and undoubted faith to the promise of God, believing stedfastly, that we shall abundantly receive of God whatsoever he hath mercifully promised. For without this faith nothing is obtained of God. The commandment of the Lord to pray, and the promise of God to hear and to grant those things for the which we pray, profit nothing at all, if faith be absent: yea, whatsoever good thing God promiseth, he promiseth it only to the faithful; so that whosoever presumeth to pray without faith, that is to say, without a full and certain persuasion of the mind to obtain the thing which he asketh, he doth none other thing than deride and mock God, yea, and recounteth God a liar, forasmuch as he doubteth of the truth, faith, constancy, and power of God; and by this means is his prayer become sin and abomination to the Lord, and to himself sin and damnation. "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin," saith St Paul. Again: "Without faith it is impossible to please God: for he that cometh unto God must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of such as seek him." Now he that doubteth whether God be a rewarder to them that seek him, cometh not to God aright; but this do they, which do not believe that they shall obtain the thing which they ask of God: therefore come they not rightly unto God, and so consequently they obtain nothing of God. No, verily; for where faith wanteth in prayer, no good thing is obtained, although they pray so fervently, that they sweat both water and blood.

That faith is necessarily required in prayer, very many both sentences and histories of the holy scripture do most manifestly declare. St James saith: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of him that giveth it, even God, which giveth to all men indifferently, and casteth no man in the teeth; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, and waver not: for he that doubteth is like a wave

Dan. ix.

Psal. lxxix.

Psal. xxv.

Gen. xxxii.

Psal. xxv.

Faith in prayer.

Heb. xi.

Psal. cix.  
Prov. xxviii.  
Rom. xiv.  
Heb. xi.

James i.



of the sea, which is tossed of the winds, and carried with violence. Neither let that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A wavering-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Our Saviour Christ saith also: "Whatsoever ye desire Mark xi. when ye pray, believe that ye shall have it; and it shall be done to you."

Faith obtaineth easily all things of God. For "all things are possible to him that Mark ix. believeth." And without faith nothing is obtained of God, but wrath, vengeance, the curse of God, and everlasting damnation. Therefore in the histories of the gospel we read, that when any benefit was asked of Christ, Christ made inquisition of their faith, demanding of the askers, whether they did believe that he was able to grant them their requests, and to satisfy their desires. In the gospel of Matthew we read, Matt. ix. that when two blind men desired Christ, that he would restore unto them their sight, "Christ said unto them, Do ye believe that I am able to do this thing?" They answered: "We believe, Lord." Then said Christ: "According to your faith be it unto you." Likewise read we, that when the father of that child, which was possessed of a dumb spirit, desired Christ to have pity on his son and to heal him, "Jesus Mark ix. said unto him: If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. The father of the child even with tears cried out and said: I believe; O Lord, help my incredulity." And straightways his son was made whole. Again, to whom is Matt. xv. this unknown, that the woman of Canaan making intercession for her daughter, which was possessed of a devil, received of Christ many hard, and (as I may so speak) unfriendly answers: notwithstanding she with a strong and unshaken faith continued still praying, never ceasing from prayer, till at the last Christ, being overcome with the faithful prayer of her, said: "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou desirest." How often read we in the scripture, "Thy faith hath saved thee!"

Faith is so mighty a thing before God, that it many times obtaineth a benefit of God before it be asked. Read we not, that certain men brought a man diseased Matt. ix. of the palsy unto Christ? We read not, that they made any petition unto Christ for his health: notwithstanding Christ healed him, and said unto him, "Son, be on a good comfort: thy sins are forgiven thee. Rise, take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house." How came this to pass? Verily, through the faith both of the man diseased of the palsy, and of them also which brought the man. For thus writeth St Matthew: "When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man diseased of the palsy, Be on a good comfort, son: thy sins are forgiven thee." They believed in their hearts, that Christ both was able and also would heal the sick man, of the which thing the sick man himself was also fully persuaded; and this their faith was so acceptable unto Christ, that without any asking, yea, before they opened their mouth to speak, he granted them their desire. And here see we that true, which God speaketh by the prophet: "It shall be that, or ever they call, I shall answer them: while Isai. lxx. they are yet but thinking how to speak, I shall hear them." This we see also proved true in David, which writeth on this manner: "I said, I will confess my sins unto Psal. xxxii. the Lord; and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin. For this shall every one that is godly make his prayer unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found." It is truly also said of Moses: "What other nation is so great, that gods come so nigh Deut. iv. unto, as the Lord our God is nigh unto us in all things, as oft as we call unto him?"

Forasmuch therefore as we have so gentle, so loving, and so liberal a Father, which hath not only commanded us, that we should pray unto him, but also hath promised that he will hear us, and grant us our petitions; let us bring with us, whensoever we intend to pray, a sure, constant, and unshaken faith, nothing doubting of the promises of God; but being surely persuaded that, whatsoever he most graciously hath promised us, the same will he also most bounteously perform and give unto us.

*Father.* God give us this faith! *Son.* Let us crave it of God, and pray with the apostles, saying: "O Lord, increase our faith." Luke xvii.

*Father.* Is there any other thing behind, concerning the due preparation unto prayer? *Son.* Yea, verily. Fifthly, after we have diligently considered the cause wherefore we will pray, and have earnestly pondered the commandment of God, which willeth us to pray, and have also most deeply weighed the promise of God, that he

will both hear us and grant us our petitions, again, that to the promise of God, we must annex and adjoin a sure and stedfast faith, being thoroughly persuaded, that whatsoever God hath promised, he will abundantly perform; this followeth next in order to be considered, that whatsoever we ask of God, it must be asked of him in the name of his most dear and only-begotten Son, Christ Jesus. For albeit our cause be never so good and godly, and although our consideration about both the commandment and promise of God be never so earnest, and albeit we bring never so great faith by believing the promises of God; yet, if the prayers, which we do make, if the petitions which we do ask, be not made and asked in the name of Christ, all the aforesaid things profit nothing at all.

Whosoever therefore intendeth to pray aright, let him fully determine with himself, before he pray, to ask nothing of God, but only in the name of Christ: otherwise he shall not only pray in vain, but also with his prayers provoke and kindle the wrath and vengeance of God against himself. For whatsoever we obtain of God, we obtain it not for our worthiness, nor for the holiness of any creature either in heaven or in earth, but only for Christ's sake, for Christ's innocency, dignity, and holiness; in whom, and for whose sake, God the Father is well pleased with us. For, as St Paul saith, "All the promises of God by Christ are yea, and by him Amen;" that is to say, in Christ and for Christ's sake God most certainly fulfilleth whatsoever he hath most graciously promised. For Christ is that dearly-beloved Son, for whose sake God the Father is well pleased with man. Christ is that door, by the which we have free access unto God the Father. Christ is that way, by the which whosoever doth not walk, he cannot come unto the Father, as he himself testifieth: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Christ is that high and everlasting bishop, by whom we must offer our prayers, praises, and thanksgivings unto God the Father, as the apostle saith: "By him (Christ) do we offer sacrifice of praise alway to God, that is to say, the fruit of those lips which confess his name." Whosoever striveth to approach unto God with his prayers by any other mean than by Christ alone, he is a thief, a robber, and a spoiler of the glory of Christ. And against such Christ-robbers this saying of Christ shall stand for ever, as an invincible bulwark and mighty fortress: "I am the way, the truth, and life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Whosoever therefore will address himself unto prayer aright, he must direct his prayers unto God the Father, not in his own name, nor in the name of any other creature either in heaven or in earth, but only in the name of Jesus Christ, our alone Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor.

*Father.* What is it to pray in the name of Christ? *Son.* To pray in the name of Christ is to believe and to acknowledge Christ alone to be our Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor unto God the Father; and in the dignity, virtue, and power of his mediation and intercession to offer up our prayers and praises unto God, and to ask of him all good things necessary for the body or for the soul, only for the excellency, majesty, and honour of this our alone Mediator, Christ Jesu. Whosoever prayeth on this manner, I mean, in the name of Christ, he may be well assured, that he shall suffer no repulse at the hand of God, but shall abundantly obtain whatsoever he asketh, as our Saviour Christ saith: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified by the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, that will I do." To make us certain and sure that, whatsoever we ask of God in the name of Christ, we shall easily obtain it, Christ in the aforesaid words promiseth twice, that he will bring to pass, that we shall enjoy the things which we have asked in his name. Again he saith: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever things ye shall ask the Father in my name, he shall give you." As Christ afore promised twice that he will bring to pass, that we shall obtain of God the Father whatsoever we ask in his name; so likewise now, because we should not doubt of his truth, he addeth unto his promise an oath, and sweareth, that whatsoever we ask of the Father in his name he shall give us: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he shall give you." O unoutspeakable comfort!

St Paul also commandeth us, that "whatsoever we do in word or in deed, we should do all things in the name of the Lord Jesu." For nothing is acceptable

Prayer must be made in the name of Christ.

Matt. iii. xvii.  
2 Pet. i.  
2 Cor. i.

Mark i. ix.  
Luke iii. ix.  
John x.

Rom. v.  
John xiv.

Heb. xiii.

John xiv.

What it is to pray in the name of Christ.

John xiv.

John xvi.

Col. iii.

unto God, that is not done in the name of Christ. Our prayings, our preachings, our watchings, our fastings, our almose-deeds, with all our other good works, are vile and filthy, yea, they stink before the face of God, if they be not done in the name of Christ, be they otherwise never so much seasoned and powdered either with the merits and intercessions of saints, or with our own righteousness and good works. For what other thing are "all our righteousnesses," yea, even of the most perfectest, but "as a polluted and defiled cloth," if Christ's righteousness be laid aside? All our righteousnesses, prayings, fastings, watchings, almose-deeds, good works, satisfactions, merits, and whatsoever besides even the most holy among us have, are none other thing before God, without Christ, than dunghills of abominations. It is not therefore without a cause required of him, which intendeth to pray aright, that he offer his prayers unto God in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord. Isai. lxiv.

It is truly said of St Austin: "The prayer which is not made through Christ (that is to say, in the name of Christ) doth not only not put away sin, but the very prayer itself is made sin!" Notable, golden, and precious is this sentence of St Ambrose, and worthy to be reposed in the lowest part of our memory: "Christ alone is our mouth, whereby we speak to the Father; our eye, whereby we see the Father; our right hand, whereby we offer unto the Father; which Christ except he maketh intercession for us, neither we, nor all the saints, have any thing to do with God<sup>2</sup>." In Psal. cviii.  
Libr. de Isaac  
et anima.

And here fall down flat to the ground, yea, to the very hell, all the prayers of the Jews, of the Mahometists, and of all other sectaries. For albeit that all these after a certain manner call upon God, and offer prayers and praises unto him; yet, forasmuch as they pray not in the name of Christ, they rather with their prayers provoke God unto anger, than make him their good and gracious Lord.

For as concerning the Jews, although at this present day they boast themselves alone to be the peculiar people of God, they pray, they fast, &c., yet, because they do not believe in Christ, neither acknowledge Christ to be God and man, to be their Saviour, Mediator, Reconciliator, and Atonement-maker, &c., nor offer their prayers unto God in his name, God doth utterly detest and abhor both them and their prayers, as it is written: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. But he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Neither is it sufficient that the Jews do acknowledge God the Father, pretend a certain faith toward him, pray unto him, and call upon his holy name, except they also believe and confess that Christ is the Son of God, yea, God himself, equal with the Father, of the same majesty, might, virtue, and power, to the uttermost; for whose sake alone God is at one with them, forgiveth them their sins, and accepteth their prayers; which thing because they do not, whatsoever they boast of the favour and good will of God toward them, it is but a vain ostentation and brag, seeing they cast away Christ, and the saving health, which is laid up in him for all the faithful. For, as St John saith: "Whosoever denieth the Son, he hath not the Father." Again: "He that hath the Son hath life: he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." The Jews.  
John iii.  
1 John ii.  
1 John v.

The same is to be said of the Mahometists, that we have spoken of the Jews. For neither they call on God in the name of Christ: therefore are their prayers also sin, wickedness, and plain abomination before God. Mahometists.

But what shall we speak of the papists? Do they call upon God in the name of Christ? yea, rather in the merits, mediations, intercessions, dignities, wounds, blood, passion, and death of saints. Let the popish portasses<sup>3</sup> and mass-books be searched, and it shall soon be perceived how idolatrous the prayers of the papists are, formed and made in the names, merits, and intercessions of saints, as though there were so great dignity in the merits and intercessions of saints, that God for their sake were bound both to hear their prayers and to grant their requests. I could bring forth ensamples too many of this matter, if time did serve. But to whom are they un-

[<sup>1</sup> August. Op. Par. 1679-1700. Enarrat. in Psalm. cviii. v. 7. Tom. IV. col. 1219.—See Vol. I. page 149, note 3.]

[<sup>2</sup> Ambros. Op. Par. 1686-90. De Isaac et

Anim. Lib. cap. viii. 75. Tom. I. col. 380.—See Vol. I. page 150, note 2.]

[<sup>3</sup> Portasses: breviaries.]

known? Whosoever therefore will prepare himself to pray aright, let him fully determine with himself to offer and present his prayers to God only, only in the name of Christ, in the virtue and power of Christ, in the dignity and excellency of Christ; and desire to be heard, and his prayers to be accepted of God, for Christ's sake our only Mediator, as St Paul saith: "By him (Christ) we offer sacrifice of praise always to God, that is to say, the fruit of those lips which confess his name." If any man presume to pray otherwise, he shall find at God's hand all one reward with the Jews, Mahometists, papists, and such other sectaries.

*Father.* God give us all grace in the unity of his holy Spirit truly to call upon the Lord our God, in the name of his most dear Son Jesus Christ, our alone Mediator. But if there be yet remaining any thing that is necessarily required unto the worthy preparation unto prayer, I would gladly hear it. *Son.* Sixthly, it is required of us, if we will pray aright, that we have also this consideration in us, I mean, that in our prayer we ask nothing of God but that which is agreeable to his holy will. For our will is wicked and naught, desirous rather of ungodly than godly things, and for the most part wishing that which should rather hurt us than profit us.

