

Monergism

*A WEEK OF  
SOLILOQUIES  
AND PRAYERS*

*WITH A PREPARATION FOR THE HOLY COMMUNION*

**Pierre Du Moulin**



Monergism

**A WEEK OF  
SOLILOQUIES  
AND PRAYERS**

*WITH A PREPARATION FOR THE HOLY COMMUNION*

**Pierre Du Moulin**

**A WEEK OF SOLILOQUIES AND  
PRAYERS**

**WITH A PREPARATION FOR THE HOLY  
COMMUNION**

BY PIERRE DU-MOULIN THE SON, SO D. MOULIN.

LONDON, PRINTED FOR H. MOSELEY AT THE PRINCE'S ARMS  
IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD. 1657.

## **Table of Contents**

TO THE Right Honourable ELIZABETH, Countess of CORK.

A Week of Soliloquies and Prayers

For Monday

For Tuesday

For Wednesday

For Thursday

For Friday

For Saturday

For the LORD'S DAY Morning

A PREPARATORY Meditation for all sorts of Prayers

PREPARATION for the Holy Communion

## **TO THE Right Honourable ELIZABETH, Countess of CORK.**

MADAM,

GOD has recently sent me a visitation, enough to humble me and confine me to my chamber, not to disable me (I thank Him for it) in any faculty of my body or mind. Therefore, I considered it my duty to employ this time for the service of God and your Ladyship, as I am honoured in your noble House to fulfill both these services at once. I have endeavoured that my withdrawal may compensate, in some measure, for my absence. While your Ladyship has shown such charity and tender care for my recovery, I have devoted some thought to a responsibility befitting my position: to offer assistance to your devotion, so that when you pray, you may consistently find God, whom we often miss when we approach Him in prayer.

Indeed, we ought to be diligent in discerning the reasons why our prayers are frequently unanswered or met with displeasure instead of comfort. As for the wicked and hard-hearted, who nonetheless dare to pray, the blind man healed by Christ said (John 9:31), "God heareth not sinners," and he was right, for he meant impenitent sinners.

But what have I to do with those outside? I now address your godly soul, endowed with the fear and love of God. Why, then, are the prayers of those who love and fear God often ineffective? The primary cause is the wandering of their thoughts during this sacred

duty. It is no surprise that God does not grant what we ask when we do not contemplate what we request. It would indeed be surprising if the Holiest of Holies, when spoken to inattentively, did not take offense, something we would not tolerate with our inferiors. Therefore, since wandering thoughts are the cause of this great evil, what prompts such wandering? The primary cause is the incapacity of our low, carnal nature to comprehend the infinite God, who, being invisible and immaterial, does not provide the mind with any image that corresponds to our senses and imagination. Without such an image, it is quite challenging for the intellect to focus its thoughts. Moreover, our natural deficiency is compounded by our failure to consider beforehand what we are about to do, who God is, and what we are.

Even the best things can be misused, and the practice of reciting memorized prayers, which is necessary for many people unable to compose their own prayers, can inadvertently encourage wandering thoughts. Words ingrained in memory through long custom tend to flow from our lips before they enter our minds. Such is human frailty, where the most common things are often the least heeded.

To help counter these inconveniences, I have provided prayer models for each day of the week, as well as two for the Lord's Day, all accompanied by a Soliloquy based on a Scripture passage. The variety of prayers is intended to help you maintain your focus, as are the accompanying Soliloquies.

Since we often come to prayer with our minds preoccupied with worldly concerns and associations, it would be wise to pause and meditate briefly, collecting our thoughts before we commence our prayers. As we frequently find ourselves unfit to speak to ourselves

about God, let alone to God, you will find here prepared Soliloquies to aid you.

For different days, I have selected different themes that encompass the entire Christian duty. I have arranged them in the order that, in my judgment, would best prepare a conscientious soul. However, I do not intend to restrict devotion to specific days; the Monday prayer is equally suitable for Tuesday.

In addition to these prayers, you may add others as your need or discretion suggests. I have kept them concise so that a Soliloquy and the accompanying prayer will not consume more than a quarter of an hour.

I am aware that your Ladyship employs other valuable aids for your personal aspirations towards heaven. I do not presume to dissuade you from any form or devout custom that has been edifying to you. By occasionally using these prayers, they may enhance your experience of the others, as variety often makes them more acceptable and beneficial.

Allow me to offer one piece of advice to your godly disposition: never engage in prayer without preceding meditation, either from your own thoughts or from those prepared for you. To that end, I have included at the end of this Week of Devotions a preparatory Soliloquy for various types of prayer. Given the vast distance between God in heaven and man on earth, it is almost impossible for one who prays to transition from worldly matters to addressing the Heavenly Father without first constructing a bridge of meditation to span this great divide.

In this collection, you will also find a preparation for the Holy Communion, although I acknowledge that you have access to the

works of others who have reflected worthily on this subject. Their good example should not dampen the enthusiasm of other Divines but should inspire their diligence. Especially when this duty is opposed or neglected by others, it becomes even more crucial for us to approach it with devotion and diligence.

While there are superior resources available for the practice of piety, these may be more effective for your Ladyship, as they are your domestic treasures and the products of your charitable concern for my well-being. This prompted my efforts to care for the health of your soul.

However, by offering these aids to devotion, I do not intend to make your meditation easier but rather to inspire your noble mind, blessed with a disposition towards godliness and good works. I could say much more on this topic, but it is not my role to commend you; instead, I strive to encourage and augment your commendable qualities.

With this purpose in mind, I humbly present these Meditations as handmaids to your Ladyship's devotion, entreating God to bless them with His divine power from above. May you be strengthened by His Spirit within, growing daily from grace to grace, and ultimately from grace to glory.

I remain,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's Most dutiful and affectionate Servant,

P. Du Moulin.

From your residence in Youghal, February 20th, 1653.





# **A Week of Soliloquies and Prayers.**

**For MONDAY.**

Psalm 38, verse 5: "For mine iniquities are gone over my head, as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me."

## **Soliloquy**

The life of a faithful soul is a journey to God. And I praise His mercy that I feel within me a sincere desire to embark on that journey. For I know that drawing near to God is my ultimate good, and turning away from Him leads to certain perdition.

But when I strive to ascend towards God, I sense a heavy burden of the flesh weighing down the wings of my devotion, preventing their ascent. Then the multitude of my sins fills me with shame, and the lofty justice and holiness of God strike me with terror. If even the Seraphim veil their faces with their wings in His presence, deeming themselves unworthy to behold the Holiest of Holies, how can I approach Him with my feeble and impure nature? How can mere straw stand before that all-consuming fire?

I realize that the first step in drawing near to God is humility. To rise up to God, I must first descend in self-condemnation. My Judge will not pronounce me guiltless until I acknowledge my guilt.

Alas, I have ample cause for self-condemnation. When I consider what God has bestowed upon me and how I have repaid Him, it grieves me deeply. He created me in His image, yet I have marred it with sin. He fashioned me for His glory, yet I have sought my own.

He illuminated me with the light of His truth, and I have not walked in that light.

He purchased me with the precious blood of His beloved Son, and I did not yield to Him what He acquired at such a dear cost. By right of creation, redemption, and preservation, both my body and soul belong to Him, yet I have not honoured Him fittingly in either. How many of His graces have I received, and how poorly have I employed them? How often have I failed to offer thanks when He supplied my needs and delivered me from danger? Instead of gratitude, I have, on numerous occasions, offended Him even as He defended me. It is as if His benevolence and my ingratitude vied for supremacy.

Solomon tells me that it is not good to punish the just or to strike princes for equity. Yet this is precisely what I have done to my God. I have opposed both the Just One and His justice by grieving His good Spirit. That Just One is my Prince, and it is for His equity and forbearance that I have abused Him. Had He consigned me to hell when I willingly descended into sin, or had He not continued to grant me life, strength, and abundance, I could not have used His blessings to offend my Benefactor as I have done (Proverbs 27:26).

How carelessly and perfunctorily have I performed the duties of His service! My thoughts wander during prayers, my devotion is lukewarm, and I neglect good works. Have I listened to His word attentively? Have I meditated upon it with devotion? Have I observed it sincerely? When God touched me with His good Spirit, did I readily accept and follow His promptings? Did I open to Him every time He knocked, as the Bride did when He said to her, "Open to me, my sister, my love"? Or did I, rather, disregard the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, remaining oblivious to the fact that His goodness is meant to lead me to repentance?

How slowly do I rise in my thoughts towards God, and how swiftly do I turn towards the world! How easily I become ensnared by unbelieving anxieties and fears, lulled by the deceitful hopes of this world! O, poor soul, aspiring to your heavenly homeland, in what a foreign land do you dwell! Here, the world claims all your time, and one can only think of God surreptitiously. What a fleshly prison you are confined to, where Piety withers while sin thrives! Nature abets your captivity and dreads your freedom. Wretched soul that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death! (Song of Solomon 5:2; Romans 7:24).

### **PRAYER.**

O Great God, whose majesty is infinite, whose holiness is perfect, whose eyes see all, and whose justice is formidable, I am filled with shame and confusion when I contemplate Your pure nature and my own impurity. I am even more guilty because You have created me in Your image and endowed me with Your sacred knowledge. You have honoured me by acknowledging me as one of Your children through Your Son, Jesus Christ. This exalted grace should have driven me to strive to resemble my Heavenly Father. You have given me holy laws, surrounded me with loving-kindness and tender mercies, and comforted my soul with Your saving promises. Yet, I have transgressed Your laws, misused Your tender mercies, and turned the comfort of Your promises into an occasion for carnal security.

I have been more active in pursuing the things of the world than in serving You. I have sought my own interests more than those of the Lord Jesus. This deceitful world has often stolen my affection, which should belong to You alone. The blessings You have bestowed upon me, meant to draw me closer to You, have sometimes pulled me away. I have cluttered my mind with anxious cares and fears that are

offensive to Your love and providence. Instead, I should have cast all my cares upon You, for You care for me. I have committed numerous presumptuous sins, errors, and secret faults daily before You, the Holy One and the Just, who hates iniquity and does not justify the wicked. How far I am from the holiness required in my words, thoughts, actions, and even more so in my affections to walk in Your presence! O great and holy God, who sees all, judges all, and searches the hearts and minds, I have sinned. What can I do but humble and condemn myself before Your justice and, by a faith working through love, appeal from Your justice to Your mercy?

O Father of mercies, though I am a great sinner, I am in a position to offer You an acceptable sacrifice, for the sacrifices You desire are a broken spirit and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Our hearts are never whole before You until they are broken, and they cannot be broken until You break them with the beneficial bruise of repentance. Our hearts remain hard until You soften them, and our lips stay closed concerning confession of our sins and Your praises until You open them. Therefore, Lord, I place my hope and confidence in these beginnings—sitting in the ashes and tears of my contrition. This contrition is the work of Your grace in me, for I am without goodness, and my sincere displeasure at having offended You, and my desire to return to You, are the actions of Your Spirit, drawing me, making me run after You.

O Lord, there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared. If we were not sinners, Your beloved Son would have come into the world in vain. The enormity of my sins provokes the greatness of Your mercy. The gravest sins are covered by the merits of Your Saviour, Jesus, just as the highest hills were submerged in the floodwaters. O my God, whom I have greatly offended, I will not add incredulity to my other sins. I will embrace Your holy promises, that whoever

believes in Jesus Christ shall not perish but have everlasting life. Even he who believes in Him, though dead, shall live. Lord, I believe; help my unbelief. Enable me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me with Your free spirit.