And here may we see the corruption of our nature, which we have sucked out of the breast of our old mother Heve; which hath so infected and poisoned us, yea, and every part of us, that, whether we respect the body or the soul, nothing can be found whole, nothing sound, nothing perfect in us; so truly is it said of the prophet: "The whole head is sick, and the heart is heavy. From the sole of the foot unto the head there is no whole part in all your body; but all are wounds, botches, sores, and stripes," &c. The heart of man is unpure, filthy, lewd, and so stuffed full of all kind of wickedness, that it is utterly unsearchable, except of him alone which searcheth the hearts and the reins. All the senses and thoughts of man are not only prone unto evil, but also evil in deed even from the very cradles. The free will of man is so wounded and made weak, that in things appertaining unto the Spirit of God and unto our salvation it can of itself do nothing at all, as Christ saith: "Without me ye can do nothing." Also St Paul: "It is God that worketh in us both the will and the deed." Again: "We are not able of ourselves so much as to think a good thought." Moreover, the strengths of man are so weak, yea, so none, that, being once thrown down, we are not able to rise up again.

Such misers and wretches are we, that we suffer ourselves as miserable bond-slaves to be led captive of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and to be handled as it pleaseth them. We are so spoiled of our garments, that our miserable nakedness is easy to be perceived; neither can we of ourselves cover that evil-favoured nakedness of ours. Beastly are we, not understanding the things which belong unto the Spirit of God. Hypocrites are we, and a very lump of wickedness, yea, the wickedness itself. We cannot so much as once think well; so unable are we either to ask or to do any good thing. What would such a monster of wickedness do in prayer, if it were suffered to ask according to his own will, and to enjoy the requests which it would ask? What would that monster (I mean man) desire? what would he ask? what would he wish? Being a covetous man, he would wish with king Midas, that whatsoever he touched might straightways be made gold. Being a carnal and voluptuous man, he would wish with Jupiter, that Phœbus would prolong the time of going forth with his fiery cart many hours, that he, being in darkness, might without all shame use his venerous pastime at his pleasure. Being an ambitious man, he would wish with king Nabuchodonosor to have all nations under the heavens subject unto him, and himself to be taken for a god upon the earth. Being an idolater, he would wish with Jesabel, that no god might be worshipped but Baal, and that no ministers should be had in honour but only the priests of Baal. Being an hog of Epicure's flock, he would wish with Epicurus none other thing but worldly and fleshly pleasures, eating and drinking, quietness, rest, dicing, carding, &c. Are not these meet and worthy things to be asked of God? O miserable blindness of most miserable man!

It is truly said of St Paul: "We know not what to desire as we ought." It is not therefore without a cause required, that whosoever intendeth to pray aright should determine with himself only to ask that in his prayer which is agreeable to the will

Heb. xiii.

All things are  
to be asked  
according to  
the will of  
God.

Isai. i.

Jer. xvii.  
Prov. xx.

Gen. vi. viii.

John xv.

Phil. ii.

2 Cor. iii.

Luke x.  
Luke xv.

Luke x.

Gen. iii.

1 Cor. ii.

2 Cor. iii.

Dan. iii.

1 Kings xviii.

Rom. viii.

of God. For it is not lawful for us to ask what we think good in our carnal judgments, but that only which we know to be acceptable in the sight of God; or else we pray in vain, and without fruit: or if we do obtain at any time that which we ungodly require, we obtain it unto our destruction and damnation; and better were it for us never to have obtained it. The will of God above all things is to be considered in our prayers, and according unto that ought we to pray; which thing if we do, we may be sure to pray profitably, and to obtain that we ask, as St John testifieth, saying: "This is the trust that we have in God, that if we ask any thing <sup>1 John v.</sup> according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him."

That things asked contrary to the will of God are vainly asked and without fruit, it appeareth by divers histories of the holy scripture. In the gospel of St Mark we <sup>Mark x.</sup> read, that James and John, the sons of Zebedeus, came unto Christ, and said: "Master, we will that, whatsoever we shall ask, thou grant us. Christ said unto them, What will ye have me to do for you? They said, Grant us, that one may sit on thy right hand, the other on the left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus answered: Ye know not what ye ask." James and John, the dearly beloved disciples of Christ, persuaded themselves, that they should easily obtain whatsoever they asked of so loving and gentle master, without any respect or exception. They dreamed that Christ (as the blind Jews do at this present day) should have an earthly kingdom in this world, and reign like a most triumphant and glorious prince over all nations: therefore desired they of Christ, that one of them might sit on his right hand in his kingdom, the other on his left hand, that is to say, bear the chief rule about him; and, as I may so speak, one to be lord chancellor, and the other to be lord treasurer. These two disciples prayed, but not according to the will of God. Therefore said Christ unto them: "Ye know not what ye ask." The will of God was, not that they should reign in this world as earthly princes, which thing they greatly desired; but that they should prepare themselves to the cross, and be content to suffer for the gospel of his Son, and so to enter into glory, not of the world, but of heaven.

St Paul also prayed that the unquietness through the flesh, even the messenger <sup>2 Cor. xii.</sup> of Satan, wherewith he was continually buffeted, might depart from him; but he obtained not his desire, although he desired it of the Lord thrice, that is to say, oftentimes. Why so? Because he prayed not according to the will of God. Therefore was it answered him on this manner: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Many in times past have prayed, and were not heard. Many also pray at this day, and are not heard. How cometh it to pass? Because they pray not according to the will of God.

Plato in his prayer unto Jupiter hath a notable sentence, which is this: "O king Jupiter, give us good things both when we pray, and when we do not pray. As concerning things which are evil, give them by no means unto us, although we ask them<sup>1</sup>." The noble philosopher Socrates affirmed that we should ask nothing of the immortal gods, but only that they should give us good things, forasmuch as they do best know what is most profitable for every man: as for us, we many times in our prayers ask that which were better for us not to have it granted<sup>2</sup>. Here even of the very ethnicks may we learn, that nothing ought to be asked of God, but that only which is good: again, that in all our prayers we submit our will to the good will and pleasure of God, according to this our common prayer: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

<sup>Matth. vi.  
Luke xi.</sup>

*Father.* What is to be done that we may pray according to the will of God? *Son.* God hath opened unto us his blessed will in the holy scripture, wherein he hath

[<sup>1</sup> Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ, τὰ μὲν ἐσθλά καὶ εὐχομένοις  
καὶ ἀνεύκτοις  
ἄμμι δίδου, τὰ δὲ δεινὰ καὶ εὐχομένοις ἀπα-  
λέξειν.

These lines are quoted in Plat. Alcibiad. Secund.]

[<sup>2</sup> Socrates humanæ sapientiæ quasi quoddam

terrestre oraculum, nihil ultra petendum a Diis immortalibus arbitrabatur, quam ut bona tribuerent; quia ii demum scirent quid unicuique esset utile: nos autem plerumque id votis expetere, quod non impetrasse melius foret.—Valer. Max. Lib. vii. cap. ii.]

declared what we ought to ask. Whatsoever we find in them to be the will of God, that may we be bold to ask and to crave. And whatsoever we ask, so praying, we may be sure to obtain it, forasmuch as we pray according to the will of God. As for an example: St Paul writeth this to be the will of God, that "all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." Whosoever therefore prayeth that he may be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, he prayeth according to the will of God. Jeremy the prophet prayed unto God that he might obtain everlasting salvation, saying: "Heal thou me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: save thou me, and I shall be saved." The thief also prayed for the same on this manner: "O Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Also St Paul: "I wish to be loosened, and to be with Christ." For the knowledge of God's truth David prayed thus: "Shew me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths. Direct me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art God my Saviour." Again, he saith: "Give me understanding, O Lord, that I may know thy testimonies." All these prayed according to the will of God, and were heard.

Moreover, the holy scripture declareth this to be the will of God, that no man should perish, but that all should repent and live. For so writeth St Peter: "The Lord is patient toward us, while he will none to perish, but to receive all unto repentance." God himself saith by the prophet: "As surely as I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he turn and live." Christ also saith: "I say unto you, that there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous, that need no repentance." Whosoever therefore prayeth unto God for repentance, he prayeth according to the will of God, and may be sure to be heard.

Likewise as for repentance, so for faith also, the good will of God is, that we should pray; forasmuch as without faith repentance before God is of no valor: yea, repentance without faith driveth unto desperation, and desperation unto damnation, as we may see in Caim, Judas, and such like. And forasmuch as both repentance and faith is the gift of God, therefore must they both be asked of him. For Christ said not only, "repent," but he added, "and believe the gospel." Repentance and faith must go together as companions inseparable, even as the sun and light, fire and heat. For the will of God is, not only that we should repent, but also that we should believe, as our Saviour Christ saith: "This is the will of him that sent me, that all that see the Son and believe on him should have everlasting life." Whosoever therefore prayeth for faith, that he may have everlasting life through Christ, he prayeth according to the will of God. So read we of the apostles, which prayed unto God for faith on this manner: "O Lord, increase our faith."

Furthermore, "this is the will of God (saith St Paul), even your sanctification, that ye abstain from whoredom, and that every one of you know how to possess his own vessel with holiness and honour, and not in the lust of concupiscence, as do the heathen, which know not God." Again, this is the will of God, saith he, "that no man oppress and defraud his brother in bargaining, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such things." Whosoever therefore prayeth that he may be holy in all his conversation, that he may not pollute his vessel, that is to say, his body, with fornication, adultery, or with any other kind of uncleanness, but keep it in holiness and honour; again, whosoever prayeth that he may deal justly and truly with all men, with whom he hath to do, either in bargaining, buying, or selling, he prayeth according to the will of God, and may be sure to be heard. To be short, look whatsoever we find in the holy scripture to be the will of God, that may we freely and with a good conscience ask; and so asking we pray according to the will of God, and we may be sure both to be heard and also to enjoy our requests.

*Father.* We may then lawfully pray for the enlarging of Christ's kingdom, for the advancement of his holy word, for the true understanding of the sacred scripture, for constancy and stedfastness in the religion of Christ, for remission of our sins, for the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the increase of faith, for fervent love toward our neighbour, yea, even toward our enemy, for peace and quietness of conscience, for long-suffering, for modesty, for patience in adversity, for humility in prosperity, and

1 Tim. ii.

Jer. xvii.

Luke xxiii.  
Phil. i.

Psal. xxv.

Psal. exix.

2 Pet. iii.

Ezek. xviii.  
xxxiii.

Luke xv.

Gen. iv.  
Matt. ii.  
Matt. xxvii.  
Acts i.  
Mark i.

John vi.

Luke xvii.

1 Thess. iv.

for such other like spiritual gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost: and as we pray for them, so shall we enjoy them. *Son.* Yea, verily.

*Father.* But what concerning bodily and worldly things? must we ask them also of God? Do we pray according to the will of God, when we crave at his hand all things necessary for the sustentation of this our poor and needy life? *Son.* I am not altogether ignorant what some writers judge in this behalf. Notwithstanding, this have I learned, that we may with a good conscience ask of God all things necessary as well for the body as for the soul; as meat, drink, clothe, health of body, long life, defence from miseries, deliverance from tribulations, prosperous success in all our labours and travails, a quiet commonweal, public peace, a good wife, obedient children, quiet subjects, good magistrates, and such like, as we have divers examples in the holy scripture. And our Saviour Christ taught us to ask of God the Father "our daily bread," that we may know that all good things, Matt. vi. both for the body and for the soul, come from God, and by this means learn to be thankful unto God for all his benefits.

But this is to be noted, that as all spiritual things appertaining either unto the glory of God or unto the salvation of our souls are to be asked of God without any condition, so likewise are all corporal things to be desired of God with a condition, which knoweth better what is expedient for us, than we ourselves do. Note well. As for an example: When we pray for the forgiveness of sins, we shall not pray on this manner: 'O heavenly Father, forgive us our sins, if it be thy will.' No, but without any condition we shall say: 'O heavenly Father, forgive us our sins for Christ's sake.' For God hath declared unto us in his holy word, that it is his good will and pleasure that we should so pray. "As surely as I live (saith he) I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he turn and live." But if we pray to be delivered from any corporal incommodity or disease, as from an ague, from the plague, from banishment, from imprisonment, from poverty, from sickness, from death, &c., then ought we to submit our will to God's will, which best knoweth what is most profitable for us; as a certain man saith: "What is most profitable for the sick man, the physician knoweth better than he that is diseased." As for an example, if we should pray to be delivered from sickness, we must pray after this manner: 'O God and heavenly Father, which for our sins and wickedness hast worthily cast upon us this grievous cross of sickness, wherewith we be greatly enfeebled, made weak and brought low; we most humbly beseech thee, that thou wilt now at the last, after so many and so great troubles, pains, and adversities, take away mercifully from us this our sickness, and liberally restore unto us the benefit of health, that we, as in mind, so likewise in body, being made sound and strong, may live and glorify thy holy name. Notwithstanding, O heavenly Father, thy will, and not ours, be done in this thing.'

For concerning temporal and corporal matters we must so pray, that all things be left unto the counsel, determination, and will of God, to give unto us what he will, when he will, and how much he will. So teacheth us Christ in our common prayer: "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." And as he taught us thus Matt. vi. to pray, so likewise did he himself practise this manner of praying. For when the time of his passion began to draw nigh, he prayed unto his Father on this manner: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup depart from me. Notwithstanding, not Matt. xxvi. as I will, but as thou wilt." Here Christ prayed his Father, that he might not Mark xiv. drink of the cup of his passion: notwithstanding he submitted his will to the will of his Father. Likewise prayed the leper: "Lord," saith he, "if thou wilt, thou art Luke xxii. able to make me clean." The leper wished to be cleansed from his leprosy: notwithstanding he referred the matter to Christ, and to his holy will, to do with him as he thought best. Again, those three young men, which at Nabuchodonosor's commandment were cast into the hot brenning furnace, because they would not worship the golden image, said to the king: "We may not consent unto thee in this Matt. viii. matter. For behold, our God, whom we serve, is able to keep us from the hot burning oven, O king, and can right well deliver us out of thy hands. And though he will not, yet shalt thou know, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor do reverence unto that image which thou hast set up." Furthermore David desired to Dan. iii. 2 Sam. xv.

be restored to his kingdom, when he was put out of it by Absolon his son; yet he wished it none otherwise then it should seem good in the sight of God. His words are these: "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again. But if the Lord thus say, I have no lust unto thee; behold, here am I, let him do with me what seemeth good in his eyes." Note here, how obedient David shewed himself to the will of God. He wisheth to be restored to his kingdom: notwithstanding, if it shall otherwise seem good unto God, he is content also to obey his holy will.

All these examples teach us, that in all corporal and temporal things we ought to submit our will to the good will and pleasure of God, and to be content to receive of him whatsoever his good will shall be, whether it be riches or poverty, health or sickness, life or death, &c. He is our Father, and we are his sons. Let us not doubt therefore, but that he will give us that which he knoweth to be best and most profitable for us. Only let us do our endeavour to pray according to his will, and ask those things which we are taught in the holy scripture to ask, that is to say, those things which belong unto the glory of God, the salvation of our souls, and the commodity of our neighbour; and let us not doubt, but that we shall be heard, and obtain our desires, whether they pertain unto the soul or unto the body. God without doubt will accomplish our desire, if we go about to satisfy his godly pleasure, and frame our prayers according to his blessed will; as the psalmograph witnesseth, saying: "He will accomplish the desire of them that fear him, and hear their prayer, and save them." Hereto belongeth the saying of St John: "Dearly beloved, if our heart do not condemn us, we have trust to God-ward; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight."

Psal. cxlv.  
1 John iii.

*Father.* God give us all grace, both in our prayers and in all other exercises either of the body or of the soul, only to do those things which are acceptable in his sight! *Son.* Amen.

*Father.* What remaineth there yet behind concerning the worthy preparation unto prayer? *Son.* Seventhly, although the aforesaid things, whereof we have hitherto spoken, are so necessary to the worthy preparation unto prayer, that whosoever cometh not so instructed unto prayer, he prayeth unprofitably and in vain; yet this matter also, whereof we shall now entreat, is so necessary unto him that intendeth to pray with fruit, that without it all the other profit nothing at all.

*Father.* What is that, my son? *Son.* It is the frank and free forgiving of them, which have offended us either in word or in deed.

*Father.* Is this thing so necessary? *Son.* Yea, verily, as you shall hear hereafter. Therefore whosoever intendeth to pray, if he will pray aright, let him consider with himself, how he is affected toward his neighbour, although his enemy. Let him search his conscience, and look in the book of his heart, whether all things in him be friendly, loving, and charitable toward not only his friends, but also his enemies. For, as our Saviour Christ saith: "If ye love them which love you, what thanks have ye? For sinners also love their lovers. And if ye do good for them which do good for you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same." Whosoever therefore intendeth to pray with fruit, let him see in himself whether he hath a cankered, malicious, hateful, spiteful, and envious heart against any man, or not. If he have, let him know that he is a right bird of Caim's nest, and a very image of Satan, although he speak with the tongues of angels, and understood all the mysteries both of God and God's word; yea, although he were so fervent in prayer, that his knees were made like to the knees of camels through kneeling, as we read of St James, the bishop of Jerusalem<sup>1</sup>.

Forgiving  
our offend-  
ers.

Matt. v.  
Luke vi.

Gen. iv.  
1 John iii.  
1 Cor. xiii.

If any man therefore findeth in himself an hateful heart toward any man, let him not presume once to open his mouth for to pray. If he do, the first word of his prayer turneth unto his own damnation. And the more he prayeth, being so affected, the more doth he heap the hot wrath and fierce vengeance of God against himself. Neither shall such a monster of wickedness obtain any grace or favour at the hand

[<sup>1</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. ii. cap. xxiii. p. 50. Amst. 1695. See Vol. i. p. 143.]



of God, as the wise man testifieth, saying: "He that seeketh vengeance shall find vengeance at the Lord's hand, which shall sure keep him his sins. Forgive thy neighbour thy hurt that he hath done thee; and so shall thy sins be forgiven thee also, when thou prayest. A man that beareth hatred against another, how dare he desire forgiveness of God? He that sheweth no mercy to a man, which is like himself, how dare he ask forgiveness of his sins? If he that is but flesh beareth hatred and keepeth it, who will entreat for his sins? Remember the end, and let enmity pass, which seeketh death and destruction, and abide thou in the commandments (of God). Remember the commandments (of God): so shalt thou not be rigorous over thy neighbour, &c."

Eccus.  
xxviii.

Here hear we, that except we forgive them that have offended us, although we pray never so much, yet shall not our prayers be heard of God, I mean unto our salvation: our sins shall never be forgiven us, but God shall reserve and keep them unto our damnation; and albeit heaven and earth, and all that ever are in them, with one voice should pray for us, yet should not their prayers for us be heard, so vile misers and damnable wretches are we in the sight of God, so long as we continue in this malicious mind and spiteful hatred. For God loveth, alloweth, and regardeth nothing that proceedeth from an envious, hateful, and malicious heart. Let us remember Caim. He offered sacrifices unto God, praying and praising God outwardly with no less holiness and devotion, than his brother Abel did. But what saith the scripture? "God looked unto Abel, and unto his gifts; but unto Caim and unto his gifts he looked not." Why so? Because his heart was void both of faith toward God, and of love toward his brother. His heart burned with envy and hatred against his brother Abel. Therefore his prayers, praises, and sacrifices were abomination unto God.

Gen. iv.

O, with what face dare we be bold once to open our mouth, and to say the Lord's prayer, calling the heavenly Father our Father, when we hate one another, and speak evil one of another? Is God the Father the father of the malicious, of the envious, of the hateful, and of the uncharitable? Or is he rather the father of the friendly, of the loving, of the charitable, and of the well-willing? "God is charity," saith St John, "and he that dwelleth in charity dwelleth in God, and God in him." Now he that dwelleth in hatred, in whom dwelleth he? verily, in the devil, and the devil in him. Is such a monster of malice a meet person to call upon God the Father? A malicious and envious person to call God father, is none other thing than to call God envious, malicious, hateful, spiteful, and the father of all tyrants and blood-thirsty people. And how great an impiety that is, who knoweth not?

1 John iv.

Again, with what forehead (except we have too much rubbed our forehead, I mean, except we be past all shame) dare we say in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," if we do not forgive them which have offended us? So to pray, is it any other thing than to ask vengeance upon ourselves? If we retain hatred in our minds; if we seek to be revenged; if we devise how we may hurt them that have hurted us; yea, if we labour not to be reconciled even to our very enemies; and if we cannot be content to forgive them, to love and favour them, to speak well of them, to pray for them, and to do for them whatsoever lieth in our power, and no less to seek their commodity and profit, than we do our own; when we pray this prayer, we do none other thing than beseech God that he will not forgive us our sins, but rather deal with us according to our deservings, with all kind of rigour and severity. For except we forgive other, it is vain to look for remission and forgiveness of our sins at the hand of God, as our Saviour Christ witnesseth, saying: "Forgive, and it shall be forgiven you." Again: "If ye forgive men their faults, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye will not forgive men their faults, neither will your Father forgive you your sins." The demand which Peter asked of Christ, how often he should forgive his brother, is not unknown. St Matthew writeth, that "Peter said unto Christ on this manner: Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I shall forgive him? Seven times? Christ answered: I say not unto thee seven times, but seventy times seven times:" that is to say, so often as he sinneth, forgive him. The parable,

Matt. vi.  
Luke xi.

Luke vi.

Matt. vi.

Matt. xviii.

which Christ immediately after put forth, declareth evidently, that except we forgive them that have offended us, yea, and that from the very heart, we shall never obtain remission of our sins at the hand of God.

Col. iii. Are not these the words of blessed St Paul, "Forgive ye one another: if any man have a quarrel against another, even as Christ forgave you, even so do ye?" Can any better or more apt example be brought forth, whereby we may be provoked one to forgive another, than the example of Christ? To whom is his free forgiving of our sins unknown? When we were yet his enemies, he did not only forgive us our sins, but he also gave himself even unto the death to be a ransom for our sins, and to reconcile us unto God his Father, that through his pains we might be delivered from the pains of hell, and by his death be made free from everlasting death, and be made inheritors of everlasting life.

1 Cor. xv.  
Heb. ii. *Father.* It is meet and convenient, that if we will find favour at the hand of God, we shew also favour to our neighbour, and be the very same unto him that we would wish God should be unto us. And forasmuch as we are but frail vessels, and cannot so live in this world, but sometime displeasure shall chance among us, it is our duty one of us to forgive another, to bear one with another, to take all things into the best part, not soon to be provoked unto anger, not straightways to bear any displeasure against any man, not to shew ourselves hard to be entreated, but easy to be reconciled, and to seek all men. Rom. xlii. *Son.* This is the office and duty of a christian man. For if any do behave himself otherwise, he is no meet man to pray unto God.

*Father.* Remaineth there any more to be spoken of, concerning the worthy preparation unto prayer? *Son.* Finally, it is requisite, that whensoever we intend to pray, we appoint not God the time when he shall help us, and perform our desires; but commit this thing unto his godly wisdom, as unto him which best knoweth when our petitions ought to take place, and to be brought unto effect. For as the way and the place to help us are not to be assigned unto God, no more is the time to be appointed unto him when he shall help us, and bring our requests unto a fortunate end; but in this behalf we must be content to receive the benefits of our desires at the hand of God, not when we will, but at what time it shall be his good pleasure to give them unto us; which thing without all doubt shall then come to pass, when it shall be most unto our great joy and singular comfort.

And although we do not perceive that God doth straightways grant us our petitions, yet let us not faint in our faith, nor despair of our hope, nor yet conceive an evil opinion of God, as though he were angry with us, or unfaithful in his words, and not true in his promises; but rather cleave unto him with a strong faith, and wholly depend upon his promises, nothing doubting, but that in his time he will liberally perform and abundantly give whatsoever we have asked, yea, more than we can or dare be bold to ask, as the prophet Habacuc saith: "If the Lord maketh trariance, abide thou his leisure; for he will undoubtedly come, and will not tarry." The prophet Esay saith: "In silence and hope shall your strength be." Jeremy also saith: "It is good with silence to tarry for the saving health of God."

Hab. ii. In prayer no time of granting is to be appointed unto God. *Father.* For God many times deferreth to give us our requests, not because he is angry or hateth us, or because he is unfaithful in his words and not constant in his promises; but unto this end, that he may prove our faith, and try whether we be faithful and constant in giving credit to his promises, or not: again, that we, after long desire enjoying his benefits, should the more fervently be kindled to embrace them, and to make much of them: again, that we should the more earnestly be provoked heartily to praise and magnify the name of God for his fatherly benefits, so liberally and lovingly bestowed upon us. For things soon given soon wax vile; but things long desired, and at the last obtained, are highly esteemed and had in great price. All the glory therefore in times past, although they did not straightways enjoy their desires, ceased not still to pray unto God: neither were they any thing at all dismayed, but patiently abode the Lord's leisure, being content to receive when it should be his good pleasure to give, as David saith: "Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters; and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us." Here David

appointed God no certain time, when he shall shew his mercy on him and grant him his requests, neither ceaseth he from lifting up his eyes unto the Lord his God, because he doth not straightways obtain his desires; but he goeth forth in his prayers, and continueth calling on the name of God, even so long until the Lord hath pity on him, and grant him his desire. O blessed David! O worthy ensample to be followed of all them which are led with the earnest love of prayer, and heartily wish to have their petitions accepted of God!

And this is it that our Saviour Christ saith in the gospel: "Men ought alway to pray, and not to be weary." "For God will tender the supplications of them which night and day cry unto him, although for a time he defer them." Such patient abider of the Lord's leisure was Job also, which saith: "Although he killeth me, yet will I put my trust in him." Likewise said Moses unto the children of Israel, when Pharaoh pursued them, and they saw no way to escape, but either to perish with waters, or else to fall into the hands of the enemy. "Fear not," saith he, "stand still, and behold the wonderful works of God, which he will do this day." Moses commandeth the people of Israel not to fear, but to stand still, that is to say, not to prescribe unto God either the way, or the place, or the time of their deliverance, but with strong faith to cleave to the promises of God, and patiently to abide their deliverance, when his good pleasure shall be. Luke xviii.  
Job xiii.  
Exod. xiv.

The patient abiding of the Lord's leisure doth so greatly please God, that nothing can more haste or provoke his benefits; as, on the contrary part, nothing doth more displease and offend God, than through impatiency to prescribe unto him the time when he shall help us; as we may perceive by the words which the godly matron Judith spake unto the citizens of Bethulia, which, when Holofernes besieged their city, prescribed unto God five days' respite to help them. If no help came from God by that time, they were full determined to yield and give over the city to the enemy. But how earnestly that stout-stomached and courageous matron Judith rebuked them for this their impatiency, incredulity, and tempting of God, these her words do evidently declare: "What thing is this (saith she) wherein Osias hath consented, that, if God help not within five days, he will give over the city to the Assyrians? What are ye, that ye tempt the Lord? This device obtaineth no mercy of God, but provoketh him to wrath and displeasure. Will ye set the mercy of the Lord a time, and appoint him a day after your will? Nevertheless, forasmuch as the Lord is patient, let us rather repent, pouring out tears and beseeching him of grace. For God threateneth not as a man, neither will he be provoked unto wrath as the children of men. And therefore let us heartily fall down before him, and serve him with a meek spirit, and with weeping eyes say unto the Lord, that he deal with us according to his own will and mercy." Judith viii.  
[Vulgate.]