Truly, there is sin in my bosom that is worse than natural death. But, by Your grace, I also have the sparks of faith, which are the life of the soul. O holy and good Spirit, please increase them. Since the righteous shall live by faith, O God, grant me a faith that may shape in me a life of righteousness. Clothe me with righteousness so that I may live by faith. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Lord Jesus, who, though made guilty for my sake, has taken away the guilt of my sin, please also remove the iniquity of the same sin. For what terrifies me most about my sin is not the dread of Your judgments but sin itself. It is sin that horrifies me with its ugliness, confounds me with its enormity, and crushes me with its weight. My iniquities have overwhelmed me like a heavy burden; they are too heavy for me.

O great Deliverer of the captive and oppressed, You say, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I come to You, weary and burdened by the weight of my sins. Grant me rest, O my Saviour, in accordance with Your promises. Free me from the yoke of iniquity, and strengthen me with Your free spirit so that I may lay aside every weight and the sin that easily besets me. Enable me to run with patience the race set before me, looking to the Lord Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith. To Him, with Your Father and Your good Spirit, be glory forever. Amen.

Psalms 51; Matthew 11:28.

## **For TUESDAY.**

Romans 5, Verse 1. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Soliloquy**

Whichever way I turn my gaze upon the world, whether I consider the vastness of its regions, the diversity of its events, the multitude of human conditions, or the succession of years from the first sin until now, I find in all times and places the lamentable effects of the discord between God and humanity. I see a widespread and obstinate rebellion in humanity against its Creator. Thoughts of God are far from them, affections are estranged from His love, and actions stand opposed to His commandments. Some even attempt to convince themselves that God is but an invention of rulers to keep their subjects in check. "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God." For though they may not utter it with their understanding, which convicts them otherwise, they entertain it in their hearts because they wish it were true, as there is nothing more terrifying to a wrongdoer than the thought of facing their Judge.

Out of this enmity towards God springs forth all the wicked deeds committed in the world, those mountains of iniquity that reach the heavens and make the earth groan under their weight. On the other hand, God, justly provoked, manifests His displeasure through His judgments. He makes the summer scorch, the winter chill, the land barren, the air pestilential, storms assail, the sea threatens, vermin consume, wild beasts attack, and sicknesses torment the body. Care

and remorse afflict the soul, and the world suffers due to humanity's own wickedness. What else are sea and land robberies, wars, and oppressions of the law but punishments that humans inflict on one another for rebelling against God? Yet, what is seen of God's judgments is nothing compared to what is unseen—the torments of conscience and that lake of fire and brimstone prepared for God's enemies, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where torment has no end, for enmity with God has none. Psalms 14:1.

When I turn my eyes inward, I find, to my great sorrow, remnants of that carnal mind which is enmity against God. The flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; these are contrary to each other, so that I cannot do the things that I desire. I must attribute all my crosses, bodily infirmities, and mental troubles to the ancient quarrel God has against sin. However, I suffer only what is common to the children of God who have peace with Him through Jesus Christ our Lord. While God's indignation is directed towards the perverse world, even the children of God are not exempt from it in this world, for they are not entirely free from sin. Yet, amidst these remnants of sin and in the midst of the consequences of sin, the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keeps their hearts and minds through Jesus Christ (Philippians 4:7). They have a deep conviction within them that they have made peace with God.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who bring good tidings, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings of good, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (Isaiah 52:7). It is joyful news for me, who am conceived in iniquity and by nature a child of wrath, that God speaks to my heart, declaring that my iniquity is pardoned and that I have received double from the Lord's hand for all my sins. Even if my many sins were a hundred



times more numerous, my God and Judge have received double satisfaction for them. Such is the precious merit of my Saviour, and such is the effectiveness of His death that He suffered for me. This great peace is offered to all but received by few. Christ came to His own, and His own did not receive Him, but as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. I am grateful for His grace, for I am one of those who have received Him, and His presence within my heart through faith, a gift from Him, assures me that I have changed from a natural enemy into one of His children. He who dwells in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit (Isaiah 57:15), is pleased to make His dwelling within me by His gracious presence and set His throne of peace there. This throne calms the storm of my anxieties, cares, and fears, especially the fear that subjects one to bondage, the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15). By God's grace, I fear not eternal death, for my Saviour has conquered it. I fear not temporal death, for the great Saviour has sanctified it and transformed it from a gate of Hell into the gate of heaven for those who believe in Him.

From this state of grace and peace, I look out, as from a safe haven, at the storms that rage outside due to the turbulent perversity of people devoid of God's grace. Great empires tremble, monarchies are overthrown, people harm each other through wars and lawsuits, and my interests are not exempt from the turmoil of the world. However, amidst this tumult, I enjoy the peace of my God within. My heart is a sanctuary where God dwells with me, and I with Him. If He sends me afflictions, it is only to multiply His comforts and reveal His marvellous loving-kindness by saving me through His mighty hand (Psalms 17:7). He has saved me from eternal torment and sanctified temporal suffering for my benefit. He makes His rod fruitful, yielding both fruits and flowers. I am confident that everything He sends me

is good, for it comes from the hand of my God and Father. Eventually, He will grant me victory over all enmity—from Satan, the world, and the flesh—and welcome me into His great eternal peace, clothed in the righteousness of my Saviour. For, being justified by faith, I have peace with God through Jesus Christ, my Lord.

## **PRAYER**

Almighty God and merciful Father, who teaches me through thine Apostle that mercy rejoices against judgment (James 2:13), I praise and glorify thee with all my affections. Thou makest me find in my conscience the exposition of that holy doctrine. When I consider the general condemnation of the wicked world, living in natural enmity against thee, and that myself, being born in that condemnation, nevertheless, it pleases thee to speak peace to my soul and seal in my heart the remission of my sins by a lively faith, I am wrapped up with holy admiration and deeply touched with humility, joy, gratefulness, and love, looking with bowed head and fixed eyes into the depths of thy mercy.

Oh, what depth of mercy that thou, great God of infinite Majesty and power, hast given thine own Son to redeem our enemies! Thine eternal Son has taken my flesh to give me thy Spirit, suffered death to give me life, and borne the weight of thy wrath to give me thy peace. Whereas I was by nature a child of wrath, I am now adopted into the rights of thy children! Father of mercies, oh, that I might know thy mercy enough to love thee enough! O God of my Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give me the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. Enlighten the eyes of my understanding that I may know what is the hope of thy calling, what are the riches of the glory of thine inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of thy power towards us who believe

according to the working of thy mighty power which thou hast wrought in Christ (Ephesians 1:17).

O Christ, the great and only mediator of my peace with thy Father, how shall I ever sufficiently comprehend the excellency of thy love and the greatness of thy benefits! I am naturally defiled with iniquity, but thou hast washed me in thy blood. My sins are a heavy burden, but thou hast borne them upon thine own shoulders. I am guilty before the judicial throne of thy Father, but I am acquitted by thine intercession. I am unrighteous, but thou hast covered me with thy merit. Nay, Father, I am no more unrighteous before thy justice; I am righteous by the righteousness of thy Son. O Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, thou seest no more iniquity in me, for thou seest nothing about me but the obedience of thy Son, wherein I am wrapped all around by faith. I appear now before thee as righteous, holy, and blameless, since it pleases thee to look upon me through the merit of thy righteous Son. Who shall lay anything to my charge since Christ justifies me (Romans 8:33)? And how canst thou condemn me if the righteousness of thy Son be upon me? My God, I am so far from expecting condemnation for my sins that I expect recompense for the righteousness of thy Son, now my own. And no less recompense do I expect than the kingdom of heaven, for no recompense is too great for the merit of Jesus Christ, which is mine.

That harvest, by thy grace, is sure to me, but it is yet in the blade. Yet I feel the ear shooting forth within me by thy peace which passeth all understanding, whereby I am made certain that thou art my Father, that Jesus Christ is my Saviour, and that thy Kingdom is my inheritance.

But because sin still lives in me, and the flesh is stubborn, the world assaults me, sometimes with seductions and sometimes with open

hostility, and Satan's continual work is to trouble the peace of thy children by casting new guilt upon their conscience, I beseech thee, O great Prince of peace, to come thyself and take in thy hands the reins of my affections, keeping them in obedience under the empire of thy Spirit. May I, being ever ruled by him, never break peace with thee by any rebellion. May I, being justified by faith, be sanctified by the same. May my peace being made with thee by the merit of my Saviour, lead me to hate sin, which is the discord and hostility against thee, bringing trouble to the conscience and setting the soul at variance with herself. Let righteousness and peace kiss each other in my soul (Psalms 85). Let thy peace in my heart bring forth that right use declared by thy word, that thou wilt speak peace unto thy people and to thy saints, that they may turn no more unto folly (Psalms 85:8). Do this, O God of peace, for the love of thy Son, our peace-maker. To whom, with thee and thy Holy Spirit that seals thy peace in our hearts, be glory forevermore. Amen.

### **For WEDNESDAY.**

Romans 6, verse 21-22. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof you are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death.

But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

### **Soliloquy**

How imperfect is the condition of the faithful soul in this world! After I have left sin by repentance, and lifted up my heart to God by faith, I must yet look back upon sin with sorrow. For though I leave it, it will not leave me; I have condemned it, but I have not yet crucified it. I shake it, but I cannot make it ungrasp.

Yet, blessed be God, it has not that rule over me, which it had before: for Christ who has freed me from Hell, has now begun that freedom in me by cutting off many bonds of sin, that factor of hell which lays us asleep, and then binds us to deliver us up to the Devil. The sins that tempted my desire, now move my indignation, and affright me more with their ugliness than ever they allured me with their smiles.

And as all things help together for good unto them that love God, the remembrance of my sin teaches me to hate it. For what fruit did I reap but shame by sinning? And yet that is the best that comes out of it. For it is far worse when by sin we lose shame and get impudence and hardness.

What a shame is it to me to have subjected this beam of the Godhead, my intelligent soul, to things far beneath me, to have captivated the spirit under the flesh, and (as far as lay in me,) God under the world? What a shame to have ventured the loss of my birthright for a poor Mess, & more respected the favour or disfavour of men than of God, whose all-seeing eyes do always look upon me and into me? Yet it is no more shameful than true that I have offended my God who created me after his image, redeemed me by the blood of his son, sealed me by his spirit, and preserved me by his providence.

And what would have become of me if God justly angry had given me over to the pride of life, and the charming vanity of this wicked world? For the end of those things is death. That vanity is a Siren

which draws us on with smiles and fair words to cast us headlong. It is a smooth stream which carries them that float upon it into a gulf of perdition. It is a captivity ending in death like that of rebels overcome in battle, which are put to the sword. And this is the fruit of the bondage of sin.

Whereas being made free from sin and become servants of God we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. God by his great mercy has freed me from Hell altogether, and already from sin in part; but I shall lose the last and best part of that freedom, and the first also in the end, if I turn my liberty into licentiousness. For Christ has not freed me from the bondage of Satan that I should have no master, but being made free from sin I am become a servant of righteousness (Romans 6:17).

In countries where slaves are sold, whoever bought a servant to have no service from him? And shall not God who is as wise as he is merciful get service from those whom he has bought by the blood of his son and freed by his Spirit? Good reason he should. I am the Lord's freed servant, and therefore his servant because I am freed by him, for therefore he freed me that I might serve him. As on the other side I am free because I am his servant, for in his service lies the sovereign liberty of the creature; and he truly reigns, and he only, that subjecteth himself wholly to God, for then he is master at home, commanding his desires and affections in God's right. Whereas he that subjecteth not himself to him is the servant of sin and lives miserably under his unruly passions, as in a distracted commonwealth torn between many petty tyrants.