Therefore, whensoever we intend to pray, let us determine with ourselves patiently to abide the Lord's leisure, and by no means to prescribe unto him either the time, or the place, or the way, or any other circumstance, concerning our requests, but to submit all our desires to his fatherly providence; being content to receive of him what, when, and how, it shall be his good pleasure to give us; and yet notwithstanding, still continuing to cry unto the Lord with our prayers both day and night, after the example of the widow of whom we read in the gospel of Luke, with this sure persuasion, that God in his time will either give unto us those things which we presently ask, or else better things. Whosoever on this manner offereth his prayers unto God, he may be sure to be welcome unto the majesty of God, and to obtain his requests, unto the salvation both of his body and soul. And thus much have I spoken concerning the due and worthy preparation unto prayer, as I have heretofore learned of our preacher and catechist. Luke xviii.

*Father.* I greatly commend thee, my sweet and dear son, that thou dost so well remember the good and godly doctrine which heretofore thou hast learned of thy teachers. Let me hear now, according to thy promise, the declaration of the Lord's prayer, that in this behalf also I may have a taste of thy diligence. *Son.* The Lord's prayer beginneth on this manner:

"Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."

The preface of the Lord's prayer with the first petition.

*Father.* This is the first petition contained in the Lord's prayer? *Son.* Yea, verily.

*Father.* How many petitions are there in the Lord's prayer? *Son.* They commonly number seven.

*Father.* Why is it called the Lord's prayer? *Son.* Because the Lord Christ himself made it, and taught it his disciples, and willed them so to pray.

*Father.* Where teacheth the holy scripture that? *Son.* In the gospel of Luke we read, that one of the disciples came unto Christ, and said unto him: "Lord, teach us to pray, even as John taught his disciples. And Christ said unto them, When ye pray, say: Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

*Father.* Is this prayer of all other most excellent? *Son.* Yea, forsooth; both because of the maker of it, as I said before, which is the Lord Jesus; and also because in few words it containeth abundantly whatsoever is necessary to be desired, either for the glory of God or for the safeguard of the body and soul of man. For the three first petitions concern the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom: the other four petitions, which follow in order, entreat of our necessities, and pertain unto our commodity and profit, whether we respect the body or the soul, or both.

*Father.* Why dost thou direct thy prayer unto God, and not rather unto men, or unto the blessed spirits in heaven? *Son.* Vain is the salvation that is looked for from man. To save is the office of God alone, from whom "cometh down every good and perfect gift;" therefore unto God alone are our prayers to be directed, according to this commandment: "Call on me," saith God, "in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." To invoke and call upon the saints in heaven, as it is not commanded in the word of God, so likewise is it injurious to the majesty of God, seeing we give that honour to creatures, which is due to God alone; neither have we any promise in the holy scripture, that we shall be heard and enjoy our petitions, if we pray unto saints departed. To pray unto God, and to ask all good things of him in the name of our alone Mediator Christ Jesu, we are not only commanded, but also promised that we shall be heard. Therefore to leave that which is certain, and to embrace that which is uncertain, is mere folly, as I may speak nothing more sharply.

*Father.* But what if we do both? *Son.* What mean you?

*Father.* Pray both unto God and unto the saints in heaven? *Son.* Then is your faith divided; and therefore no true and perfect faith. Then also do you steal away that honour and glory from God and give it unto creatures, which alone is due unto God. For there can be no greater glory and honour given to God, than in our adversity and trouble to flee unto his holy name as unto a strong bulwark, to call upon it, and to ask all good things of the Lord our God, which is "a jealous God," and speaketh by the prophet on this manner: "I am the Lord, this is my name: my glory will I give to none other." And his servant Moses saith: "Thou shalt honour the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve." The saints themselves also cry and say: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give the glory, for thy mercy and truth's sake." Against all such half worshippers of God, the prophet Elias thundereth on this manner: "How long will ye halt on both knees? If the Lord be God, follow him: if Baal be he, follow him." And God himself saith to such halting hypocrites and double dissemblers: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. But because thou art between both, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." As God alone giveth all good things, so is he alone to be called upon in all our adversities and troubles.

*Father.* What is to be thought of them which, when they pray unto the saints in heaven, use to say this prayer of the Lord, "Our Father which art in heaven," &c. and use to say it oftentimes in the honour of such saints as they most fancy? *Son.* Their blindness is much to be lamented; and it is to be wished that such people were better taught. Is it a meet thing to call any saint in heaven, Father? to desire that his name may be sanctified? and that he will forgive us our sins, &c.? They which thus pray do rather dishonour than honour the heavenly spirits; and indeed, so praying, they do nothing else than blaspheme God, and provoke God unto anger; so that by this means, where they seem to seek salvation, they fall into the danger of everlasting damnation.

Why it is called the Lord's prayer.

Luke xi.

The excellency of the Lord's prayer.

James i.

Psal. i.

Prov. xviii.

Exod. xx.  
Deut. v.  
Isai xlii.

Deut. vi.  
Matt. iv.  
Luke iv.

Psal. cxv.

1 Kings xviii.

Rev. iii.

Superstitious worshippers of saints.

*Father.* Thou holdest then, that this prayer ought to be said unto God alone.  
*Son.* Yea, verily, if we intend to pray it with fruit.

*Father.* Let us then fall in hand with this prayer of the Lord, and boult out every parcel thereof. *Son.* Content.

*Father.* In the beginning of this prayer thou callest God "Father". *Son.* So is it. Why we call God Father.

*Father.* Why callest thou God thy Father? *Son.* I have learned so to do out of the word of God.

*Father.* Let me hear some testimonies of the holy scripture concerning this matter.

*Son.* Moses saith to every faithful man: "Is not the Lord thy Father, and thine owner? Hath he not made thee and ordained thee?" Deut. xxxii.

*Father.* But why dost thou rather say "our Father," than "my Father"? *Son.* To declare that God is the common Father of all the faithful, and not of one only.

*Father.* How provest that by the word of God? *Son.* The prophet Esay saith: "Thou, O God, art our Father. For Abraham knoweth us not, neither is Israel acquainted with us. But thou, Lord, art our Father and Redeemer; and thy name is everlasting." Again: "Thou, O Lord, art our Father: we are thy clay, and thou art our potter, and we all are the work of thy hands." The prophet Malache saith: "Have we not all one Father? Hath not God made us? Why doth every one of us then despise his own brother?" Mal. ii. God himself saith by the same prophet: "Should not the son honour his father, and a servant fear his master? If I be now a Father, where is my honour? If I be a Lord, where is my fear?" In another place he also saith: "I will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters." Our Saviour Christ saith: "Call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven." 2 Cor. vi. Matt. xxiii. St Paul also saith: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear any more, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, dear Father. The same Spirit certifieth our spirit, that we are the sons of God. If we be sons, then are we also heirs; the heirs (I mean) of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ." Again: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, dear Father. Wherefore now thou art not a servant, but a son. If thou be a son, thou art also an heir of God through Christ." Gal. iv. 1 John iii. St John also saith: "Behold, what exceeding great love the Father hath shewed unto us, that we should be called (and be in deed) the sons of God."

*Father.* How cometh it to pass, that God is our Father, seeing that we are flesh and blood, corruption and dust? *Son.* God is our Father two manner of ways: first, in that he hath created and made us, as we tofore heard; secondly, in that he hath begotten us anew, "not of mortal, but of immortal seed," in that he hath given us his Spirit, and we believe in his Son Christ Jesu, as St John saith: "As many as received him (Christ), to them gave he power to be the sons of God, even them that believed in his name; which were born not of the blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor yet of the will of man, but of God." 1 Pet. i. John i. St Paul also saith: "Ye are all the children of God, because ye believe in Christ Jesu." Gal. iii. Again: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. viii.

*Father.* Then are not we the sons of God by nature? *Son.* No, verily, but by adoption. One only is the natural Son of God, even Christ Jesus the Lord: the faithful are the sons of God only by adoption and grace, as we tofore abundantly heard in the declaration of the second article of the christian belief.

*Father.* Thou sayest truth, my child. But what profit hast thou in this, that God is thy Father? *Son.* What profit have I not, whether I respect the body or the soul? In that God is my Father, I am well assured, that I shall want no good thing necessary both for the body and for the soul. For as a good father hath a special care to provide and aforessee, that his son lack no good thing that is necessary for him; so likewise my heavenly Father, which by adoption and grace hath chosen me to be his son, will suffer me to lack no good thing, but abundantly minister and give unto me whatsoever is needful either for the body or for the soul, as God said unto Abraham: "Fear not: I am thy defence and mighty shield; and thy reward shall be exceeding great." Gen. xv. Psal. lxxxii. By the psalmograph he also saith: "I am the Lord thy God, &c.: open thy

mouth wide, and I shall fill it." And if at any time I seem to lack, in that God is my Father, I may be bold to come unto him, and to crave of him whatsoever thing I have need of, with this perfect persuasion and assured hope, that he will grant me my petitions no less, yea, much more (for he is almighty, and an horn of plenty) than any natural father will labour to satisfy the desires of his son; as our Saviour Christ saith: "Is there any man among you, which, if his son ask bread, will offer him a stone? or if he ask fish, will he proffer him a serpent? If ye then (when ye are evil) can give your children good gifts, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give you good things, if ye ask of him?" Therefore in that I am taught by him, which is the self truth, to call God Father, I may be bold to come unto him, to lament my miseries unto him, to crave at his hand help, succour, defence, and whatsoever besides I have need of, with this faith, that I shall not be denied of my requests; forasmuch as he tendereth me no less, yea, much more, than a most loving father pitieth his most dear child.

Matt. vii.  
Luke xi.

John xiv.

What we  
learn by call-  
ing God our  
Father.



*Father.* What earnest thou of this, that thou sayest not "my Father," but "our Father"? *Son.* In that I call God "our Father," I am put in remembrance, that God is the Father of us all, (I mean the faithful,) and that we be his sons, and therefore brethren also. Now, forasmuch as we all have one Father, and be all brethren and fellow-heirs of one and the same kingdom, I am here taught to love my brethren, and to do them good unto the uttermost of my power, to seek no less their commodity and profit than mine own, as St Paul saith: "Let no man seek his own commodity, but the profit of other." Again: "Charity or love seeketh not her own." He that hath not this love toward his christian brethren, he is not the son of God, neither is God his Father. "In this thing," saith Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another."

Phil. ii.

1 Cor. xiii.

John xiii.

*Father.* Thou dost not only call God "our Father," but thou sayest moreover that he "is in heaven." *Son.* Yea, verily.

God is in  
heaven.  
Isai. lxvi.  
Psal. ciii.  
Psal. cxv.  
Psal. cxliii.

Matt. xxiii.

*Father.* How provest thou that God is in heaven? *Son.* God himself saith by the prophet: "Heaven is my seat." The psalmograph also saith: "The Lord hath prepared his seat in heaven." Again: "Our God is in heaven." Item: "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, which dwellest in the heavens." Likewise saith our Saviour Christ: "Call no man father on the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven."

Psal. cxxxix.

*Father.* How canst thou truly and properly say that God is in heaven, when he is in all places at once, and filleth heaven and earth with his presence; forasmuch as he is infinite and incomprehensible? as the psalmograph saith: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I go from thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, thou art there: if I go down to hell, thou art there also. If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Peradventure the darkness shall cover me; then shall my night be turned to day. Yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee; but the night is as clear as the day: the darkness and the light to thee are both alike." Salomon also in his prayer said unto God: "Behold, the heavens and heavens of all heavens are not able to contain thee." And God himself saith by the prophet: "I fill both heaven and earth." *Son.* I know and confess that the majesty of God is infinite, unmeasurable, incomprehensible, filleth heaven and earth, occupieth all places at once, and cannot be compassed within certain limits (as all creatures are); forasmuch as he is the Maker of all things, and not a thing made: notwithstanding, the holy scripture most commonly termeth him to be and to dwell in heaven, yea, and that for divers causes.

1 Kings viii.

Jer. xxiii.

God is infi-  
nity, and can-  
not be com-  
prehended  
within certain  
limits.

Why it is  
said that God  
is in heaven.  
1 John v.

First, to set forth unto us his majesty, highness, might, and power; while we consider that his dwelling is not in this world, which is a vale of miseries and a sink of all evils, but in the most high and glorious palace of heaven, where all joy and everlasting felicity is, where all goodness and virtue do abound, where nothing is that is not most delectable, most sweet, most pleasant; and that he hath there placed himself, not only that it should be his mansion, but ours also, forasmuch as he is our Father, and we are his children; so that whatsoever glory, joy, and felicity our Father hath

and enjoyeth, the very same shall we his children, after this our banishment, likewise have and enjoy, as our inheritance freely given us of our most loving, gentle, and bounteous Father.

Secondly, to declare that our heavenly Father, being in so high a place, doth lovingly behold us and all ours, consider our necessities, hear our prayers, grant our requests, defend us, save us from our enemies, and give us all good things; as the psalmograph saith: "The Lord is high above all heathen, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath his dwelling so high, and yet humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth? He taketh up the simple out of the dust, and lifteth the poor out of the mire; that he may set him with the princes, even with the princes of his people. He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children." Psal. cxiii.

Thirdly, to teach us, that as the heaven by unmeasurable wideness of compass containeth all places, the earth and the sea; and no place is there, that may be hid from the large reach of heaven, sith it is at every instant of time to every thing present; so likewise God is present to each thing in each place. He seeth, heareth, understandeth, and perceiveth all things, he being himself a spirit, and most far from all earthy and mortal state. This witnesseth God himself by the prophet, saying: "Am not I a God near unto you? and am not I a God far off? Shall any man be able to shroud himself in such a corner that I cannot espy him?" John iv. Jer. xxiii.

Fourthly, to signify unto us, that if we will have any thing to do with this our heavenly Father, we must have our minds free and utterly estranged from vicious affects, sinful lusts, and worldly desires, and fixed only upon God, and upon heavenly and everlasting things, as the apostle saith: "If ye be risen again with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on heavenly things, and not on earthy things." Col. iii.