Come then, my soul, let us labour to perfect that freedom which God has already wrought in us by his good spirit. Let us break what remains in us of the bonds of sin, which tie us still too fast to the

world and the flesh. Let us stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and let us not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1). O what goodly fruit, what blessed end is brought forth by this spiritual freedom! The fruit thereof is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. First, the fruit of holiness, then the end everlasting life, a divine and inviolable order. I must not hope to have for the end everlasting life, unless I yield before the fruit of holiness. And with good reason holiness is called a fruit since it feeds our faith, which is our spiritual life. If I be holy, I reap all the fruit of my holiness. And what greater fruit can a faithful soul conceive than to please him that loved her so much? God in his goodness will take care to give me eternal life, but the care that I must take is, that I may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10). But for that, I must humbly crave his help.

## **PRAYER**

My Saviour Jesus, who hast loved me and washed me from my sins in thy blood, and hast presented me arrayed and decked with thy precious merit unto God thy Father: the more thy grace is admirable towards me, the more am I ashamed and grieved, that anything displeasing unto thee should remain yet within me. The remembrance of my sins past is displeasing unto me, and much more the sense of the present. I have a deep sorrow that I have offended thee, but more that I offend thee still. O when shall the full deliverance come when all the bonds of sin shall be cut off, when there will be no more cloud between heaven and me that stops the passage of prayer, and no more weight that keeps the spirit from rising to thee?

O Lord Jesus who hast plucked me out of the jaws of Hell by thy victory over death, be pleased to complete thy conquest in my soul. For I shall not account myself fully redeemed till I be rescued from the power of sin; and that is the principal end of thy coming, that is the principal effect of thine obedience. I learn of thine Angel fore-runner and foreteller of thy birth, that thou bearest the name of Jesus, because thou savest thy people from their sins. Matthew 1:21. There is with thee plenteous redemption, and thou shalt redeem Israel from all his iniquities. Psalm 130:7. Lord it is that plenteous redemption that my soul longeth for; I cannot be contented with less, than to be redeemed from all mine iniquities. I cannot conceive neither Salvation nor liberty without it.

Therefore will I call upon thee to be freed from sin, I will myself labour for it with all mine endeavour. And the freedom which it hath pleased thee to begin within me, kindleth my desire and provoketh my diligence to bring it to perfection. Yea, Lord I will say after thy servant David, I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts, Psalm 119:45. being assured that I shall find in thy service perfect freedom. O what freedom; yea, what empire shall my soul possess, when she shall be altogether subjected to thy good spirit, who in recompense will subject this rebellious flesh unto the more spiritual part of the soul, this flesh which so often raiseth, even in faithful hearts, a party against God; and sets on the passions to shake off the majesty of piety and reason.

O Son of God who makest us free and then we are free indeed. John 8:36. I desire not to be free to make liberty a covering of maliciousness, or to turn thy grace into wantonness. I desire but to change one service for another, the service to sin for the service to righteousness, I desire to be free that I may be thy servant; yea, that I may serve thee with full liberty, freely bestowing all the powers and



faculties of my soul upon thy service, and making my heart a burnt offering, a living Sacrifice, holy acceptable unto thee, which is my reasonable service.

O God and father of my Lord Jesus Christ, thou hast sanctified me in some measure by thy Spirit, because thou hadst before redeemed me by thy Son; but I long for the perfect stature: all is not well with me till I have the full measure. And how far I am yet from it, it grieves me to think on. But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13. O Lord if I have the grace sincerely to press towards the mark, I cannot miss the prize of thy high calling. Give me but the grace to press towards the mark, and I leave to thy goodness the care of bestowing the prize upon me. Let thy Sabbath be my delights, thy word my food, thy will my rule, thy commandments my business, and thy promises my encouragement. I long more to be sanctified than to be glorified; and I long to be glorious that I may be holy. But it is of thee, O Lord, that I must expect both: draw me, O Lord, and I shall run after thee. Song of Solomon 1:4. Turn me and I shall be turned. Jeremiah 3:19. Teach me to do thy will for thou art my God. Psalm 143:10. Work in me both to will and to do according to thy good pleasure. Philippians 2:13. For thy Son's sake, and by thy Spirit, and perfect my holiness for thy glory. Amen.

**For THURSDAY**

Psalms 116:12. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?

### **Soliloquy**

It is the querulous and ungrateful humour of man to keep an exact reckoning of his afflictions, most of which are but imaginary, and to murmur against God, but to forget his benefits, and take no notice of them, no not when he fills himself with them. Although there is none so afflicted upon earth, but hath more reason to thank God than to complain, though he had nothing but life and the way open for repentance.

To praise God for his graces is the highest duty of the Christian, and together his highest felicity. It is the everlasting employment of glorious souls in heaven to praise God for his salvation, crying with a loud voice, Salvation belongs to our God which sitteth upon the Throne and to the Lamb. To which the armies of Angels answer, Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.

Let us now, my soul, join with that consort of heavenly praises. Let us anticipate the date of our felicity, singing our part already in the music of Angels. And what have I else to render unto God for his benefits, but to employ for his praise the gift he made to me of a soul capable and desirous to know him, to love him, and to praise him?

But when I come to think on that numerous universality of all God's benefits upon me, I feel my meditation swallowed up in a bottomless gulf. Nature, providence, and grace call me all three together to admiration and thankfulness.

Nature as the nearest presents me to myself, and showing me my body made with such divine art and symmetry, teacheth me to say with David, I will praise the Lord for I am wonderfully made. Psalms 139:14. In that body God hath lodged a soul stamped with his own image, endowed with reason, and enabled with intellectual faculties. To comprehend what I owe to God for my body only, I should value every piece one by one, and think what I would refuse to part with them. What would I take for one of my arms? Not Millions. What for an eye? Not a whole world. What then for both? What for health and life? I must account that I possess as much treasure as I would refuse, rather than be deprived of everyone, and of any one of these natural goods; and upon that account I must estimate my obligation, and the greatness of my debt to my great benefactor.

How much then do I owe unto God for my soul, which is the breath and the living image of God, in comparison of which this body which we so much value is of no value. To understand my obligation to God for my soul I should know her nature and her work. That knowledge is too wonderful for me. But as darkness teacheth us to value the light. I learn to admire the value of a soul in her right sense when I see one out of it, a man become a beast. It strikes me with horror, and makes me exclaim, how much am I indebted to God, for giving and preserving unto me a reasonable soul?

And when from within I look without, what a numberless multitude of benefits of God are crowding about me! the earth that bears me, the air which I breathe, the heaven that shines upon me, the plenty of nature that feeds me, her variety that delights me, the several creatures that serve me. What readiness, what utility, what dutiful attendance of so many good things which God made for me!

And all these goods of nature are managed by his providence for my use. To providence, I owe the goodness of my Father, the tenderness of my mother, that loving care whereby I was brought up from the cradle, supported in the infirmity of mine infancy, and conducted in the simplicity of my youth. To the provident care of my heavenly Father, I owe the sucking, next after my nurse's milk, of the principles of piety and honesty, which to me since have been preservatives against those mischiefs which I have seen others run into for want of good breeding. When I see so many persons disfigured with sickness, their limbs broken, their body spoiled by sad accidents; others groaning under the lash of ill renown, perhaps wrongfully, some miserable out of want, some out of plenty, some oppressed by wicked neighbours, some by their own melancholy, I cannot but think myself well used, notwithstanding all the infirmities within and difficulties without, which I must wrestle with. And I must exalt the bounty of God, who so carefully preserveth my person, my peace, and my reputation.

What private helps did God send me in the public ruins! What ways did he open to me where there was no way! How graciously, how miraculously did he make Manna fall before me when bread failed, and wrought for me a subsistence out of the hardest natures and businesses, as it were fetching water out of the rock! How loving are his very chastenings, denying me the things that I desired, to give me better than I desired; and sending me the things that I feared, to make them occasions of blessings!

I should never have done numbering the benefits of his providence; but here his grace interrupteth the reckoning, ascribing to herself all the blessings both of providence and nature. For it is out of that love before all times in his beloved son, that he feedeth me and furnisheth

me with all the goods of nature, and assigneth his Angels for my keepers which carry me in their hands.

But what are all these great benefits but small productions of the inestimable treasures of that grace whereby I enter upon all the rights of God's children? Oh that I could once apprehend what a high grace it is to have God for my father, Christ for my brother, his kingdom for mine inheritance, yea, God himself for my portion forever? How gracious is his redemption! How free is his pardon! How precious is his loving kindness! What fullness of joy is at his right hand! What eternal pleasures in the contemplation of his face! And in that expectation, how comfortable is the presence of his good spirit in my heart, giving me ears to hear his word, and a sincere desire to keep it, strengthening me in my troubles, raising me in my falls, wounding my soul with contrition for my sins, and then healing it with faith in his promises! O precious guest! O blessed company! O Paradise upon earth! O beginning of the kingdom of heaven! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Psalms 103:1.

## **PRAYER**

Most merciful Father, when I compare my indignity with the greatness of your benefits, I feel in my heart a compound of humble repentance and hearty thankfulness. For what am I by nature but a child of wrath, conceived in iniquity, which original corruption I have since increased with innumerable actual transgressions? And yet, Lord, where sin abounded, your grace has abounded much more, and your infinite love has prevented me when I was your enemy. Lord, who am I, that you, the great Maker and Sovereign of heaven and earth, possessed with infinite glory and dwelling in a light not to be

approached unto, would grace me so much as to make me one of your children and enrich me with the inheritance of your kingdom? That you would give me your beloved Son for the price of my redemption, which I may present unto you by faith? That you would give me your good spirit to seal my adoption, and work my regeneration, and say to my soul, "Soul, I am your Salvation."

With what wonders of mercy was that Salvation purchased for me? Your only Son, in whom you are well pleased, must put on infirm flesh like unto mine, to make me like unto him by his good spirit. He must make himself a servant to make me free. He must suffer death to give me life. He must cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" to bring me back to my God whom I had forsaken. He must overcome death to entitle me to his victory. He must ascend into heaven and there sit at the right hand of his Father, that I might be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Ephesians 1:3.

O Father of mercies, the great, the good, the wonderful, be pleased to add to these your mercies one more, even the thankfulness of my heart, answerable, as far as man's capacity can reach, to the greatness of the obligation. O that you would grant me, according to the riches of your glory, to be strengthened with might by your Spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in my heart by faith, that I, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that I may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:16.

Most gracious God, I expect from the riches of your glory to be filled in heaven with all your fullness, by the blessed contemplation of your face. But even in this present weak condition of mine, be pleased to

pour into me some drops of that fullness, enough to fill this small frail vessel with your love and a feeling resentment of your bounty. And as all things about me speak to me of your love, so let all things help me to be thankful, and to acknowledge and love him that loved me so much in Jesus Christ.

'It is true, Lord, that even your enemies enjoy out of your bounty the light and heat of the Sun, and the fertility of the earth, and in you live and move and have their being. But I enjoy all these benefits with a better title and relish in the very bread which I eat, and in the air which I breathe, your eternal love in your beloved Son. For since you have elected me in him and redeemed me by him, it is by him also and for his sake that you preserve my body and soul which he has redeemed, and make me enjoy the promises of the life that now is and of that which is to come. 1 Timothy 4:8.

What shall I render unto you, Lord, for all your benefits towards me? With what fatherly care have you fed, preserved, and defended me? What help of your providence did you make me find in the whole course of my life? With what vigilance and wisdom have you made me a way through a thousand dangers that beset me? With what compassion have you held me up when I was falling, and guided me when I went astray? How graciously have you moved me to repentance by your word, by your spirit, by your gifts, by your rods, sometimes pulling me with fear as plucking me out of the fire, sometimes drawing me with love by temporal comforts, and by the sweetness of your promises? How quick and powerful are the comforts of your spirit, assuring me of your reconciliation with me, and giving me a foretaste of eternal life?