Fifthly and finally, we call God our heavenly Father, to discern him from our fathers which be upon earth. For our fathers which we have in earth are but miserable, poor, needy, and mortal men, and of themselves neither able to save themselves nor us. But our Father which we have in heaven is omnipotent, almighty, rich, sufficiently able of himself to help us in all our necessities, immortal and ever living, at all times ready in this world to give us what is needful for body and soul, and after our departure from this world to place us in his heavenly kingdom, there to remain with him for ever in eternal felicity and joy.

*Father.* God make us all partakers of that heavenly glory! Now that thou hast declared why we call God our Father, and what is meant when the scripture saith he is in heaven; come off, rehearse unto me the first petition of the Lord's prayer. *Son.* The first petition is this:

"Hallowed be thy name."

The first petition.

*Father.* What desire we of God in this petition? *Son.* Forasmuch as the name, that is to say, the majesty, glory, honour, fame, wisdom, power, goodness, mercy, justice, truth, knowledge, &c., of God, is divers ways profanated, polluted, and defiled in this world by many and sundry sects, by divers heresies and wicked opinions, by manifold superstition and idolatry, by the drowsy dreams and trifling traditions of men; we most humbly beseech our heavenly Father, that he will take away out of the earth all these abominations and filthy uncleannesses, wherewith not only the glory of his most glorious name among men is greatly obscured and defaced, but the souls of many are brought also into great errors, and in fine unto everlasting damnation. And as we desire of our heavenly Father in this first petition, that all things may be taken away wherewith either the glory of his holy name is diminished, or the salvation of men's souls is hindered; so likewise we pray, that he alone may be known, not only among the Christians, but also among all the nations of the earth, to be the only true God, the alone Saviour of the world, the mighty defender of his people, the plentiful rewarder of all them that trust in him, the merciful comforter of the faithful penitent sinners, the joyful receiver of such as turn unto him, and the strong avenger and punisher of all those that run from him a whore-hunting after strange

What we desire in the first petition.

gods, and the wicked imaginations and inventions of their own hearts: again, that all nations of the world without exception may fear, reverence, honour, worship, glorify, call upon, and praise the glorious name of our heavenly Father, and in all things seek the avancement and honour thereof, preferring the glory of it before all creatures either in heaven or in earth, yea, more than our own goods and life, as it is written: "For thy sake," that is to say, for the glory and hallowing of thy name, "we are killed all day long, and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain." Daniel crieth out on this manner, and saith: "O Lord, to us, to our kings and princes, to our forefathers, yea, even to us all that have offended thee, belongeth nothing but open shame. But unto thee, O Lord our God, pertaineth righteousness, mercy, and forgiveness." All the saints of God cry out on this wise: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give the glory, for thy mercy and truth's sake."

*Father.* Methink the words of this first petition do so sound, as though the name of God might yet be made more holy and more glorious than it is now, as it is written: "He that is righteous, let him be more righteous; and he that is holy, let him be more holy." *Son.* God forbid, that any man should so think, that the name of God may be made more holy, glorious, and honourable than it is already, which is in all points in itself and of itself so holy, that no holiness can be put unto it; so glorious, that no glory can be added; so honourable, that more honourable it cannot be made; being of itself full of all holiness, glory, and honour: neither do we pray, that the name of our heavenly Father may be sanctified and hallowed unto this end, that in itself it may be made more holy, which is already most holy, but that it may be hallowed of all men in this world, and that the holiness of his name may be known among all nations, that they with one consent may believe and repose their whole affiance, trust, and confidence in it, call upon it and fly unto it as unto a strong and mighty bulwark in their adversity, praise and magnify it in their prosperity, and at all times have it in great honour and reverence; so that in all their thoughts, words, and deeds, the glory of God's most glorious name may be set forth by them, as the apostle saith: "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory and praise of God." Again: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesu, giving thanks to God the Father by him."

Of this hallowing of his name among all nations, God speaketh by the prophet on this manner: "I will make the name of my holiness to be known among my people of Israel; and I will not let my holy name be evil spoken of any more; but the very heathen also shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, it cometh, and shall be fulfilled indeed, saith the Lord God." Hereto belongeth the saying of the psalmograph: "Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord: there is not one that can do as thou doest. All nations, whom thou hast made, shall come and worship thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name."

Moreover, we do not only pray that the name of God may be sanctified, hallowed, called upon, praised, magnified, and perfectly known among all nations, yea, among the very heathen, which as yet have no perfect and true knowledge of God and of his holy name; but also that his name may be hallowed and magnified of us, which are his people, which have dedicated ourselves to his holy religion, which are baptized in the name of his Son Christ, and of him are called Christians, which profess godliness, and which are dead unto the world, and live unto Christ, lest, through our corrupt manners, wicked life, and ungodly conversation, the name of the Lord God be evil spoken of, slandered, railed upon, and blasphemed among the enemies of the truth, and his holy law condemned for heresy, as God himself complaineth by the prophet. And St Paul saith: "The name of God is evil spoken of among the gentiles through you." For as there can be no greater dishonour done unto God in this world, nor no greater ignominy unto his holy name, than when such as profess godliness practise ungodliness, unto the great slander of our profession, and unto the utter condemnation of ourselves; so likewise can there be no greater honour and glory shewed unto the Lord our God, and unto his blessed name, than when we, which profess godliness in word, practise the same in deed, that we be not of the number of them which "profess that they know God, but with their deeds deny him, seeing they are abominable and

Psal. xlv.  
Rom. viii.

Dan. ix.

Psal. cxv.

Rev. xxii.

Prov. xviii.

1 Cor. x.

Col. iii.

Ezek. xxxix.

Psal. lxxxvi.

Isai. lii.

Rom. ii.

Tit. i.



disobedient, and unapt unto every good work ;” nor like unto the five foolish virgins, Matt. xxv. which had lamps and no oil, and therefore were shut out of the bridegroom’s chamber, and when they knocked, and would have been let in, answer was made, “I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity;” nor like to that son, which promised his Psal. vi.  
Matt. xxi. father that he would work in his vineyard, and yet did not; nor yet like unto that fig-tree, which had leaves, but no fruit, and therefore was accursed of Christ, so that Mark xi. it withered away, and never brought forth fruit after.

In consideration whereof our Saviour Christ exhorteth us unto good works, saying: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify Matt. v. your Father, which is in heaven.” St Peter also saith: “Dearly beloved, I beseech you 1 Pet. ii. as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which fight against the soul; and have your conversation honest, that whereas they backbite you as evil doers, they, judging you of your good works, may glorify God in the day of visitation.” Again: “This is the will of God, that with well doing ye may stop the mouths of foolish and ignorant men; as free, and not as having the liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but even as the servants of God.” Likewise St Paul in divers places of his epistles exhorteth us, that by well doing we should “garnish the doctrine of God our Saviour,” Tit. ii.  
Phil. i.  
Phil. ii. walk worthy of the gospel of Christ, and so live, that we may be “such as no man can complain on, and unfeigned sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we ought so to shine as the lights of the world, holding fast the word of life.”

*Father.* In this first petition, therefore, we ask of our heavenly Father, that his name, that is to say, his majesty, glory, honour, fame, wisdom, power, goodness, mercy, justice, truth, knowledge, &c., might be known, revered, honoured, and magnified throughout the world; and that all things, which in any part may seem to hinder the glory of God’s most glorious name, or let the salvation of men’s souls, although there be never so great shine and outward appearance of holiness, may utterly be extirped and rooted out of the earth, that the Lord our God may be known among all the nations of the world, to be the alone true and everlasting God, the alone Saviour of them that trust in him, and the plentiful fountain of all goodness, in adversity to be called on, in prosperity to be thanked and praised, and at all times to be most humbly revered, worshipped, and honoured: again, that such as profess his holy name may so frame their lives according to his blessed word, that God may be glorified, even among the very heathen, through their godly conversation and honest life, and his most glorious name praised among all the nations of the world. *Son.* So is it.

*Father.* Let me now hear the second petition. *Son.* This is it:

“Thy kingdom come.”

The second petition.

*Father.* What do we require of God in this second petition? *Son.* It is not unknown how great, how mighty, and of what puissance the kingdom of Satan is, which, as St Peter saith, “goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour;” which Satan, in the holy scriptures, is termed the “prince and god of this world,” “the ruler of darkness,” “the strong armed man,” and “the accuser of the brethren,” and such one indeed as feared not, even in the state of their innocency and sinless life, to assault our grand parents, Adam and Heva, and with his sugared eloquence to allure them from the obedience of God’s most blessed word unto the wicked transgression of his holy commandment and perfect will; not only that, but he also feared not (such is his impudency and unshamefacedness) to attempt the Lord Jesus, that innocent Lamb of God, “in whom was never sin, and in whose mouth no guile at any time was found,” that he should despair of his heavenly Father’s good will toward him, and obey to his subtle persuasions and wicked temptations. There is no ravening wolf that so earnestly seeketh greedily to devour his prey, as this enemy of mankind: that old serpent hunteth and studieth every moment of an hour, how he may destroy and bring to everlasting damnation mortal men, that they may fall from the favour of God, and “have their portion with him in that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.” As this god of the world, I mean Satan, is a great king

Of Satan.  
What we desire in the second petition.  
1 Pet. v.  
John xiv.  
2 Cor. iv.  
Eph. vi.  
Luke xi.  
Rev. xii.  
Gen. iii.

Matt. iv.  
Mark i.  
Luke iv.  
1 Pet. i.  
1 Pet. ii.  
Isai. liii.  
1 John iii.  
2 Cor. v.  
Rev. xii.  
1 Pet. v.  
Eph. vi.

Isai. lxvi.  
Rev. xxi.

Eph. ii. and mighty prince, and strongly ruleth in the children of unbelief and in the vessels of wrath, so is his kingdom ample and large; which kingdom this prince of darkness ceaseth not daily more and more to amplify, to enlarge, and to make very populous, that he might be the chief ruler of this world, and his kingdom the alone monarchy on the earth.

Of the world. And as Satan and his kingdom is mighty, large, and great, so likewise is the world a mighty prince, and ruleth strongly and stoutly in very many; whose kingdom also is most ample and populous, stuffed in every part with infinite numbers of people, compassed about with all wickedness. The guard of this prince is so great, that in this earth no potentate, no ruler, no governor is able to compare with it. For from the highest to the lowest, from the magistrate to the subject, from the priest to prophet, from the bishop to the deacon, all in a manner are worldlings, and under the kingdom of this mighty prince, the world. The world at this present hath so blinded the eyes of all men, that without any consideration they follow the world and the vanities thereof, being snarled with them, even as the fish is with the line and hook. They from the least to the greatest are miserable mammonists and wretched money-slaves, serving their goods, and not their goods them, which is the greatest slavery and the most detestable bondage that can be found on the earth. And in serving such a vile idol, they are utterly fallen away from the faithful service which they owe unto the one and alone true God, whom above all things they ought to fear, reverence, serve, honour, worship, praise, magnify, and obey, yea, and that with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, and with all the powers both of their soul and body, that the Lord our God may reign king, ruler, and governor alone, and that his kingdom may be enlarged "from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same;" again, that his holy name may be known and praised among all the nations of the world.

The world so ruleth in the hearts almost of all men, that they utterly forget themselves to be "strangers and pilgrims" in this life; neither do they consider, that they "brought nothing into this world, neither shall they carry any thing out of it;" so far is it off, that at any time they call to remembrance these sayings of the holy scripture: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is made the enemy of God." Again: "See that ye love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world (as the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) is not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that fulfilleth the will of God abideth for ever." Also in another place: "We know that we are of God, and the world is altogether set on wickedness." Item: "The time is short: it remaineth that they which buy be as though they possessed not, and they that use this world be as though they used it not." Once again: "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have already: for he hath said, I will not fail thee, neither forsake thee; so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man may do unto me." "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

Of the flesh. Again, what shall I speak of the flesh? Is her kingdom small and little? Ruleth she in few, or rather in many? This flesh also seeketh and deviseth all means possible to enlarge her kingdom and empire, and studieth with all her wits how she may allure and entice the people of this world from the works of God's Spirit unto her filthy lusts and fleshly pleasures, as the apostle saith: "Walk in the Spirit, and fulfil not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit contrary to the flesh. These are contrary one to the other." "They that are carnal are carnally minded: but they that are spiritual are ghostly minded. To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: because the fleshly mind is enemy against God; for it is not obedient to the law of God, neither can be; so that they which are in the flesh cannot please God." The kingdom of this flesh, as it hath been in all ages, so likewise now in these our days, wherein

men are rather “lovers of pleasure than of God,” is very large and ample, and comprehendeth infinite numbers of people, which willingly offer themselves subjects, servants, and slaves to this vile strumpet, the flesh; and the flesh again as a most mighty empress ruleth in them, and carrieth them as bond-slaves whither she willeth, and enforceth them as miserable captives to follow her lust and pleasure in all points; so that the flesh also is a mighty ruler and governor of the people of this world, and her kingdom is wide, large, and populous. 2 Tim. iii.

Now at the last cometh also antichrist and his kingdom; which antichrist with his false belief, superstition, hypocrisy, false worshipping of God, men's traditions, wicked counsels, devilish constitutions, ungodly doctrines, &c., stoutly and strongly ruleth in the hearts of the children of unbelief, deceiving them through the superstitious visor of feigned holiness, and throwing them into everlasting damnation; forasmuch as they reject and cast away, despise and condemn the true faith, religion, and doctrine of our Saviour Christ, and embrace, maintain, and defend the trifling traditions of this most abominable antichrist, that adversary of God and of all godliness. The kingdom also of this antichrist is very ample, large, mighty, and strong, and containeth in it infinite multitudes of people, even so many as are fallen away from the faith and doctrine of Christ, and are not led with the Spirit of God. “For they only are the sons and children of God, which are led with the Spirit of God.” 2 Thess. ii. Rom. viii.

All these princes and rulers, I mean the devil, the world, the flesh, and antichrist, labour with all main daily and continually to plant their kingdoms and to rule in the hearts of men, that, God and his holy Spirit through unbelief and wickedness of life chased out of their minds, they only may reign and possess them as their slaves, impelling and moving them unto what lewdness they lust. And this their labour they do not only employ about the wicked (whom they have already in their nets), but also, yea, much more, about us, which are the children of light, which profess godliness, and in our baptism have utterly forsaken and given over the devil, the world, and the flesh, with all their vain pomps, beastly pleasures, and wicked works, and have wholly renounced and cast away antichrist with all his antichristian traditions, and dedicated ourselves to God, to God's doctrine, and to his holy religion. Who seeth not now then, how necessary this second petition is, wherein we pray that the kingdom of our heavenly Father may come and rule in us? 50

*Father.* What meanest thou? For I do not perfectly understand thee. *Son.* Forasmuch as we are environed, besieged, compassed, and set round about with so many adversaries, as we have tofore heard, which studiously and diligently labour to possess our hearts, to rule in us, and to make us their subjects, servants, bondmen, captives, and slaves in this present world, and after this life to make us firebrands of hell and inheritors of everlasting damnation; our Lord and Master Christ Jesus—the alone teacher of truth, and the alone wisdom also of the Father, tendering our health and salvation of body and soul both in this world and in the world to come, knowing also how unable we be of ourselves to resist and withstand so great multitudes of adversaries, which, being strong and valiant, strongly and valiantly seek our destruction—commandeth us to flee unto our heavenly Father with faithful and earnest prayer, and to crave of him succour and aid against so fierce and cruel enemies, lest we fall into their hands, and so become their preys, and at the last be swallowed up of hell-mouth, and made heirs of everlasting damnation.

And in this behalf we first of all desire of our heavenly Father, that the kingdom of the devil, that sworn enemy of mankind, “that old serpent,” that wily fox, that ravening wolf, which at all hours seeketh our destruction, may utterly be subdued, destroyed, and brought to nought, with all his wicked temptations and poisonous persuasions, that we never give place unto them, nor yet be overcome of them, but with strong faith manfully resist them, that Satan may not rule in us, nor we become his kingdom. We also desire of our heavenly Father, that the kingdom of the wicked world with all his vain pleasures, lusts, pomps, and vanities, may be dispersed and brought unto confusion, that we, which profess godliness, be by no means snarled or seduced by them; but that we, considering how vain, transitory, flitting, and soon passing away they be, may embrace those pleasures which Gen. iii.  
Rev. xii.  
1 Pet. v.

are immortal, those goods which are constant, those riches which never fail, and by this means bid adieu both to the world and to his kingdom, setting always before our remembrance, that we are selected and "chosen aside from the world;" yea, that by our profession we are dead to the world, and our "life is hid with Christ in God."

Again, we desire of our heavenly Father, that the kingdom of the wicked flesh, with all her carnal concupiscences and filthy lusts, which fight against the soul, may be so extirped and plucked up by the roots, that we, being made free from all the uncleannesses thereof, may no more be seduced with the venomous and poisonous enticements of this most venomous and poisonous mermaid, the flesh, nor by any means hereafter consent to her beast-like desires and filthy lusts; but so live, being clad with this weak and mortal flesh, that the lusts thereof may not rule in us, but that we rather may subdue them, and "put on the new man, which is shapen and made in righteousness, holiness, and truth."

Item, we desire of our heavenly Father, that antichrist with his kingdom, which hath seduced, and daily doth seduce, an infinite number of miserable and poor wretched souls through his glistering and painted visor of counterfeit, false, and feigned holiness, may shortly be slain and brought unto confusion "with the breath of the Lord's mouth, and utterly be abolished with the brightness of his coming;" that "that sinful man, the son of perdition, which is an adversary, and is exalted above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," may no longer "sit in the temple of God, boasting himself to be God," nor be "drunken" any more "with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesu," nor yet sell the souls of men, nor utter any more of his false and counterfeit merchandise to the simple ones; that the kingdom may be his alone, which is "King of kings and Lord of lords."

And as we pray unto our heavenly Father, that we, through his mighty power, may be delivered from these our aforesaid enemies and from their tyranny (so that they rule not us, but we rather rule and subdue them); even so in like manner do we desire of him, that he will vouchsafe to make us his kingdom, and to rule in us by his mighty power, that we may be his inheritance, and he our owner; he our Lord, and we his people; he our Father, and we his children.

And forasmuch as we of ourselves are feeble and weak, of no force and strength, ready at all times to be cast down even of the least of our enemies, if we were not underpropped and stayed up by the strong hand of God; we in this petition crave of our heavenly Father, that he will pour out his holy Spirit into our hearts, which may rule and govern us, and direct us in all our ways, and so at all times work and shew his mighty power in us, that we may be and continue the obedient people of God, "serving him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life." For "the kingdom of God," as St Paul saith, "is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" and God hath delivered us "from the power of our enemies, that we should serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life." Christ, that most high and everlasting bishop, "through the everlasting Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, that he might purge our conscience from dead works for to serve the living God." For "God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

Again, forasmuch as we of ourselves, of our own nature and natural strengths, although otherwise never so prudent and worldly-wise, are not able to perceive and understand those things which belong unto the Spirit of God and unto our salvation, but are miserable, poor, and blind, and without any true knowledge of God; we desire our heavenly Father, that, all our ignorance and blindness wiped away, and all the dark dreams and dreaming darkness of antichrist utterly dispelled, removed, and put aside, the glorious light of Christ's gospel, which is "the mighty power of God to save so many as believe," which is the food of the soul, which is the undefiled word of the Lord, which "turneth souls," which "is pure and giveth wisdom unto the simple," which "rejoiceth the hearts," which "giveth light unto the eyes," which is an "armour," or weapon, "not carnal, but mighty in God to cast down strongholds, and to overthrow counsels, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity all imagination to the obedience of Christ," which is "the sword of the Spirit," &c., may shine among us, lighten our

John xv.  
Col. iii.

Eph. iv.  
Col. iii.

Isai. xi.  
Dan. vii.  
2 Thess. ii.

Rev. xvii.  
Rev. xviii.  
Rev. xix.

Luke i.  
Rom. xiv.

Heb. ix.

1 Thess. iv.

Matt. xi.  
1 Cor. ii.

Rom. i.  
Matt. iv.  
Psal. xix.

2 Cor. vi.

Eph. vi.

dark hearts, illumine our senses, polish our wits, fine our understanding, and bring us unto the true knowledge, faith, and doctrine of him (I mean God the Father) which "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the king-<sup>Col. i.</sup>dom of his dear Son, by whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." For where this gospel of Christ is truly preached, and through the working of the Holy Ghost received into the hearts of the hearers, there is faith, joy, peace, quietness of conscience, new godly affects, spiritual motions, heavenly desires, correction of manners, newness of life, continual study of innocency, with all the fruits of the Holy Ghost, as St Paul saith: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new <sup>2 Cor. v.</sup>creature." Again: "They that appertain unto Christ have crucified the flesh with <sup>Gal. v.</sup>the affects and lusts thereof."

Contrariwise, where the gospel of Christ is not preached nor received, there remaineth unbelief, grief of mind, trouble of heart, disquietness of conscience, old corrupt affects, carnal motions, worldly desires, continuance in sin, wickedness of life, disposition unto all evil, with all the works of the flesh, as Salomon saith: "When the preaching of <sup>Prov. xxix.</sup>God's word faileth, the people perish." Again: "Where the knowledge of God's word <sup>Prov. xix.</sup>is not, there is no goodness for the soul." Item: "Vain are all they which have no <sup>Wisd. xiii.</sup>knowledge of God."

Therefore in this petition also we ask of our heavenly Father, that his holy gospel may reign among us, all man's doctrines utterly set apart, and that it may bring forth such fruits in us, that we may be the kingdom of God, his holy Spirit continually ruling and governing us, and "leading us into all truth." <sup>John xvi.</sup>

Moreover, forasmuch as there be yet divers nations and kingdoms which know not the true, and him the one and alone God, but walk after the vanities of their own mind, or else after the trifling traditions of men; we beseech our heavenly Father, that he will have mercy on all people, and "shew unto them also the light of his <sup>Psal. lxxvii.</sup>countenance, that all nations on the earth may know his ways, and his saving health <sup>Isai. lxi.</sup>throughout the world;" that, as we altogether have one Creator and Maker, so likewise <sup>Mal. i.</sup>we may have "one faith, one hope, one baptism," one doctrine, and one life everlasting, there worlds without end to magnify and praise our heavenly Father. For by this means shall it come to pass, that the kingdom of Satan, of the world, of the flesh, of sin, and of antichrist, shall greatly be diminished and soon brought to nought, and the glorious kingdom of God shall most triumphantly prosper, grow, increase, wax strong, and flourish; so that with one voice all nations of the earth shall praise the blessed name of the Lord our God, and be made his kingdom and possession, knowing him and his saving health even "from the least to the greatest, insomuch that it <sup>Jer. xxxi.</sup>shall not be needful one to say unto another, Know the Lord; for," when the <sup>Heb. viii.</sup>kingdom of God shall so be enlarged, "all shall know God, even from the highest to the lowest."

Finally, in this our petition we do not only ask and desire of our heavenly Father, that the kingdom of Satan, of the world, of the flesh, and of antichrist, may be destroyed and brought to nought, so that from henceforth we neither serve them, neither they rule in us: again, that God through his Holy Ghost and blessed word should only have dominion and power over us, yea, and rule in our hearts, so that, all sin and wickedness set apart, we shall be plentiful of all good works, and abound in all godliness and honesty: Item, that the kingdom of our heavenly Father may be so enlarged, that all nations of the world may know him to be the alone true God, and embrace his blessed gospel, and, so believing, become with us the people and servants of God; but also, that after this life we may come to that kingdom, where all true joy and immortal felicity is, which is the end of our faith, and the consummation and perfect fulfilling of our hope, I mean the glorious palace of that most high God, where we shall see the blessed Trinity, not "in a dark speech or in a glass," or with <sup>1 Cor. xiii.</sup>the eyes of our faith, as we do now, but we shall see him "face to face, and know him, as we are known," according to this saying of St John: "Dearly beloved, now <sup>1 John iii.</sup>are we the sons of God, and yet it doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that, when it shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is also pure."

1 Cor. xiii. Hereto belongeth the saying of St Paul: "Now we see in a glass, even in a dark speaking; but then shall we see face to face. Now I know imperfectly, but then shall I know even as I am known."

*Father.* God give us grace so to behave ourselves in this world, that after this mortal and transitory life we may come unto his heavenly kingdom, and enjoy the immortal and everlasting life! *Son.* Amen.

*Father.* Rehearse the third petition contained in the Lord's prayer.

The third petition.

*Son.* "Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in heaven."

What we desire in the third petition. Gen. vi. viii. Phil. ii.

*Father.* What is that? *Son.* Forasmuch as our will is alway evil, or at the least prone unto evil, even from our cradles upward, fleshly, and disobedient to the most holy and perfect will of God, seeking her own, and not that which is Christ's, coveting evermore worldly and not godly things, wholly bent unto things which lead not unto salvation but unto damnation; in this third petition we desire our heavenly Father, that he will mortify this our carnal, worldly, and devilish will, and make it obedient and conformable to his most godly and blessed will, that we in nothing resist his holy pleasure, but shew ourselves ready to follow and to accomplish unto the uttermost of our power, without any resistance, that which in the holy scripture we have learned unfeignedly to be his good and fatherly will.

The will of man is naturally bent unto evil.

*Father.* Are not we able of ourselves, without craving this at the hand of God, to frame our will to the will of God, and to perform whatsoever the good pleasure of God is? *Son.* Our will of itself is a captive, bond, and thrall will, subject unto sin, estranged from all goodness, and altogether unapt either to consent unto the will of God or to perform the same; so little, or rather none, are the strengths of our will, whose liberty or freedom was not only grievously wounded, but in a manner wholly lost and perished in the fall of Adam, insomuch that the best and most perfectest among the children of men may right well say with St Paul: "The law," that is to say, the will of God, "is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Again: "The fleshly mind is enemy against God; for it is not obedient to the law of God, neither can it be; so that they which are in the flesh cannot please God." For "that which is born of flesh is flesh;" and "a natural man perceiveth not the things that belong to the Spirit of God: for they are but foolishness unto him; neither can he perceive them, because they are spiritually examined." "We be not able of ourselves to think any (good) thing, as of ourselves; but if we be able unto any (good) thing, the same cometh of God." For "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." "Without me," saith Christ, "ye can do nothing." "It is God that worketh in us both the will and the deed, even of good will." Who seeth not now therefore, what great need we have to cry unto God, that it may please him to reform our will, which is altogether naught and given to wickedness, and to make it obedient and conformable to his will, which is most holy, just, and perfect? This considered the Lord Jesu, which is the wisdom of his Father, when he taught us in this most perfect prayer to say: "Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in heaven." This thing also was not unknown to the psalmograph, when he prayed on this manner: "Teach me, O Lord, to do thy will; for thou art my God."

Rom. vii.

Rom. viii.

John iii.

1 Cor. ii.

2 Cor. iii.

James i.

John xv.

Phil. ii.

Matt. vi.

Psal. cxliii.

Isai. xlvi.

Jer. xxxii.

Isai. xiv.

Psal. xxxiii.

*Father.* But what meaneth this that we are taught to pray, that God's will may be fulfilled here "in earth, as it is in heaven"? Is not God able to bring to pass whatsoever his good pleasure is here in earth among the children of men, as well as he is able to do it in heaven among the holy angels and blessed saints? *Son.* God is almighty, and able to perform abundantly whatsoever he determineth; neither is any thing impossible unto him; so that without our help or without our prayer he can right well bring to pass whatsoever his good will and pleasure shall be, as he himself saith by the prophet: "My device standeth stedfastly established, and I fulfil all my pleasure." Again: "Behold, I am the Lord God of all flesh: is there any thing then too hard for me?" The prophet Esay, also saith: "If the Lord of hosts determine a thing, who is able to disannul it? And if he stretch forth his hand, who may hold it in again?" Likewise saith the psalmograph: "He spake, and it was done: he commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought,

and maketh the devices of the people to be of none effect: but the counsel of the Lord shall endure for ever, and the thoughts of his heart from generation to generation." Again he saith: "Our God is in heaven: he hath done whatsoever pleased him." Psal. cxv.