Among your many blessings, I reckon it for a mercy, Lord, that you did not leave me without discipline, but have exercised me with your

chastenings to awake my faith, warm my zeal, and make me have recourse to the shelter of that very hand that smote me. I praise you for not giving me all my desires in this world, that my heart might be weaned from it. O Sovereign Physician, in your hand even poisons are remedies; and you never did send me affliction but in the end turned it into a blessing, by your wonderful ways which fetch light out of darkness. Thus, Lord, whichever way I look, whether to prosperity or adversity, whether to the goods of this world or those of a better, whether to my desires frustrated or to your liberality in your Son which surpasses all my desires, I find myself in all things obliged to glorify you.

What then shall I render unto you for so many benefits? Lord, I have nothing but yours. Then all that is yours I will render unto you. I will consecrate unto you this body and soul which you have made and redeemed, and so carefully preserved. I will employ my understanding to meditate on you, my heart to love you, my mouth to praise you, all my faculties to obey and please you. And because my goodness extends not to you, I will endeavour to make it extend to the Saints that are in the earth, Psalms 16:2, according to the measure of my ability; and to feed and clothe my Saviour Jesus in his members, as he has fed me with the bread of life and clothed me with the cloak of his righteousness, besides his care of me for the temporal. My God, give me holy resolutions which may be attended with holy actions. My God, grant that my life may be a continual thanksgiving in affections, in words, and in works. My soul does magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has regarded the lowliness of his servant. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever. Amen.



## **For FRIDAY.**

1 John 2. Verse 15. 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.

### **Soliloquy**

How high is this lesson, and how unwelcome to the sense of the flesh! But how beneficial to them that understand and practise it! God commands me not to hate mankind, nor to hate the wicked, in which signification the world sometimes is taken in Scripture. Much less does he command me to hate that great and precious work of his, heaven and earth. It is so complete and handsome and bears such lively characters of the wisdom, power, and bounty of his Maker, that it is impossible to see it and not delight in it. For without extending my thoughts upon all the plenty and variety wherewith God hath enriched this fine nature, for the service of man, who sees not that the great creator had a purpose to delight him and make him in love with his works, by the singing of birds, the smell and colour of flowers, the pleasantness of prospects, and the glory of the stars, wherewith the roof of this great palace is adorned?

But there is within this world another world which God forbids me to love, and he is pleased to give me a reason for it, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. 1 John 2.16. That world is the world of the Devil, which he hath created within the world of God. For whereas God in the creation set light out of darkness, Satan

fetcheth darkness out of light, making the excellent creatures of God his instruments of temptation and enticements to evil.

But how easily do we pass from the world of God to the world of the Devil, how insensibly the admiration of the beauty and goodness of creatures degenerates into the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life! How hard is it to use this world and not abuse it, and set just limits which we never overpass, to that love which it is lawful for us to bear to creatures! Yet as hard as it is, it is necessary. For if we love the world the love of the Father is not in us. There is in every soul a master-love that subjects all other affections to it; that master-love is due to the Father; to give it to the world, and to the Father together we cannot. And there can be no more two masters in a soul than in a kingdom. To love anything but God and not for his sake is a sacrilege that transports to another what we owe to him alone. And when we love anything without relation to God, we come shortly to love it above him, for to love both equally we cannot, we love always the one more than the other.

The comparison being infinitely unequal between God and the world, reason with little instruction will be brought to give her verdict for God, and adjudge him the love and possession of the soul. But at the same time the world gets into the soul without leave of reason, finding always the five doors of the senses open to him, and the imagination fit and adequate to his objects. God is not in all the thoughts of the wicked, Psalms 10.4 and hardly settles in the thoughts of the best; because of the great disparity between the nature of that high and pure spirit, and our low and impure flesh. We love the world by nature, and God against nature, before his spirit hath so far enlightened our minds, and wrought upon our hearts, as to make us apprehend that we subsist in God, and that to come near

him by love is returning to our true being. And our only Sovereign good.

The love of the world being so agreeable to my nature, and the love of God so necessary both for my duty and happiness. I wish sometimes that I might love the world for God's sake, and with a degree of love far inferior. But alas, my heart is so prone to be deceived by the flattery of the amiable things of this world, that if I give leave to my heart to love the world for God's sake, I fear I shall soon come to love it for his own; and by loving it I shall soon come to trust in it, and repose upon it my hope and joys. So I shall find ere I be aware, that my love, my faith, my hope and my joy are past from the Creator to the creature. And then where am I but in a gulf of misery, fear and perpetual inquietness? For God leaveth those that leave him, and in their necessities turns them over to seek deliverance in those things in which they have placed their trust and affection.

O then how much do I need firmly to lay the two hands of love and faith upon my God, lest I be drawn from him and he from me! What care must I take that I suffer not the world to pull with God for my heart! Lest God in his jealousy give over pulling for a thing of so small value; for all he will have or nothing, I cannot serve God and Mammon. Matthew 6:24. For love, when it is come to the height, is a service and a captivity of the soul under the beloved object. I cannot serve two masters, especially these two so different that require such different love and service. To my God then, to him only I must dedicate the service of my love; a service which giveth a perfect liberty. Whereas the service to the world is a miserable servitude, keeping the soul in a continual shaking suspense between fear and hope. That love promiseth much and performeth little, idolizing a false image of good which is of no use in the greatest need. The

redemption of a soul is precious, too dear to be purchased with all the goods of the world. Psalms 49:9.

How little satisfaction do all the goods of the world give! How hard are they to get, how troublesome to keep, how easy to lose! And though they should never leave us, yet we must leave them, and go out of the world naked as we came into it.

O how the love we bear unto the world is many times an evil counsellor, swelling the heart with pride, inflaming it with evil desires, making the mind run wild with vanity, and to comprehend all evils in one, turning us away from God! God then only, by the help of his good spirit, I am resolved to love, and withdraw my affections from the world, considering it in its right use, as made to serve me, not to be served by me. And the chief service that I will put it to will be to serve God.

## **PRAYER**

My Lord and my God, the only good, and only worthy to be beloved with all the heart and soul; I have seen enough of this world to learn that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. Wealth is a burden, Honours are golden fetters, pleasures are follies or crimes, the life of the world is a tragedy of a few days, and a continual pageant. I have been near enough to that tumultuous noise and lustre without substance to know that it is not a worthy object of my love nor a firm ground for my hopes. And instead of finding there the comfort of the soul and quietness of mind, I have found nothing but temptations and sorrows.

Yet Lord, as it is hard to walk upon the fire and not be burnt, I acknowledge that I have not lived in the world without a taint of its corruption. And I have too much loved the world and the things that

are in the world. I was almost in all evil, and should have sunk into it had not thy spirit upheld me, and thy very rods helped me out.

Lord, where shall I begin, either to praise thee for not abandoning me to the temptations of the world or to crave thy pardon for loving it too much? My God, I will do both together, I will praise thee with my humility, and acknowledging that in me abideth no good, I will also acknowledge that it is of thy great mercy that the love of the world hath not quenched the love of the Father in my heart. O how easily the love of the world creeps into my carnal heart! How prone am I to be abused by the deceitfulness of riches, whether I possess them or labour for them, or bewail the loss of them! How many times have I been diverted from thy service by domestic cares! How oft have I provoked thee to jealousy by loving those very persons whom thou commandest me to love, and made the most lawful affections for the things of this world to become unlawful by letting them run to excess? There being neither parents nor husband, nor wife nor children, whose love do not become vicious, when to feed itself it withdraws the love that is due unto thee. Many times, O Lord, I have sought my content without thee, and placed my trust and my joy upon other things than thee.

But, O my God, as thou lovedst me before I loved thee, now be pleased to love me when I am defective in my love to thee. Blot out my sins by thine eternal love in thy son Jesus Christ. And the effect of that love which I chiefly crave at thy hands is that it may please thee to renew and increase my love to thee, so that I properly love nothing but thee, and all things else which my duty obliges me to love, only for thy sake, and in a degree subordinate to the love which I owe thee. Let me not settle mine affections and my hopes upon persons and things, which it is impossible for me to keep, and which must leave me or I them.

Let me be built upon the rock of thy love to me in Jesus Christ, that when the winds blow, and the rain falls, and the floods come, I may stand fast, while the storm shall beat others to ruin who are built upon the quicksand of this unsteady and deceitful world. Lord, the fashion of this world passeth away, and I must prepare to remove from this house of clay, my frail body. O give me grace beforehand to remove my heart from the world and it, and settle it upon thee, and mine eternal mansion with thee.

Let me not covet those goods which thou givest many times to thine enemies in greater measure, which make not the possessors better, but commonly make them worse; that swell the mind with pride, and together beat it down with fears and cares; that give no satisfaction to the mind, and no refuge against thine indignation. But let me be covetous of the true treasures that give a solid content to the soul and follow the soul to heaven when the body dieth. O Lord enrich my soul with thy love and thy fear; Pour into me the riches of thy grace. Dwell in my heart by faith, for no less wealth than thyself do I ask, and I cannot be satisfied unless thou givest thyself unto me. O my God thou art the portion of mine inheritance. Thou art my stock and my rent, mine eternal possession, and mine only good. There be many that say, who will show us any good? But I will say, Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me. Psalms 4.6. Ease my mind of all earthly cares, which give torment to no purpose, and give me the grace to seek thy kingdom and thy righteousness, being sure that all things shall be added hereunto. And after all gifts, O my God, again, I beseech thee give thyself to me. As I for my part desire to resign myself wholly to thee as having nothing in heaven but thee, and there being nothing on earth that I desire besides thee. Lord thou wilt lead me by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Amen.

## **For SATURDAY.**

Matthew 26. Verse 39. — not as I will but as thou wilt.

### **Soliloquy**

As men are prone to transgress the will of God's commandment, so they are apt to control the will of his decree, of which our Saviour Jesus speaks here. We measure the actions of God's providence with the ell of our interest, and of our blind desire, which is to bring the rule under unruliness, for the will of God is the rule of perfection, but the carnal will of man hath neither rule nor measure. We let our desires loose, and flatter ourselves with hopes, before we know whether God will have it, and without preparing ourselves to patience if he will not. We grieve to miss what we desired, and to meet with that we feared, because in our projects we had made our reckoning without God: no wonder if we must reckon twice. Many men if they durst utter their thoughts when events fall cross-grain to their desires, would invert the prayer of Christ, and say, Not as thou wilt, but as I will.

The cause of this impatience is, that we have no good opinion of God. Flesh and blood will not be persuaded that God doth well when he sends affliction, or that he is wise, or that he is good, or that he hath the power to work good out of evil. If the flesh resisteth God's will when God is teaching, she will do it much more when he is striking.

I cannot give a good account to God of my obedience to this command, the hardest of all to keep, that we have no will but his will: and I confess with humility that my will did not bow under his as it should have done.

Alas! the ways of God are not my ways, and his thoughts are not my thoughts; he doeth good by evil. He advanceth his glory and our good by means in all likelihood contrary. He afflicteth his children to mend them. He brings them by the cross to glory. He suffers injustice to tread upon his Church for the execution of his justice, yea, for the setting forth of his mercy in due time. For God preserveth those whom he loveth, even by adversity, as we are taught by David in this text of profound doctrine, blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity until the pit be digged for the wicked. Psalms 94.12 That wisdom is too high and wonderful for a soul that liveth in the flesh •... : and I hope that God will, rather in compassion than anger, look upon the difficulty that my soul finds sometimes to bring my will under his.

To be proficient in that high task, I must look to the pattern of all perfection, my Saviour Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith. Who being in his greatest agonies bearing the burden of God's wrath for the sins of the whole world, and sweating out of anguish drops of blood trickling down to the ground, yet even then mastered his most tender and natural affections, and rejected his own will to embrace God's will. He would suffer, he would die, because it was God's will.