We pray not, therefore, that God's will may be done here in earth "as it is in heaven," unto this end, as though it had need of our prayer, that it may have good success, which in and of itself is almighty; but we pray, that God's good will, which he hath revealed and shewed unto us in his holy word, may effectually be done in us through the working of the Holy Ghost, and obediently fulfilled by us, both privately and openly, both in word and in deed, unto the glory of his holy name; which otherwise can never be brought to pass of us nor in us, so great is our infirmity, so corrupt is our nature, so malicious and disposed to all evil is our heart, so carnal, wicked, and ungodly is our own will, and so slender, yea, rather so none, are all the strengths of our free will, which, as the apostle saith, "of ourselves are not able to think a good thought." 2 Cor. iii.

*Father.* But what meaneth this, when we pray that the will of God may "be done in earth, as it is in heaven"? Why is mention made here of the fulfilling of God's will in heaven? *Son.* Our Saviour Christ, in teaching us so to pray, setteth before our eyes a goodly exemplar or pattern to follow. Who knoweth not that the glorious angels and blessed spirits in heaven do most obediently and readily accomplish and fulfil the holy will of God, and by no means resist his godly pleasure? as it is written: "O praise the Lord, ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength, ye that fulfil his commandment, and hearken unto the voice of his words." Psal. ciii. The Lord commanded his angel to plague the Israelites with pestilence; and he plagued them straightways, so that there died in three days seventy thousand men. And when the Lord bade him hold his hand, the angel striked no more, so that the plague ceased. The Lord's angel also at his commandment slew in one night an hundred fourscore and five thousand of the Assyrians. Raphael the angel, at the Lord's commandment, accompanied young Tobias in all his journey. Again, Gabriel the angel, at the commandment of God, came from heaven unto the virgin Mary, to declare unto her the good pleasure of God concerning his Son's incarnation, which through the power of the Holy Ghost should be brought to pass in her. Many other histories have we in the holy scripture, which do evidently declare how obediently and diligently the angels accomplish the will of God; so that not without a cause they are called of St Paul "ministering spirits, that are sent to minister for their sakes which shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. i. After the example of these holy angels and blessed spirits ought we here in earth with all diligence to endeavour ourselves to accomplish the good pleasure of God.

*Father.* Have we any examples in the holy scriptures, that men, living here in this world, have in this behalf followed the angels by practising and executing the will of God? *Son.* Many are found in the word of God; but let this one example of our Lord and Saviour Christ suffice for this present, of whom we read, that it was his meat and greatest desire to fulfil the will of his heavenly Father, insomuch that, to obey his blessed pleasure and determinate counsel, he was content to suffer "death, yea, even the death of the cross." He prayed unto his heavenly Father, that if it were possible, the cup of his passion and death might pass away from him; yet he added: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt, O Father." John iv. In all things he gladly obeyed the will of his Father, and performed the same, to give us an example, which of Christ are called Christians, that we also should labour to practise the like obedience to the will of God in our life and conversation, as St John saith: "He which saith that he dwelleth in Christ ought to walk even as he hath walked." Phil. ii. And the Lord Jesus himself saith: "I have given you an example, that even as I have done, so ye likewise should do." Matt. xxvi. Mark xiv. Luke xxii.

*Father.* Seeing we pray in this third petition, that we may have so fervent a desire to accomplish the will of God in all things here on earth, as the holy angels and blessed saints have in heaven; come off, tell me what the will of God is. *Son.* Although we have partly touched this matter before, when we entreated of the worthy John xiii. will of God is.

preparation unto prayer; yet, forasmuch as your pleasure is to ask me this question, I answer that the will of God is whatsoever in his holy word he commandeth us to do.

*Father.* What willeth he us to do? What commandeth he? *Son.* Forasmuch as by nature we are the "children of wrath," and bond unto everlasting damnation, God, tendering our health and salvation, hath commanded us to repent and to better our life, that by this means we might be received into favour.

*Father.* Where hath he expressed this his will? *Son.* In divers places of the holy scripture. By the prophet he saith: "I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner; but rather that he should turn and live." St Paul also saith: "God will all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." St John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, call us all unto repentance and unto the amendment of our life; whereof also we may learn, that the good will of God is, that although heretofore we have been never so great and grievous sinners, yet we should now repent, correct our manners, and amend our life.

Secondly, forasmuch as repentance and amendment of life are things unperfect concerning everlasting life, except faith be annexed, therefore the good will of God is not only that we should repent, but also believe, I mean, in our hearts to be perfectly persuaded that for Christ's sake, our alone Mediator, all our sins be forgiven us. Therefore Christ and his apostles taught not only repentance and amendment of life, but also faith. "Repent and believe the gospel," saith our Saviour Christ. God's good pleasure therefore is, not only that we should repent, but also believe, and so be saved, as Christ saith: "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting life." Again: "This is the work of God (which he requireth of you), that ye should believe on him whom he hath sent."

Thirdly, after we be engrafted in Christ through faith, God, willing us to shew ourselves no more to be the sons of Satan, or of the world, but the sons of God, and new-born children of the Holy Ghost, commandeth us from henceforth not to obey the lust of the flesh, but the desire of the Spirit; not to walk any more in our old sinful life, but to lead a new conversation, and to practise new manners, yea, and those godly, pure, and christian, as St Paul saith: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "They that pertain unto Christ have crucified the flesh with the affects and lusts thereof." Again: "Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should thereunto obey by the lusts of it: neither give ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but give over yourselves unto God, as they that of dead are alive." Also in another place: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from whoredom, and that every one know to possess his vessel with holiness and honour, &c. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." Likewise saith St Peter: "This is the will of God, that by well doing ye should stop the mouth of foolish and ignorant men; as free, and yet not having the freedom as a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."

Fourthly and finally, this also is the good will and pleasure of God, that we shall not only repent, believe, and lead a new life, garnished with all good works; but also that we both obediently, patiently, and thankfully bear and suffer whatsoever cross, trouble, sickness, persecution, or any other kind of adversity God layeth upon us, being thoroughly persuaded, that this visitation of God cometh not from an angry and displeasent heart, but rather from a fatherly affection and singular good will toward us, yea, and that not for our destruction and damnation, but rather for our edification and salvation, as it is written: "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth, him he chasteneth, and yet delighteth in him, even as the father in his own son." God himself saith: "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." "If ye endure chastening," saith St Paul, "God offereth himself unto you as unto sons. What son is he, whom the father chasteneth not? If ye be not under correction, whereof all are partakers, then ye are bastards, and not sons," &c. "No manner chastising for the present time seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it bringeth

Eph. ii.  
Psal. li.  
Repentance.

Jer.  
[Ezek.  
xxxiii.]  
1 Tim. ii.  
Matt. iii. iv.  
Mark i.  
Luke iii.  
Acts ii.  
Rev. ii.

Faith.

1 Tim. ii.

Mark i.

John vi.

A new life.

2 Cor. v.

Gal. v.

Rom. vi.

1 Thess. iv.

1 Pet. ii.

Cross.

Prov. iii.

Rev. iii.

Heb. xii.




the quiet fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." "Blessed is the man," saith St James, "that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Hereto belongeth the saying of the psalmograph: "It is highly for my profit that thou hast chastened me, that I may learn thine ordinances." For "those which God knew afore, he also ordained afore, that they should be like fashioned unto the shape of his Son." "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord." Our elder brother Christ first suffered, and afterward entered into glory. "By many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of God." "All that will live godly in Christ Jesu shall suffer persecution." "If we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with Christ: if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with Christ." And our Saviour Christ himself saith: "Whosoever will follow me, let him forsake himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." Forasmuch therefore as it is God's good pleasure to keep his children under the cross, whom he hath appointed to be inheritors of his everlasting glory, it shall become as many as wish to be glorified with Christ, to bear also the cross with Christ, and to shew themselves in all kind of adversity and trouble conformable to the will of God, and both obediently, patiently, gladly, and thankfully to bear whatsoever God layeth upon their shoulders, even unto the very death.

*Father.* Have we any examples in the holy scripture, which declare that certain in times past have been so obedient to the will of God in this behalf, that they have patiently, and without any murmuring or grudging (against God), borne and suffered whatsoever kind of adversity hath been cast upon them? *Son.* You heard before the example of the Lord Jesu. But besides this we have divers other. To whom is it unknown, with how many great and grievous kinds of adversity that mirror of perfect patience, I mean Job, was afflicted? Notwithstanding, how conformable he shewed himself to the will of God, how patiently he suffered that heavy cross, these his words do most manifestly declare: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I turn thither again. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Even as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it come to pass. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Again: "Shall we receive prosperity at the hand of God, and not receive adversity?" "In all these things," saith the historiograph, "Job did not offend, nor murmured foolishly against God." To whom also is the history of old Tobias unknown? whom God deprived of his sight, that he might try his patience and conformity to his godly will. "He grudged not," saith the scripture, "against God, because the plague of blindness had chanced unto him, but remaineth still steadfast in the fear of God, and praising God all the days of his life." What shall I speak of king David, which, being grievously and mortally pursued of his ungodly and disobedient son Absolon, committed himself wholly unto the hands of God, ready to receive whatsoever the good pleasure of God should be, whether it were restitution unto his kingdom, or an utter loss of the same?

I pass over Moses and the prophets, Paul and the apostles, which patiently, joyfully, and thankfully bare whatsoever cross God laid upon their back, never grudging against the will of God. The history of Lazarus is more known than it needeth here to be recited, which, suffering quietly the great pains of many mortal diseases, besides the extreme famine, with whose dart he was most miserably pierced, and never grudging against the good will of God, was at the last of the glorious angels carried up into the bosom of Abraham. I pass over the history of the leper, which although he desired to be cleansed from his leprosy, yet he referred the matter to Christ, to do with him whatsoever his good pleasure should be, either to be made clean, or to remain still in his leprosy. Thus all good men from time to time in every age have patiently and thankfully borne the cross that God hath laid upon them, and submitted their will to the good will of God, being fully persuaded that "all things work for the best unto them that love God," seeing that nothing chanceth to the godly without the good will and the determinate counsel and singular providence of God.

*Father.* Doth God send such afflictions and troubles as chance unto men in this

 world? *Son.* To the godly, and to such as fear God, nothing cometh by fortune or by chance, but by the determination and will of God, be it never so grievous and troublous cross.

Isai. xlv. God saith by the prophet: "I am the Lord, and there is else none. It is I that created light and darkness. I make peace and trouble: yea, even I the Lord do all these things." Jeremy also saith: "What is he that saith, there should something be done without the Lord's commandment? Out of the mouth of the Most Highest goeth not evil and good?" By evil he meaneth adversity; by good he understandeth prosperity. Likewise saith our Saviour Christ: "Are not two little sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not light on the ground without your Father;" that is to say, without the consent and good will, without the counsel and determination of your Father. "The Lord keepeth all the bones of the righteous, so that not one of them shall be broken." For he giveth his angels charge of them to keep them in all their ways, which shall pitch their tents round about the godly, and shall deliver them. By the providence of God all things are governed, and at his appointment all things chance to the godly; neither can any thing happen to such as fear God without both the determination and permission of God. Esau burneth with an immortal hatred against his brother Jacob, purposing in his heart to kill him: but God so mollified his heart, that when he met with his brother Jacob, he lovingly embraced him, friendly kissed him, and for very joy wept upon him. Saul persecuted David cruelly, purposing to kill him; but his labour was in vain. Jesabel threatened and sware, that she would slay the prophet Helias; but the Lord preserved him. Satan could do nothing to Job, till God licensed him; neither exercised he his cruelty any further against Job than he was appointed of God. Christ said unto Pilate: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." The devils had no power to enter into the swine, till Christ gave them leave. "If thou cast us out of this man," said they, "suffer us to enter into the herd of swine." Christ answered, "Go ye;" and they went.

Seeing then that nothing chanceth to the godly without the singular providence and determinate counsel of the Lord our God; again, whatsoever chanceth unto them is for the best, and for their great commodity and profit; it is our duty in prosperity not to wax proud against God, nor in adversity to murmur or grudge against him; but like obedient children to surrender and give up unto him ourselves, our wills, our affections, our lusts, and whatsoever we have besides, humbly desiring him, that not our own will, nor the will of Satan, or of the world, but his most godly and blessed will may be done in us; yea, and that with no less fervent desire and greedy affection than it is accomplished and fulfilled of the glorious angels and blessed spirits in the kingdom of heaven; so that from henceforth even unto our life's end there may no motion of lust be felt in us, but such only as shall wholly consent with his will; nor that we will any thing of ourself, but as the Holy Ghost will in us, by whose secret instruction we may learn to love and to do those things that be pleasant to him, and to hate and abhor whatsoever displeaseth him.

*Father.* God for his mercy's sake mought vouchsafe to bring to pass this thing in us, unto the glory of his holy name! *Son.* Amen.

*Father.* Let me now, my son, hear the fourth petition.

*Son.* "Give us this day our daily bread."

The fourth petition.

*Father.* To what end do we direct this prayer unto God? *Son.* You heard afore, that the Lord's prayer containeth in it seven several petitions, whereof the three first petitions concern the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom; the other four, which follow in order, entreat of our necessities, and appertain unto our commodity and profit; of the which this is the first: "Give us this day our daily bread." After that we have most humbly desired of our heavenly Father, that his holy name may be sanctified in us; that the glorious kingdom of his holy Spirit and gospel may come unto us; and that his most blessed will may be done and fulfilled of us here in earth, with no less desire than it is done and accomplished of the holy angels in heaven; forasmuch as we cannot live in this world to enjoy these most precious and

inestimable benefits, for the which we have tofore prayed, without bodily food (for man being made of two parts must have a double nourishment; he is made of soul, whose food is the word of God; he is also made of body, which must needs be fed with corporal sustenance); therefore, as “in him we live, move, and have our being,” so likewise in this petition do we crave of him all things necessary for the maintenance of this our poor and needy life, as that alone fountain of all goodness, “from whom descendeth every good and perfect gift;” and as that alone most bounteous Lord, which “giveth food to all flesh, and filleth every living creature with his blessing.” And of this order of praying we learn a good and profitable lesson, even this, that we should first of all pray unto our heavenly Father for spiritual and heavenly things, and afterward for such things as are necessary for the preservation of the body, as our Saviour Christ saith: “Seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof; and all these things shall be cast unto you.” “For man shall not live with bread alone, but with every word that cometh out of the mouth of God.”