I will look upon the reason that bowed his will to yield such a free obedience to such a hard sentence: now said he, is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again. John 12.27.

This was it that made him digest the bitter cup of God's wrath; God thereby was glorified. After that consideration he had no will for



preserving his own life. Come shame, torments, the whips, the nails, the cross, and death in the end; all is welcome if God be glorified.

The same reason I have to subject my will unto God's will in all my crosses, whether God deny me what is most pleasing to me, or send me what is most smarting. I must be assured that God does nothing but for his glory. And though I see it not, he seeth it, and that must content me. Now if God afflict me for his glory, how can it be but for my good? For being one of his children, if my heavenly Father be glorified I cannot but be happy: and he shall bring forth my happiness by those ways which he likes best, according to his fatherly love and his Sovereign wisdom; unto which in silence and humility I submit my will, and with confidence and joy commit myself, never to have any will but his.

## **PRAYER**

MY GOD and Father who among thy many mercies hast visited me with thy rods, which I reckon also among thy mercies. I humbly confess that I did not make the right use of them, and did not bow my will as readily and freely as I should have done under thy holy will. I have desired certain things too eagerly, before I knew whether my desires agreed with thy good pleasure. And I have borne with impatience patience other things which were sent to me by thy good pleasure: whereas I should have said after thy servant David, I will be dumb and keep silence, because thou hast done it. Psalms 39.9.

O Lord Jesus, who in thy greatest agonies didst say, Father not my will but thy will be done. Be pleased to extend upon me the merit of that wonderful obedience which thou didst yield to thy father in these words. For in that obedience consisteth the invaluable price of our redemption. O Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, accept that obedience of infinite merit for satisfaction for my sins. Impute it to

me as if I had yielded it in mine own person; and having justified me by his righteousness, be pleased to reform me upon his example, so that my will be sincerely subjected to thy will as his was. Give me that grace that I may ever find thy will good, pleasant and perfect, printing this assurance in my heart by a lively faith, that thou lovest me more than I love myself; and that as thou art most good thou art also most wise, and never sendest afflictions to thy children but to turn them into blessings. Since it is the duty of children to let themselves be ruled by their parents, frame my heart, O my heavenly father, to an entire and filial submission under thy wise and loving providence; so that even when I feel the smart of thy rods, I receive them with a meek and willing heart, acknowledging thy powerful fatherly hand, and saying with Eli, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. 1 Samuel 3.18. This subduing of nature is a work too hard for me, unless thy good spirit work in me powerfully an impartial renouncing of myself, and a full resignation of all mine affections unto thy holy will.

O God, who commandest them that want wisdom to ask it of thee in faith, with a promise to give it, James 1.5. give me faith to ask and to obtain so much wisdom of thee, that when thou sendest me trials unpleasing to my nature, I behave and quiet myself as a child weaned of his mother, Psalms 131.2. taming my passion, yea, and silencing my reason, when thou callest me to bow under thy will. Make me capable of this heavenly doctrine, that when thy will is become our will, thy glory also is become our glory, and thy goods our goods, and that we have all that thou hast when we will all that thou wilt. For O Lord thou belongest to them that are thine, and the way for us to be thine is to resign ourselves absolutely to thy will.

When shall it be, O Lord, that no will shall live within me but thy will, whether it be to obey thy commandments with readiness, or to

undergo thy decrees with patience? And since the felicity of Angels consisteth in the union of their wills with thine, I am covetous, O my God, of that Angelical felicity. I beseech thee make me conformable to them before I meet with them, at least in this point, that my will be ever thy will, and that I have no interest but thine.

But because this poor soul of mine liveth as yet in the flesh, and the flesh is infirm; I beseech thee, O merciful Father, let no temptation take me but such as is common to man, for, O my God thou art faithful who wilt not suffer me to be tempted above that I am able, but wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10.13. It is my great and serious desire to follow thy will in all things. O send me no trial too hard for my will to follow thine. Never hide thy gracious face from me, and let thy will never be so severe towards me, that I lose the persuasion of thy good will in thy son Jesus Christ.

O God increase my faith. Let neither death, nor life, nor tribulation, nor distress, nor temptation, nor persecution be able to separate me from that love of thine in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen. Romans 8.

### **For the LORD'S DAY Morning**

Psalms 31. Verse 23. O love the Lord all ye his Saints [otherwise] his beloved.

Was there ever a more reasonable desire, that those whom God loveth should love him again? For so many blessings which God sends down in great showers upon them, can they do less than send

up to him the Vapours of their holy affections and thanks? Truly it was by him that love began. Herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us. Yea, we love him, because he first loved us. 1 John 4.10. And the chiefest effect of his love to me is the grace that he giveth me to love him. O if love requires love, and if benefits demand thankfulness, what love, what thankfulness do I owe to my God in whom I have both my being and well-being?

But as the Sun makes us lose the sight of the Stars, there is an effect of his love which seems to swallow all the other effects, and by its great light draws upon itself alone the eyes of the devout soul. And that is the sending of the Son of God for our redemption. For God hath so loved the world, that he sent his only son into the world, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3.16. O unfathomable depth of the love of God! Love stronger than death! death of the son of God that gives us life! Happy is he that can dive into that gulf of mercy. Not to find the bottom, for it hath none, but to lose himself in it with love and admiration. But it is a comfort to me in this temporal condition where reason is short-sighted and cannot reach to the height of the knowledge of God, that it is possible for me to love more than I know. And without comprehending his mysteries I may rejoice in his love. Praised be God that I know enough of him to love him, though I should know no more of him but that he loveth me.

Then that I may perfectly love him, I will take for my pattern the perfect love that he bears to me. He loved me and elected me in Christ before the foundation of the world. As his love is eternal, mine must be perpetual, and partake of the perpetuity of its object and original. He loved me freely and without hope of profit, for though he fetch glory out of his mercy to me, he could have glory enough without it. And he could fetch glory out of his justice if he had chosen

rather to condemn me. My love to him then must be altogether free; I must not love him with a mercenary love only, for mine own utility, but purely and simply, because he is good to me, good in himself, and the prime perfection. And because it is the duty of the creature to love the Creator, and of the redeemed to love the Redeemer.

He hath loved me with a singular love, for Christ hath taken as much labour to redeem me as if he had none but me to redeem. It is not by the great, it is in particular and by virtue of a singular election that I am redeemed. And I may say after St. Paul that God loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2.20. Besides, his love guideth and tendeth me as carefully in all my ways, yea in all my steps, as if he had none but me to tend in all the world, I must then for that singular love return him a love altogether singular. I must love nothing properly but him, all other things in him and for him, nothing out of him. He loved me so much as to die for me, I must also love him more than my life. He loved me as his Spouse, I must also love him as my husband, but a husband to whom I owe my life and myself; a husband that married me with eternal compassions, when I was by nature his enemy; and marrying me he endowed me with his own kingdom.

How it grieves me that I have nothing to bring to a husband so great and so good! For what can I bring to him in marriage since he hath given me what I have, and made me what I am? What then? Shall I bring him nothing? Yes truly; I will bring him my heart, I will give him my love. For though I hold from him my heart and the grace to love him, yet it is a gift of mine when I present it to him, because I present it freely. Be the disparity never so great between the Creator and the creature, I may give him love for love: the eternal God that loveth me, payeth himself with the love of his little servant.

I will put him as a seal upon my heart. Song of Solomon 8.6. I will keep him fast and close to my heart, that my heart may take the print of him and never lose his blessed figure. He is so good that he defends me even when I offend him, I will be so good as to love him even when he strikes me. He keeps near me when I turn away from him, I must keep near him even when he seems to hide his face from me. God patiently expects my repentance, I will patiently expect his deliverance. He loved his own unto the end, John 13.1. and he stays with them always, unto the end of the world, Matthew 28.20. and beyond, even to eternity. His love to me hath no end, no measure, no intermission; O that my heart were towards him as his is towards me! O that I could love him to the end, yea without end, and that the world and the flesh should make no intermission in my love! O that I could raise my love to such a high degree, and there keep, that many waters could not quench that love, neither could the floods drown it. Song of Solomon 8.7. But to that end I must crave the help of his Holy Spirit.

## **PRAYER**

O My God, my most gracious Father, who hast loved me from all eternity, and wilt yet love me to all eternity, I am too little to comprehend the greatness of thy compassions, and the excellency of thy promises to me. O Lord, how excellent is thy loving-kindness! Psalms 36. Thou hast not only made me after thy likeness, fed me with thy bounty, and preserved me by thy providence, but thou hast not been sparing of thine own Son, and thy Son hath not been sparing of his own life to redeem me from death and give me the inheritance of thy kingdom. O the depth of the riches both of thy wisdom and mercy! O incomprehensible goodness! O infinite love! What shall I render thee for the inestimable treasures of thy grace? But even this belongs to the infinity of thy love, that thou acceptest

the love of thy little creature in exchange for thine infinite love. Come then, let me love thee, let me bless thee, O my God, who forgivest all mine iniquities, who healest all my diseases; who redeemest my life from destruction, who crownest me with loving-kindness and tender mercies, who satisfiest my mouth with good things. Psalms 103.3. O my Saviour Jesus, who for my sake hadst thy hands and feet pierced with nails, and thy side lanced with a spear, be pleased to make a wholesome wound in my breast with the point of thy love. For as by thy light we see light, so by thy servant's love to us, we are inflamed with love to thee.

O thou the first beauty, the first goodness, who only deservest that I make an incense of my affections unto thee with the fire of love; I desire to know thy perfections better, that I may love them better. I desire to love thee with all my heart, and with all mine understanding, and more yet with my heart, because it is more capable to embrace thee than mine understanding to know thee. Lord how I esteem the celestial glory because there the soul knows thee and loves thee perfectly! And how the world and mine own flesh displease me, because they make me incapable to know and love thee as much as I desire! But although I feel myself full of imperfection, yet the desire of my soul is to thy name, O Lord, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. Isaiah 26.8. I will seek thee, O Lord, but I have need that thou seek me and find me, and bring me thysself to thee, and put far from me all things and all desires that make me go astray from thee.

My God, because I love thee, I desire to please thee, and that I may please thee I desire to be like unto thee. O great Bridegroom of my soul, when wilt thou make me like unto thee that I may be all handsome and a fit Bride for thee? When shall I be clad all about, all

over, with the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness! Ephesians 4.24. How ambitious am I to be decked with the precious jewels of faith, charity, zeal, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which before thee is of great price, 1 Peter 3.4. and above all with thy love which is the bond of perfectness, Colossians 3.14. that these Christian virtues be an ornament of grace unto my head and chains about my neck. Proverbs 1.9. Lord thou hast adorned me with the imputation of thy perfect righteousness, my glorious wedding gown, whereby I do appear before God thy father and mine all righteous and all perfect. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornament, and as a Bride adorneth herself with her jewels. Isaiah 61.10.

O Christ who hast already made me fine with the jewels of thy merit, be pleased to add unto them those of thy spirit, that thy righteousness serve not only to justify me, but much more to sanctify me. For I shall never be a Spouse handsome enough for such a perfect Bridegroom till thy virtues pass unto and into me, and change me into thy likeness by the operation of thy powerful spirit, the chief effect thereof being a fervent love expressed in a serious imitation. O Lord, thy banner over me is love, Song of Solomon 2.4. my wedding livery is love. With that livery I expect to be led by thee into the wedding chamber. O in that expectation let love produce his best effect in me, which is to change the person loving into the beloved, so that I may truly say, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2.20. I look for an eternal habitation to live with thee and live by thy life. But it is too long for me to expect till thou bring me into that wedding room. I have a wedding room for



thee in my heart, not so well furnished as I could wish to receive such a great guest, but come Lord and bring thy furniture of grace along with thee. That house cannot want accommodation since graced by thy presence. O Lord be thou in me and I in thee, as thou Father art in the Son, and thou Son in the Father, that I also may be one with you, John 17, by the holy Ghost, the spirit and bond of love. And to you three persons and one God be glory for evermore. Amen.