Deut. viii.  
Matt. iv.  
Luke iv.  
Acts xvii.

James i.

Psal. cxlv.

A good lesson.

Matt. vi.

Matt. iv.  
Deut. viii.

*Father.* But come off, let us examine every word of this petition in order.  
*Son.* Agreed.

*Father.* Wherefore sayest thou unto God, “give”? Can we not have whereof to live by our own policy, wit, industry, and labour, except we ask it of God?

Give.

*Son.* No, verily. Except the Lord blessed our labours, pains, and travails, all that ever we do is in vain, as the psalmograph saith: “Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” “The blessing of the Lord maketh men rich: as for careful travail, it doth nothing thereto.” And therefore are we taught of our Saviour Christ to crave daily food of our heavenly Father. For except he give it us, our travail is vain and but lost, as the psalmograph saith: “All creatures wait upon thee, O Lord, that thou mayest give them meat in due season. When thou givest it them, they gather it; and when thou openest thy hand, they are filled with plenteousness. But when thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; and when thou takest away their breath, they die, and are turned again to their dust.” “It is the Lord that giveth meat to the hungry.” “They that fear the Lord shall have no scarceness: they which seek the Lord shall want no good thing.” “The eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him, and upon them that trust in his mercy; that he may deliver their lives from death, and nourish them in the time of hunger.” “In this world we lead a poor life; notwithstanding we shall have plenty of all good things, if we fear the Lord, depart from all sin, and do good.” For good and evil, life and death, poverty and riches are of God, “in whose sight it is an easy thing quickly to enrich a poor man.”

Psal. cxxvii.

Prov. x.

Matt. vi.

Psal. civ.  
Psal. cxlv.

Psal. cxlvi.

Psal. xxxiv.

Psal. xxxiii.

Tob. iv.

Eccles. xi.

Whosoever trusteth in God and laboureth according to his vocation or calling, ever crying unto God for good success in his labours, he may be well assured never to want, as David saith: “The lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they which seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.” Again: “I have been young, and now am old; and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread on the earth. He is merciful all his life-time, and lendeth, and yet hath his children after him God’s plenty and enough.” Let us therefore “cast all our care upon the Lord; for he careth for us.” “Lay thy care upon the Lord,” saith David, “and he shall nourish thee.”

Psal. xxxiv.

Psal. xxxvii.

1 Pet. v.

Psal. lv.

*Father.* It is then God alone which giveth us all good things, when we call upon him. *Son.* Yea, verily. This considered Jacob right well, when he said on this manner: “If God will be with me, and will keep me in this journey which I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothes to put on, so that I come again unto my father’s house in safety, then shall the Lord be my God.” Neither was this thing unknown to Salomon, when he thus prayed: “Two things have I required of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt not deny me before I die. Remove from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches: only grant me a necessary living; lest if I be too full, I deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? and lest I, being constrained through poverty, fall unto stealing, and take the name of my God in vain.”

Gen. xxviii.

Prov. xxx.

*Father.* But wherefore in this petition do I rather say, praying by myself alone, us.

“give us,” than “give me”? *Son.* This prayer, which the Lord Christ both taught and commanded us to say, is a common and general prayer, serving for the use of the whole church or congregation of God, in the which we pray one for another, the prince for the subject, and the subject for the prince; the lord for the servant, the servant for the lord; the rich for the poor, and the poor for the rich, &c. and not every man for himself only; yea, and that both in spiritual and corporal things. Therefore in the beginning of this prayer, we say not, “My Father which art in heaven,” but “Our Father which art in heaven.” So likewise in this petition we say not, “give me this day my daily bread,” but “give us this day our daily bread;” wishing not only from our heavenly Father good things every man to himself privately and only, but generally and universally to all men indifferently; declaring hereby, that as we be members all of one body, and children of one heavenly Father, so are we careful one for another, gentle and loving one to another, and pray generally one for another, wishing indifferently all good things to all men without exception, and without any respect had to private profit and singular commodity.

And this is it that St Paul saith: “Be of like affection one toward another.” Again: “If there be any consolation in Christ, if there be any comfort of love, if there be any fellowship of the Spirit, if there be any compassion and mercy, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having one love, being of one accord, and of one mind; that nothing be done through strife, or of vain glory; but in meekness of mind let every man esteem another better than himself. Look not ye every man on his own things, but every man on the things that are other men’s. Let the same mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesu,” &c. Also in another place: “Members (all Christians are members one of another’s body) should indifferently care one for another. And if one member suffer, all suffer with him: if one member be had in honour, all members be glad also. Ye are the body of Christ, and members one of another.” Of this christian and brotherly affection toward the congregation of Christ was blessed St Paul, as these his words plainly declare: “I am cumbered daily, and do care for all the congregations. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?”

*Father.* It is then the duty of so many as profess Christ, one to be careful for another; one to pray and provide for another, according to this commandment of God: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” *Son.* Yea, verily. For “love is gentle and courteous,” and “seeketh not her own.”

*Father.* They then which are led with no careful and friendly affection toward other, neither have any regard whether their neighbour sink or swim, but only are studious of themselves and of their own gain, say not this prayer aright. *Son.* They do nothing else than mock God, and their prayer is to themselves sin and damnation; so far is it off, that it please God, or obtain any thing at the hand of God, which requireth a loving and charitable heart in all them that pray.

*Father.* But tell me, my son, is it not lawful for a christian man to pray for himself only, and for his own necessities unto God? *Son.* Yes, verily, so that the affection of neighbourly love be not quenched in us. For whether we respect ghostly or bodily things, we find sufficient examples in the holy scripture, which plainly shew that divers men have lamented their private and singular state unto God, craving at his hand aid and succour against their own miseries, and have obtained their requests. Jacob and Salomon, as we heard, desired of God corporal sustenance. David, Manasses, Mary Magdalene, Peter, the thief, the publican, &c., craved of God remission of their sins; and every one of these severally obtained their requests at the hand of God. It is therefore lawful for every man to lament his private cause unto God, as his necessity shall require.

*Father.* Why do we use this word in our petition, “this day”? “Give us this day our daily bread.” *Son.* Forasmuch as in this world we are “strangers and pilgrims,” as our forefathers were before us, and “have here none abiding city, but seek one to come;” forasmuch also as nothing is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the hour of death, to the which death our life at all hours, yea, at every moment of an hour is subject and ready to give place; our Saviour Christ,

Matt. vi.  
Luke xi.

Rom. xii.  
Phil. ii.

1 Cor. xii.

2 Cor. xi.

Lev. xix.  
1 Cor. xiii.

Every man  
may lawfully  
pray to God  
for his own  
necessities.

Gen. xxviii.  
Prov. xxx.  
Psal. li.  
2 Chron.  
xxxiii.  
Luke vii.  
Matt. xxvi.  
Luke xxiii.  
Luke xviii.

This day.

Psal. xxxix.  
2 Esdr. xvi.  
1 Pet. ii.  
Heb. xiii.  
James iv.  
Job vii.

willing to give us an occasion not to forget, but to have those things continually in our remembrance, teacheth us to ask of our heavenly Father food and sustenance of the body, not for many days, months, or years to come, being uncertain whether we shall live so long or not, but for that one present day wherein we live; that we may learn not to be careful after the manner of the worldlings, in making provision aforehand for this uncertain life, but to be content with the meat of the present time, so that, leaving to the providence of God, we care not for the morrow, seeing that "the morrow-day shall care for itself;" and again, "sufficient unto the day is the travail thereof." For what is our life, that we should make provision for it so many days, months, or years aforehand? Verily, this "our life," as St James saith, "is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." "A man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery. He cometh up and is cut down like a flower. He flieth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one state." His "days are more swift than a runner: they pass away as the ships that be good under sail, and as the eagle that flieth to the prey."

*Father.* Few consider this thing; but many, flattering themselves with hope of long life, make provision aforehand for a great number of years to come. *Son.* These may justly be resembled to that rich man of whom we read in the gospel of Luke, which, having great abundance of goods, and not knowing where to bestow them, said, "This will I do: I will destroy my barns and build greater, and therein will I gather all my goods that are grown unto me; and I will say unto my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up in store for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night will they fetch away thy soul again from thee. Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

*Father.* The like thing chanceth to many in these our days; but few regard it. *Son.* No marvel; for the world and the love of worldly things hath so blinded their eyes, that they cannot consider the things that belong unto their salvation. They forget themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on earth. They consider not how in this world they have none abiding city, and that therefore they ought to seek one to come. They call not unto remembrance that they brought nothing into this world, neither shall they carry any thing out of it; and that therefore having meat, drink, and clothe, they ought to be content; forasmuch as naked they came out of their mother's womb, and naked they shall depart again.

That we ought not to be so careful in making provision aforehand for long time to come, not only the shortness and uncertainty of our life teacheth us, but also the manner of feeding the Israelites which God used in the wilderness. For when God sent the people of Israel meat from heaven, which in the book of Moses is called "manna," or heavenly bread, and in the book of Psalms the "bread of angels," and in the book of Wisdom "angels' food and bread from heaven, very pleasant and of good taste"; he commanded them that they should gather no more of it every day than should serve and suffice them for that one present day, and so every day gather new, except on the sixth day; then was it lawful to gather by the commandment of God so much as should serve them that day and the day following, which was the sabbath of the Lord and a day of rest. If any presumed, of a greedy, careful, and covetous mind, to gather more than should suffice for that present day, it waxed full of worms and stank: whereby we may evidently learn, that as God will not forsake them that depend on his fatherly providence and put their trust in him, but daily give them all things necessary for their use, yea, and that abundantly; so likewise he utterly abhorreth, condemneth, and cursed the sorrowful carefulness of the flesh, which, mistrusting the providence and help of God, leaneth only unto her own wisdom, forecast, and provision. "Covetousness is the root of all evils, and it causeth many to wander from the faith, and to snarl themselves with many sorrows"; and yet the covetous man, "heaping treasure upon treasure, cannot tell for whom he gathereth his treasure."

*Father.* Truth it is; but let us go forward. Wherefore do we use this word "our," saying, "Give us this day our daily bread," and not rather "my" daily bread?

*Son.* For two causes. First, to declare our good will toward our neighbours, while we wish no less abundance of good things to them than to ourselves, and be led with no less careful affection toward them and their profit, than we are toward ourselves and our own commodity. For this mind ought to rule in all that profess God, have one heavenly Father, and be called by one name, I mean Christians, that they should be careful one for another, provide one for another, one seek another's commodity and profit, and in all points be the same to other that they are to themselves, according to this commandment of God: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour even as thyself." Again: "Whatsoever ye would that other men should do to you, do ye the same unto them." But of this thing we spake afore, when we entreated of this word "us."

Lev. xix.

Matt. vii.

No man  
ought to live  
idly.

*Father.* Thou sayest truth. Let me now hear the second cause. *Son.* The second cause why we say "our bread" is to put us in remembrance that we live not idly, nor of the labour of other men's hands, nor of the sweat of other men's brows, nor yet that we eat our bread and get our living unjustly, or by any unlawful means; but that we eat our own bread justly and truly, labouring every man some good thing according to his vocation and calling, avoiding idleness as an extreme pestilence, both of ourselves and of the commonweal wherein we dwell.

For God, shortly after the transgression of his holy commandment in paradise, gave this charge not only to Adam, but to all his posterity, that they by no means should live idly as unprofitable burdens of the earth, or as monsters only "born to consume the good fruits of the earth"; but that they should exercise some good art, some profitable occupation, whereby they may be able to eat their own bread, and not to be any burden without cause to other. "In the sweat of thy face (saith God) shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou be turned again into the ground; for out of it wast thou taken, inasmuch as thou art dust, and into dust shalt thou be turned again." "As the bird is born to fly, so is man to labour," saith Job. The psalmograph also saith: "Thou shalt eat the labours of thine own hands, and so shall it go well with thee." Likewise saith the blessed apostle St Paul: "We beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more, and that ye study to be quiet, and to meddle with your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may behave yourselves honestly toward them that be without, and that nothing be lacking unto you." Again: "We require you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesu Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that behaveth himself inordinately, and not after the institution which he received of us. For ye yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves inordinately among you; neither took we bread of any man for nought; but wrought with labour and sweat night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you: not but that we had authority; but to make us an ensample unto you to follow us. For when we were with you, this we warned you of, that if any would not work, the same should not eat. For we have heard say that there are some which walk among you inordinately, working not at all, but being busy-bodies. Them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that they work with quietness, and eat their own bread." And according to this commandment of God all the holy men both of the old and new testament behaved themselves, practising always some honest and godly exercise, that by this means they might both avoid idleness, and also eat their own bread, as we tofore heard in the declaration of the fourth commandment.

Gen. iii.

Job v.

Psal. cxviii.

1 Theess. iv.

2 Theess. iii.

Dicers.  
Carders.  
Usurers.

*Father.* What thinkest thou then of such as live by unlawful gaming, as dicing, carding, &c., or by usury? *Son.* I count them nothing else than thieves, robbers, and spoilers of the commonweal; forasmuch as they eat not their own bread, but by fraud and subtilty, by craft and oppression, they unlawfully get from other wherewith they maintain themselves. And of such speaketh St Paul on this manner: "Let him that stole steal no more; but let him rather labour with his hands the thing which is good, that he may give unto him that needeth."

Eph. iv.