### **For the LORD'S DAY Evening**

John 14. Verse 23. If a man love me he shall keep my word.

How ordinary it is to hear God's word, and how rare to keep it! And how simply will men persuade themselves that they love God, when they take no care to please him! They love God as they do their horses, for their use, which is not loving God but themselves. He that will love God and not keep his word doth as a wife married to a worthy husband, to whom she should say, I will love you for my pleasure and profit, but out of that I will do nothing that you require of me. How near this comparison comes to me whose soul is betrothed to my Saviour Jesus who loved me and gave himself for me, and hath signed the contract of marriage with his own blood? For it is too true that my love to him hath more respected my benefit than my duty.

I have often protested that I loved him. Now he puts my love to the trial, If you love me keep my commandments. If a man love me he shall keep my words. John 14, 15. He will have love from his Spouse (and such is every Christian soul) but it is according to the laws of

matrimony to love, to cherish, and to obey. It is the lesson made to that royal Bride, which represents both the Church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, and every good soul. Forget thine own people and thy father's house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him. Psalms 45.10. That I may consecrate myself to the love of that King and Bridegroom of my soul he will have me to forget my carnal interests. He greatly desireth and delighteth in that beauty which himself hath given me, his renewed image consisting in his knowledge and love, and faith in his promises. But unless I worship him, humbly bowing and subjecting all mine affections unto his word and pleasure, I have not that beauty which he desireth and delighteth in, and I deceive myself with a false persuasion that I love him. For how can I love his person without loving his pleasure? And how can I make a separation between him and his will since his will is himself?

My soul be thou to thy God and husband a loving and obedient wife, let his word be precious to thee, learn it, cherish it, keep it. It is more desirable than gold, and sweeter than honey. Psalms 19.10. It is that heavenly wisdom whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her, and happy is everyone that retains her. Proverbs 3.17.

But what is it to lay hold upon her, it is to profess the truth? What is it to retain her, it is to argue about religion in dispute? Sure there goes more to that duty. It is to maintain the excellency of it by practice. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. James 1.27. The love that God expects of me must be shown to his commandments, so that I may say with David, my soul hath kept thy testimonies and I love them exceedingly. Psalms 119.167.

That I may love God as I ought, I must love all that he loveth. He loveth righteousness and judgment, Psalms 33.5. I will then give to all their right, beginning by himself, paying the love, the faith, the reverence, and the obedience to him due. Next I will give to my neighbours their right, being sincere in my words, faithful in my promises, just in my conversation, possessing nothing but what is justly mine, accounting the unjust gain to be a loss and a curse. God despiseth not the sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart. Psalms 51.17. David calls it the sacrifice of God. I will then endeavour to break my heart with contrition, of which I have but too much cause, and make it a fit sacrifice for him.

I am commanded to do good and communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Hebrews 13.16. And I am taught that God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9.7. I will then cheerfully offer unto God those sacrifices of beneficence which he loveth. And since I can do no good to my Saviour that does me so much good, I will do good to his Disciples.

God loveth the meek, and it was to them that Christ came to preach good tidings. Since he loveth them so much, I will love them also, Isaiah 61.1. and I will endeavour to be meek that he may love me. In these and in all things else I will endeavour to keep his word, because I love him that gave it me to keep, and because his will is my delight. O when shall that happy day come, when I shall perfectly keep God's word, because I shall perfectly love him? When shall I live far from those that keep not his word, because they do not love him, and seduce or offend or interrupt them that would keep it! When shall I live with the life of the Saints and blessed, that find all their pleasure in loving and serving God, and know no difference between their duty and their delight!

## **PRAYER**

O God Almighty and all good, when I consider that thou makest the winds thine Angels, and the flames of fire thy Ministers, and that fire and hail, snow, Vapour, and stormy wind are fulfilling thy word, Psalms 148. I wonder that things incapable to love thee should inviolably keep thy word, and that no creatures should decline to obey it, but those whom thou hast endowed in their creation with a capacity to know and love thee. Lord, what a shame is this to me, that I should be overcome in readiness of obedience by those creatures that know not their obligation to obey thee! Yet, O my God, that knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, which is more than they do. But it is clear that I love thee not enough since I do not obey thee as readily out of love and reason as other creatures do without either, out of a mere instinct of nature. My God I humbly crave thy pardon for that want of obedience, and for my want of love which is the cause of it, O Father of mercies cover that shortness of love with the infinity of thine. Enter not into judgment with me for being so cold to love thee, so slow to serve thee, so careless to hear and keep thy word. I cannot tell the number of the acts of my disobedience against thy word, nor sufficiently comprehend the greatness of thy mercy which is in the heavens, and of thy faithfulness reaching unto the clouds. O Lord since thy heavenly mercy is so great as to promise remission of sins to all that would have their recourse unto thee by the merit and intercession of thy Son, thy faithfulness also shall be so great as to fulfil thy promise to me thy sinful servant, who now embrace by faith the merit of thy beloved son, and implore the benefit of his gracious intercession.

And that hereafter I may so love thee that I may keep thy word, give me grace by the operation of thy spirit to learn of that holy word how I may love thee. Let me love thy word with a fervent heart. Let me

come to it with a holy appetite, as thy Prophet, Who found thy words and did eat them, and thy word was unto him the joy and rejoicing of his heart. Jeremiah 15.16. Let it be to me quick & powerful, & sharper than any two-edged sword. Hebrews 4.12. Let me sensibly find it profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, till I may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Timothy 3.16. Be pleased to make me diligent in good works, zealous for thy glory, and charitable to my neighbours. Let me not love them in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3.18. Let me set mine affections on things above not on things on the earth. Colossians 3.2. Let not my heart be set upon the world which I must leave, but upon thee my permanent possession. Let my breast be a Sanctuary, where the incense of my holy affections ascend to thee continually, and where thyself be pleased to dwell, fitting between faith and love as it were between the Cherubims. Let thy will ever be my rule, thy fear my guide, thy wisdom my counsellor, and thy promises my comfort. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight O Lord my strength and my redeemer. Psalms 19.14. Let me be blameless and harmless, the child of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom I may shine as a light in the world. Philippians 2.15.

O Lord open the eyes and turn the hearts of those that love thee not and keep not thy word. Sanctify them that know thee, and in whose hearts thou hast already kindled some sparks of thy love. Deliver thy Church redeemed with thy blood from heresies, schisms, and scandals. And since she is thy Spouse let her be presented unto thee as a chaste Virgin, having neither spot nor wrinkle. Ephesians 5.27. And let my soul which is also thy Spouse be so presented before thee. Strengthen by thy spirit thy children tossed between persecutions and temptations, and perfect thy virtue in their weakness. Wipe off

the foul aspersions cast upon thy Gospel, and let not the sins of the professors thereof be imputed unto the holy truth which they profess. O let thy truth shine as the light and thy righteousness as the noon day. Raise again the walls of thy decayed Jerusalem. O great and jealous God stir up thy jealousy and the bowels of thy mercies. Suffer not forever thy name to be blasphemed, and thy redeemed children to be exposed to the rage of the world and the Devil. God of peace bruise Satan under our feet shortly. Romans 16.20. Lord Jesu come quickly, Revelation 22. hasten the fulfilling of thy kingdom. Begin now thy kingdom within us, delivering us from the bondage of sin, whose yoke is a thousand times heavier to them that love thee in truth, than that of all the tyrants and persecutors. O Lord if we be holy we cannot be miserable, and if we love thee we cannot be beaten down by the hatred of the world. O let me ever aspire to those eternal tabernacles where they are in a sovereign happiness, because they are filled with a sovereign love of thee. Endue me with virtue to fight the good fight, the remnant of the days of my vanity, with a firm expectation that I shall shortly and forever enjoy thy great peace, and that victory into which death was swallowed up by our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the holy Ghost be glory for evermore. Amen.

### **A PREPARATORY Meditation for all sorts of Prayers**

Ecclesiastes 5. Verse 2. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God, for God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.

Hastiness is the mother of confusion in all things, and in prayer more than in any. Thereby the reproach comes upon us which we make to them that pray in an unknown tongue, that they know not what they say. But it is no wonder that we pray so often not thinking what we say, since we commonly begin our prayer without thinking before what we are, who is he that we must speak to, and what we have to say to him.

Many actions of our life have no need to be thought upon but when we take them in hand, by reason of their facility, and because the persons and things that we have to do with are equal or inferior to us. Prayer is not in that rank, there being nothing of greater difficulty than to fix our mind (that lives in the flesh and perceives nothing but by the senses) upon God whom no man has seen at any time, and who is altogether spiritual and immaterial. And there being no inequality like that between the Creator infinite and most holy, and the creature finite and sinful.

Truly when we consider what God is and what we are, that make bold to address ourselves to him, we have great reason to think both on him and us before we open our mouth. He is the Lord, the incomprehensible, the most holy, the most just, the father of lights before whom the very Stars are not pure (Job 25.5). He created heaven and earth with his bare word, and with one word he may bring them to nothing. He governs all, he disposes of all, the closest hearts are open in his sight, and he does not hold the sinner guiltless. He that in his prayer has his mind gadding abroad, as he has no reason to expect of God's facility, that he give him what he asks when his mind goes not along with his tongue; so he has no reason to be free of the fear of his justice, vainly hoping that God will take no notice of that he said, because himself did not think of it. Though it

were to be wished for many that in their prayers God would think no more of them than they think on him.

And if from God in Heaven we turn our eyes upon ourselves that are on earth, poor, weak, guilty things in his presence, that cannot subsist one moment without him, O what humility, what reverence, what fear and trembling should seize on us when we approach, we so little, to him that is so great! What pain ought we to take to fix our thoughts upon him, and keep them from their ordinary wanderings! What adoration ought we to render to that magnificent Majesty, that inaccessible light, that Supreme Holiness, that Sovereign Justice, that infinite bounty! Could the thought of these Attributes of the Godhead enter deep into our minds, and there stay, then a devout respect would stay our attention in our prayers. We should be humble and contrite in the confession of our sins, full of faith in craving pardon through Jesus Christ, fervent and sincere in praying for our conversion and sanctification, earnest and zealous in praying for the advancement of God's glory and the good of his Church. Prayers begun with a holy trembling would grow by speaking with God to confidence and familiarity; and would end in joy and comfort! And God would graciously grant our petitions, for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5.16).

There is a general and perpetual preparation for prayer, which is holiness of life, for it is less difficult to elevate our affections unto God in prayer, and fix them upon him, when they have been trained to that duty in the midst of temporal businesses. He that always walks as in the presence of God, looking to his way that he may please him in all his conversation, shall easily find the way to heaven when he sets himself to pray. For the immediate causes of the wandering of our thoughts and the debasement in our affections in our prayers are the next preceding sins. The conscience, being



removed some steps from God, finds that God has removed as many steps from her, and that there is a barricado made between God and the soul, which stops the passage of prayer to heaven.

There is a particular preparation for the time of prayer, which is to take leisure to view the state of our conscience. And if companies or sports or business or crosses have caused some agitation in our mind, we must labour to settle that emotion, that we may bring a tranquil soul to God's service.

Especially we must examine whether we have lately added anything to the score of our sins, that we may mend it by a new repentance.

God and the world are so far asunder, that it is almost impossible to pass from the one to the other suddenly. And the mind besieged with worldly thoughts and objects has need to make a vigorous sally to raise that siege before it can have its way free to God.

We must imitate Abraham, who, going up to the Mount of Sacrifice, left his Servants and his Ass at the foot of the Mountain. For before we begin our prayer, which is our Sacrifice to God, and before we mount upwards with our thoughts and our hearts, we must leave below all that is servile and brutish in our affections or imaginations, forbidding the cares of this world, yea the most lawful, to follow us when the duty of prayer calls us to draw near God.

Also, let us take some time to acknowledge our infinite obligation to God's bounty, and with what ungratefulness we have repaid his benefits. Let us think of his Justice which has terrible judgments ready against sinners. Let us think of his mercy that acquits us when we present unto him the merit of his beloved Son by Faith. Let us think on the holiness of his divine Essence and the righteousness of his laws, which we must resolve to keep carefully, and to crave the

assistance of his Spirit to that effect. Let us think on the excellency of his promises and his Fatherly care of those that love and fear him. Let us think on his glory which, above all things, we must ask of God.

Having thus our minds full of God and our duty, let us present ourselves to him with the dispositions of reverence, humility, faith, and zeal. And because God is pure and simple, let us use simplicity and few words in our prayers. In the multitude of words, there are divers vanities, but fear thou God, saith the Royal Preacher: Ecclesiastes 5. Teaching us that if, after that warning of human frailty, we use many words in our prayer, we show want of the fear of God, venturing thus boldly to tell him many vanities among many words.

In long discourses, even of things of the world, both the hearer and the speaker will slacken their attention, like a bow too long bent. Much more in discourses of divine things, which want the natural and sensible helps for attention.

The Lord that commands us to pray to him be pleased to frame in our hearts such prayers as may be acceptable unto him, even for his Son's sake, and by the virtue of his Spirit helping our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. Romans 8.26. Yea, Lord, give us the Spirit of supplication. Give us grace to ask what thou commandest, and then we cannot miss to obtain what we demand.

## **PREPARATION for the Holy Communion**

1 Corinthians 11, verse 24. This do in remembrance of me.

## **Soliloquy**

I have great reason indeed to remember him that remembered me in his great agonies, and to do what he bids me to do in remembrance of him, since he forgot his own preservation to remember mine. It is too little for me now to consider his authority which obliges me to do this. I will stay upon his love. In what case was he when he celebrated this Sacrament of his body and blood, and commanded his Disciples (of whom I am one) to do this in remembrance of him?

Alas! it was the last night before his most bitter Passion, and he had then in his soul that horrible agony which about an hour after made him sweat great drops of blood trickling down to the ground. And it was for us, his Disciples, that he felt that agony. It was for us that he was going to put his neck under the heavy burden of the Cross. Of which, that we might ever be sensible, he left to us in his last words a perpetual remembrance of the end and of the benefit of his death and of his love to us. He blesses the bread and the cup, calls them his body and blood, represents to us under this bread broken the sufferings of his body, under this wine poured into the cup the shedding of his blood; gives us together the sign and the thing signified, making all faithful communicants as truly partakers of the benefit of his sufferings, as if they had borne them in their own persons; feeds them with that mystical meat and drink to spiritual and eternal life, makes them one body and one spirit with their Saviour whom they receive, and graciously seals God's covenant and peace with them.

Who can but wonder at the greatness of this love and the liberty of this great soul, that he would, that he could think of all those things, when he had a most cruel death before his eyes, and was hardly

breathing under the weight of God's wrath, as great as the sins of all men deserved! But he would show that this was his proper and chief business in the world, and that the motive that made him go to meet death, was to give us his body and his blood for our propitiation before God.

For that great Son of God seems to speak thus to us in this farewell and declaration of his last will before his death; My friends, I must now drink the cup of God's wrath, but it is that you may drink the cup of salvation, and here it is. I drink the bitter, that you may drink the sweet. The Cross brings me death, but it brings you life. I am going to shed my blood to spare yours. And for a perpetual pledge that it is for you that my body suffereth, and my blood is shed, I enjoin you to celebrate this perpetual remembrance of my death. As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, show you my death till I come. Every time that you shall see them, let them put you in mind of my body and blood, and of my love stronger than death, which made me deliver myself unto death to work your peace with God. Take them, and be assured that these outward elements that you eat and drink are not more yours than my body and my blood and the whole benefit of my death and obedience. Fare you well, Death calls upon me, Enjoy the fruit of my death and remember me.

I am then invited with the greatest and holiest solemnity to the table of the Lord, and to himself. And the meat and drink which he gives me is himself. O infinite love! Miraculous virtue, love! Miraculous virtue, love! Miraculous virtue, which turns the death of my Saviour into a feast, and his Adieu when he went to die into an invitation! O for thoughts and affections worthy of such a sublime and peerless love.

As for thoughts, it is in vain, my soul, that thou seekest them, though thou hadst the understanding of Angels: For they are the depths of God's love which the Angels desire to look into. And the Apostle telling us that they desire it, teacheth us that it is beyond their reach, though they try for it, the strength of their pure cleareyed eyes enlightened with God's light. But it is lawful for our affections to rise higher than the reach of our thoughts. It is lawful for them to love that great Saviour as much as he loveth us, if it were possible. And there we may strive to rise above our strength without offence. O that I could love him more than I can! But since I cannot give him more than myself; How gladly would I give myself wholly to him, for his gift to me of his whole precious self! It is too little to wish it. I must do it. Since I am invited to take the bread of life and the cup of salvation, I will go and take them, and taking them give myself together unto him that giveth them me.

But whither do I go? Let me consider before what I am to take and to give. I am going to take the body and blood of the Son of God and his whole self. But have I taken this to serious consideration, that he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself? I am going to present and give myself to him. But have I considered what I present him with, and whether I make a good or an evil gift to him?

Alas who am I that presume to come to the Lord's table? How much have I transgressed his commandments? How much have I abused his graces? Have I not been seduced by the vanities of this world? Hath not the World stolen away part of my heart which I owe to God whole and undivided? Did I not more repose myself upon temporal helps than I trusted his wisdom and bounty? What thanks did I return him for his innumerable blessings of heaven and earth? and did I not make an ill use of his blessings of the earth to turn away my

heart and mind from the blessings of heaven? And have I not laboured more for that bread which perisheth, than for that which endureth unto everlasting life? How many vain thoughts distract my attention in my prayers and in the hearing of the word of God? Hath my faith in his holy promises never staggered? Have I been sensible as I should have been of the affliction of God's Church, and the outrage done to his holy name, which is blasphemed, and to his truth which is disdained? Have I been patient, meek and charitable to my neighbours? And did I apply myself freely and cheerfully to the duty of good works? Did I bear with humility the afflictions which God sent me, and have I absolutely resigned my will unto his?

O when I think on the evils that I have committed and the duties which I have omitted, one deep calls to another deep. And I am lost in the confused number of my sins. O stubborn flesh! O slow nature to serve God, and active to serve the world! O body of death that keepest the spirit under the law of sin! how quick thou art still within me! And how ashamed and sorrowful am I, that after so many benefits of God and such a long apprenticeship in the school of his word and spirit, there remains yet in me so much of my natural corruption?

But this shame and sorrow is unto me a matter of hope, and I begin to rise again because I am beaten down. For did I not belong to God, and did I not love him, I should have no displeasure to have offended him. And had he not loved me first, I should not love him. Why then should I deprive myself of the table of the Lord as unworthy? It is because I am unworthy that I must come near, that I may become worthy. If none could receive the body and blood of the Lord worthily but such as are worthy, there would be no worthy receiving. But those are worthy receivers that acknowledge their unworthiness,

and lament it, and finding no worthiness at home, come with hunger and thirst after righteousness to seek worthiness in this holy table.

In the parable, he is pleased to invite to his table the lame and the maimed, to show that the abundance of his grace is moved by the lowest case of our infirmity: Because I have no righteousness I have the more need to go to him that hath righteousness to spare, and doth without sparing bestow it on them that beg it at his hands, To what end had Christ suffered if we were righteous? Could he have died for our sins if we had none? And was it not to all penitent sinners in the persons of his Apostles that he said when he gave this holy Cup, Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins? Matthew 26.27. & 28.

It is true that the sinner cannot subsist before the most holy God. Who shall stand when he appeareth? saith Malachi. Malachi 3.3. But there he speaks of standing before the throne of his justice. It is not there that I must now appear. I am invited to the throne of his grace. I am called to the feast of the riches of his mercy. Where being once arrayed with the nuptial garments of the merits of my Saviour the Son of God, I shall not fear to appear before the justice of his father. Come unto me (saith he) all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will ease you. Matthew 11.28. O precious invitation! And who is he that invites us so? the same that hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and on whom the Lord laid the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53.4. So he easeth us, Himself carrieth our burden.

We then that labor and are heavy laden. we whose conscience is groaning under the burden of our sins, Let us go to him and boldly unload our burden upon him. He requires it, He calls us to it. There is no burden too heavy for his divine strength. There is no offence so

great, but is overcome by the greatness of his love. Let us go confidently to him. He is the relief of the distressed, the rest of the weary, the deliverer of the captive, the Advocate of repenting offenders, for whom he obtaineth absolution from his Father, presenting them to him clad all over with his own righteousness. Let us, O let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4.16.

Let me feed now the eyes of my faith with the cheer that I am invited unto, before I come nearer. I see but one dish upon this table, which is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. But that only dish comprehends all the plenty and all the variety of the dainties of God's house. Here I find before all things a remedy to all my diseases, the remission of my sins according to the riches of his grace; for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1.7. And my sins being pardoned and my soul justified, how much grace, how much glory followeth! God becomes my father, his beloved son becomes my brother, his Spirit becomes my life, his kingdom becomes mine heritage: And God gives me now in his table the pledges and earnest of that eternal feast, where Christ hath prepared a place for me in his heavenly glory. Already in the table of this holy Sacrament he feeds me with the same meat and the same drink that I shall be feasted with forever in heaven. Here the Son of God receiveth me for his Spouse, and makes me one flesh with him, for by giving me his body, he incorporateth himself with me by faith. So that he and I are no more two, but one flesh. O dear, O precious feast, where my God himself is my food, where I taste how the Lord is gracious! 1 Peter 2.3. O life of my soul! O sweet foretaste of the fatness of God's house and the rivers of his pleasures! Blessed am I if I can relish the goodness of the Lord, more blessed if I can express it by my thankfulness.



Now this is the thing, O my soul, which thou must seriously look to. Thou hast been considering what goods are given thee at the Lord's table. But hast thou considered what duties are required of thee by this holy Communion? Look to thyself, and presume not to come to receive the benefits, not being disposed to render the duties. Here Christ gives himself to me, But it is upon condition that I shall give myself to him. He gives me his body and blood to be received by faith, but it must be a faith that purifies the heart, and is working by love. Acts 15.9. Galatians 5.6. Else it is no faith but presumption. He gives me his body and blood for my food, but it is that I may be renewed to a better life. He grafteth me upon himself, but it is that I may bear fruit answerable to the tree that beareth me. I am the vine (saith he) and you are the branches, he that abideth in me and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit. John 15.5. He makes me one body with him, but it is that I may live with his life and follow his example. I come to embrace the benefit of his sufferings: But his Apostle Peter teacheth me, that Christ hath suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps; Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. 1 Peter 2.21. Christ feeds me, and his other members with me, with the same bread, the bread of his table, that we may be all one body whereof himself is the head. I must then come near this Sacrament of charity with a mind full of charity. And joining with Christ and his Church with this mystical bond, I must study hereafter to keep that union holy and inviolable by charity unfeigned. This Sacrament is a seal of my Covenant with God. It obligeth me then to a grateful observation of that high Covenant, made with me in the holy Communion. O that I had the eyes of mine understanding enlightened and my heart open to apprehend deeply the importance of the Covenant made me in this holy table! O that my fervent affections were sensible enough to resent what obligation this seal of his eternal love layeth upon me? That the body and blood of Christ here given me are the price of my

redemption. And that being redeemed by such a great price, I am no more mine own, but Christ's, that purchased me to have my service, Then before I receive. this body and blood, I must thus cast my reckoning; I am going to take the price which the Son of God hath paid to buy me. So when I receive that payment, I must at the same time deliver to him that which he hath bought, and wholly resign myself to him by a sincere love and obedience. Without that the bargain will not hold, and the Covenant is null. For to think to possess the price that he paid to buy me, and not deliver to him what he bought, that would be keeping the clothe and the money: that would be affronting the Lord Jesus, and provoking him to keep his body and blood to himself, since we will not give him our bodies and our spirits in exchange. Can I find in my heart to take so much of him, and deny him so small a thing? And shall I not be moved by the compassions of God to present my body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto him which is my reasonable service? Romans 12.1.

It is my reasonable service indeed to sacrifice myself to him that sacrificed himself for me. And since he gives me the incense of his merit, it is my bounden duty to bring to it the fire of my love, to send up to heaven the sweet savour of zeal and praises and of a holy conversation. Since Christ is dead for me, it is my duty to die for him, killing within me that Old Man of sin who hath been the cause of the death of my Saviour; He loved me when I was by nature his enemy; I will then learn of him to love mine enemies. He hath forgiven me a debt of ten thousand talents, I must forgive a hundredth pence to my fellow servants. Yea, as God forgiveth me offences without number, so I must to my neighbours. He hath been obedient to his father even to the death of the Cross, I must also obey him in the hardest things, though it were to resist unto blood, I take Christ in his table for my Saviour, I must take him at the same time for my Lord and the pattern for my imitation.

Being thus disposed I will make bold to come near his holy Table. My soul rejoice thou in the Lord, Take hold of his salvation, Take hold of himself, Get life in his death, and health in his wounds. O taste and see that the Lord is good, Blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Psalms 34.8. The Lord Jesus hath made an exchange with me. He hath taken my sins upon himself, and put his righteousness upon me. He hath made my peace with God. He hath given me the inheritance of the Saints in the light. Jesus himself is mine inheritance; He is my food, my life, and my joy. To him then I am going with a fervent zeal both to take • him, and give myself to him. I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. I will take him, and will not let him go. Neither life nor death shall separate me from him.

### **A PRAYER before the Holy Communion**

My most gracious God, who hast so loved me as to give thy dear only Son, and deliver him over to the bitter death of the cross to make propitiation for my sins, the pledges and assurances whereof thou givest me in thy holy Table. My mind is swallowed in the admiration of thy bounty, and loseth itself in the boundless and bottomless Ocean of thy compassions; and together I am beaten down with a deep confusion and grief, when I consider how unworthy I have made myself of thy great love, and how I have provoked thy Justice. O Lord, hadst thou borne thyself towards me as a Judge, and hadst thou called me to account how I have observed thy commandments, and what profit I have made of the talent of thy graces? Instead of being invited at this time to be partaker of thy Son's body and blood, I should have been cast long ago into outer darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth, for I have grievously offended against thy laws and abused thy benefits. I have not been zealous in the

duties of thy service, nor diligent in good works, nor weaned from the love of the world, nor fervent in thy love, which requireth the whole heart and soul.

But, O my God, thou hast looked upon my guilty condition through the merit of thy Son, and therefore not with an eye of a Judge but of a tender-hearted Father. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Thou art merciful and gracious, O Lord, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. Thou hast not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to mine iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is thy mercy towards me, thy sinful servant. Psalms 103.

Wherefore, O Lord, though I have never so great reason to grieve for my sins, I have more reason yet to rejoice at thy love.

O how great is thy mercy! How wonderful is thy love, which instead of turning away from me, because I turned away from thee, was pleased to run after me, and bring me home when I was lost. What an infinite height of bounty, that thou didst pity me, not only because I was miserable, but because I was guilty, and to have made me a subject of thy wrath a motive for thy compassions!

O my God, when I behold upon thy holy table the sacred memorial of the death of my Saviour, and see with the eyes of faith his body and his blood, which are the sin-offering whereby my peace was made with thee; Then say I with humble and hearty thankfulness, joined with a deep amazement. Who am I, Lord, that thy beloved Son, one God with thee blessed forevermore, should so debase himself for me, as to suffer that I should not suffer, and undergo the vilest reproach, and the bitterest death of all, to give me his riches, his glory, his kingdom, and, which is more than all, himself? That entering into the agonies of his death, he would make a declaration of his last will,

whereby he leaveth me the legacy of his most holy body and blood, and the benefit of his meritorious death. That he would invite me by his gracious command to come and take possession of it, and encourage me to come near by the inward assurances of faith, that my reconciliation is made with thee by the merit of his obedience. How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust in the shadow of thy wings, They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. Psalms 36.7.

Now, my God, as the greatness of thy bounty to me is infinitely above mine unworthiness, it is as much above my capacity. And what shall I do to receive such high benefits worthily? O Lord, I might well be in great perplexity upon that point, if the worthiness of the communicants was necessary for a worthy receiving of thy Son's body and blood. Nay, it is for a remedy to their unworthiness that they are called by thee to this sacred feast. It is because I am unworthy, It is because I am sinful that I prepare myself to come to thy table. It is because I have provoked thy justice that I have now recourse unto the throne of thy grace. It is because I am destitute of righteousness that I come to seek it in the merit of thy Son.

Yet, Lord, because none can be a real and spiritual guest at thy holy table without the wedding garment and due preparation; I beseech thee, my God, to make thy grace complete in me, give me a serious repentance of my sins, and that sacrifice acceptable unto thee of a broken and a contrite heart. Give me a true faith in thy mercy by the merit of thy Son. Cover me with the imputation of his righteousness, that nuptial robe requisite to sit at thy table in thy kingdom, of which this holy Communion is the earnest and the foretaste. Give me a holy appetite of thy grace, that hunger and thirst after righteousness, a

feeling acknowledgment of thy bounty, the joy of my salvation, the sweet assurances of thy love.

And since our communion with thee is the common bond of the communion of Saints, Give me, O Lord, a sincere charity, whereby I may be one with thee my head, and with all thy redeemed my fellow-members, and whereby I may have peace with all men. Enable me to show that I love thee by loving my neighbours and doing them good for thy sake who dost me so much good. As thou forgivest me, give me grace to forgive.

Lord, I come to receive the Sacrament of thy Covenant. Grant that I may now renew it, consecrating to thee with a free heart this body and soul which thou hast redeemed. As I live from thee in my nature, and by thee through redemption, and in thee through regeneration, grant me also to live only for thee, and glorify thee in my body and in my Spirit which are thine. Unto thee, O Lord, I humbly present them. O take thou such an absolute possession of them that nothing but thyself live in me. That I be now filled with thy grace, and forever serve to thy glory. Amen.

### **A Shorter Prayer to use a little before the Communion**

O Lord Jesus, who callest me to thy Table, be pleased to meet me, and bring me to it thyself. Give me the two wings of faith and love to raise my heart to thee.

O Son of God, who hast given thyself for me, and dost at this time give thyself to me, open thou my heart to receive thee, give me holy affections to entertain thee. That with a confidence tempered with

humility and a joy full of holy trembling, I receive this high mystery of my salvation, yea, that I enjoy thine own self really and truly.

O thou that wouldst be conceived in the Virgin's womb, be conceived again in my heart, that hereafter I may live with thy life.

O thou that wouldst die for me, make me now feel the efficacy of thy death in the comfort of my soul and the mortification of my sinful affections.

O thou that art risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, work a resurrection of holiness in my heart, and a lively faith to ascend to heaven after thee. There to embrace thee, and hold thee, while I take with my hand the outward elements of bread and wine. O bread of life come feed my soul. O Holy Spirit give me the true taste of these great mercies. And for the fruits of thy bounty let me ever return the fruits of my love and thankfulness.

### **Thanksgiving after the holy Communion**

My God, most gracious Father, who hast this day given me the pledges of my salvation & the earnest of eternal life; My God, who hast fed me with the body and blood of thy son, and hast quickened me with the merit of his obedience applied to my heart through faith; I am full with thy bounty: My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips. My soul hath been thirsty after thee as a thirsty land, and thou hast made it a watered garden. Psalms 63:5, Psalms 143:6, Isaiah 58:11. I have presented unto thee my bruised heart, and thou hast made it whole with thy sweetest comforts. I came unto thee poor and hungry after thy grace, and I return rich and full with the bread descended from

heaven. O the treasures of thy mercy which passeth all understanding! Thou hast given me thy Son. Thou hast given me thine own self. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup, thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth, My flesh also shall rest in hope. Psalms 16:5.

O that I had the tongue of Angels, to give thee glory in the highest, for the peace which thou makest on earth, with the men honoured with thy goodwill! Let thy redeemed people glorify thee. Let all thy works magnify thee. Let my soul be delivered by thine eternal compassions, comforted by thy love, and already blessed in heavenly places in the person of Christ my head, love thee, praise thee, magnify thee, and consecrate herself unto thee, who hast bestowed thy Son upon me. I heartily desire O my God, to set up thy kingdom in my heart, to subject all my affections and imaginations unto thee alone, to have no will but thy will, to know no interest but thy glory, to place all my felicity in walking before thee unto all pleasing.

But, O my God. I live yet in the flesh. The flesh is infirm, Satan is crafty and vigilant to seduce me; And the world is contrary, whether he persecute me, or smile upon me. My zeal may take a flight to thee, but hath not the wing strong enough to keep me up in that height. And after I am raised up to heaven, I am prone to fall down again to the ground. Wherefore, O Lord, be pleased to sustain me with thy virtue from above. And as after sending of thy Son thou didst send thy Spirit to thy Church, So now after thou hast given me thy Son this day, O give me also the virtue of thy good Spirit.

Yea come, Holy Ghost, make my heart thy dwelling place. Sanctify me to thyself, mortify my sinful affections. Fill me with faith, charity,



meekness and all Christian virtues. Preserve me against the seductions of the world. Endue me with strength against all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Be my counsellor in my perplexities, My comforter in my troubles, and my guide in all my ways.

My God, who hast fed me this day in the hope of a better life spiritual and eternal, Give me grace to begin it already. O enable me to live on earth as they live in heaven, as much as my temporal condition is capable of it, advancing in thy knowledge, loving thee, praising thee and obeying thee with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, and with all my understanding. Suffer me not to love the world, nor the things that are in the world, but let my heart be where my treasure is. 1. John. 3, Mark 6.

And after I have fought the good fight, and kept the faith, be pleased to give me the crown incorruptible of life. Let me finally possess to the full thy beloved Son that loved me and gave himself for me. Let me once enjoy that fullness of joy that lieth in thy presence, and those pleasures for evermore that are at thy right hand, Where I may find mine eternal delight in praising thee eternally, for thine eternal love in thy Son Jesus Christ.

To whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be glory for evermore. Amen.

FINIS.

-----

## **MONERGISM BOOKS**

A WEEK OF SOLILOQUIES AND PRAYERS, by Pierre Du Moulin.  
Copyright © 2023

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. By payment of the required fees, you have been granted the non-exclusive, non-transferable right to access and read the text of this e-book on-screen. No part of this text may be reproduced, transmitted, downloaded, decompiled, reverse engineered, or stored in or introduced into any information storage and retrieval system, in any form or by any means, whether electronic or mechanical, now known or hereinafter invented, without the express written permission of Monergism Books.

ePub, .mobi & .pdf Editions September 2023. Requests for information should be addressed to: Monergism Books, PO Box 491, West Linn Or 97068