

ARTICLE VII.

THE THIRD REVISION OF THE DIRECTORY OF
WORSHIP.¹REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE REVISION OF THE
DIRECTORY OF WORSHIP.

The Committee on the Revision of the Directory of Worship, would respectfully present the following Report, embracing, first, the facts touching the action of the Presbyteries and the history of this revision ; and, secondly, the Directory, revised as far as it was practicable by this Committee.

Papers embodying the action of fifty Presbyteries in regard to the Revision are in the hands of the Committee.

Of these, twenty-five expressly approve the continuance of the work of revision, and many of them furnish criticisms and suggestions for the use of the Committee, to wit: Fayetteville, Augusta, Columbia, Western District, Western Texas, Brazos, Central Texas, Bethel, St. Louis, Arkansas, West Lexington, Mississippi, Tombeckbee, St. John's, South Carolina, Atlanta, Tuska-loosa, Roanoke, Louisiana, Harmony, Chesapeake, Louisville, Abingdon, Cherokee, Knoxville.

Twenty imply approval, and contribute criticisms and sugges-tions, to wit: Charleston, Greenbrier, Montgomery, Lexington, Ebenezer, Enoree, Savannah, South Alabama, Florida, Orange, Transylvania, Athens, West Hanover, Mecklenburg, Memphis, New Orleans, Macon, East Hanover, Holston, East Alabama.

Two express disapprobation of any revision, but furnish criti-cisms, to wit: Potosi and Winchester.

Three discountenance revision, and furnish no criticisms, to wit : Concord, Missouri, East Texas.

The criticisms of all Presbyteries furnishing them have been

¹ This Report, which will be submitted to the General Assembly at Houston, is very willingly allowed a place in our pages, both as of convenience to the Committee and as of interest to the Church. Two hundred copies of it will be forwarded by the Chairman, to be laid before the members of that body.—EDITORS SO. PRES. REVIEW.

carefully considered by the Committee, and great regard has been paid them in the changes presented in this Revision. Of course they could not all be embodied, for this reason among others, that they were found to be on some points irreconcilably opposed to one another.

Our former revisions reported have been carefully compared with the old Directory, and an honest effort made to combine the best things found in them all.

For convenience of cooperation, the Atlanta Assembly added to the Revision Committee Drs. Girardeau and Boggs, to act with Dr. Woodrow as a Sub-Committee. These brethren did what was possible to them in the following year to produce another revision of the Directory. During the past year circumstances occurred, leading Dr. Woodrow to withdraw from the Committee, and he has therefore not of late been acting with us. It has not been practicable during this year to obtain the counsel or cooperation of any of the other members of the Committee as formerly constituted, and accordingly this present effort at preparing a more acceptable Revision is submitted to the General Assembly at Houston on the sole responsibility of those whose names are appended to it.

The preliminary statement which introduces our work was prepared and is here furnished at the special request of several Presbyteries.

Two hundred printed copies of this Report are herewith submitted, that the Assembly may the more conveniently and thoroughly examine it, preparatory to such disposal of it as to the wisdom of the body may seem good.

For the Committee.

JNO. B. ADGER, *Chairman*.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

1. Sinners cannot approach God except through a public minister of worship, who as a priest offers gifts and sacrifices for them not without blood. Infinite mercy has provided for us such

a Minister of Worship in the person of Jesus Christ, who, having offered himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice for our sins, appears in the heavenly holy of holies, and presents for us the incense of his perpetual intercession. They who come unto God by him, defiled as are their praises and their prayers, find gracious acceptance for their persons and their worship.

2. Jesus Christ has made the Church a holy priesthood, and individual believers priests unto God even his Father, to offer in worship sacrifices, not of expiation, but of thanksgiving, supplication, and intercession : the spiritual sacrifice of themselves in the service of God, of prayer and praise to him, and of their substance for the advancement of his kingdom and the relief of the poor.

3. The adorable Agent, who produces in us the temper of true worship, teaches us what it should include and how it should be offered, moves us to its performance, and assists us to render it, is the Holy Spirit.

4. The elements of worship are either essential and immutable, or accidental and changeable. The essential, growing out of the nature of God and that of the creature in relation to each other, are imposed by moral law, and are therefore permanent features of every dispensation of the gospel; but the special forms of public worship in the Church, being matters of positive divine enactment, have varied as each economy has changed. Hence the ritualism of the Jewish temple, though formerly enforced by God's command, having been fulfilled in Christ, has, by the divine will, given way to the simple worship of the Christian dispensation, in which, excepting the symbolical ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the only forms required are such as are necessary vehicles of expression for the essential and permanent elements of worship.

5. The great principle, defining the limitations upon public worship, is, that whatsoever is not either explicitly commanded in the word of God, or cannot be deduced from it by good and necessary consequence, is forbidden. A divine warrant must be furnished for every element of the public worship of the Church. All else is the product of human wisdom and taste, and is reprobated as will-worship; which, as it is condemned by God, should

be rejected by the Church. In the spiritual sphere she has no discretion; all that she possesses is in the natural sphere, common to human societies with herself in which the circumstances, necessary as conditions to the performance of the joint acts of all of them, such as time, place, and the like, are subject to her control; but they cannot enter as elements or modes into the peculiar acts of the Church as a religious society.

6. The Christian Church, as it has no atoning human priest and no material altar, so has no outward temple. Its sanctuaries are not designed, in their structure and adornments, to symbolise the divine perfections, but derive their only glory from the presence of Christ in the ordinances of his gospel and the operations of his grace. The practice, therefore, of decorating houses of worship with statues, paintings, flowers, branches of trees, and the like, is illegitimate and ought to be avoided.

7. A Directory of Worship for the Church in this dispensation, for reasons stated above, should be confined to those things which Christ her King has either explicitly or implicitly authorised in the New Testament Scriptures, as confirming the essential elements of worship common to every dispensation, abolishing those peculiar to the Jewish, and prescribing those distinctive of the New.

CHAPTER I.

PUBLIC WORSHIP ON THE LORD'S DAY.

I. The nature of the Sabbath, or Lord's Day, and the way in which it is to be kept holy, are set forth in the Confession of Faith, Chapter XXI., Sections 7 and 8, and the Larger Catechism, Answers 116-119.

II. In the public worship of God on the Lord's day, all the people should be careful to assemble at the appointed time, that, being present from the beginning, they may with one heart engage in every part of it gravely and reverently ; and none of them should, without necessity, withdraw until the benediction shall have been pronounced. They should prepare themselves, by prayer and meditation, for the proper observance of the services of God's house. And such as are heads of families should

exercise care, that the arrangements of their households for that day be so ordered as not to prevent children, servants, and others from attending public worship, or otherwise to hinder them from sanctifying the Sabbath.

III. The standing posture in public prayer is sanctioned by Scripture, is expressive of reverence and service, is recommended by the practice of the primitive Church and by the immemorial usage of Presbyterians. It is, therefore, an eminently appropriate attitude for prayer by a congregation in the worship of the Lord's day ; and the sitting posture should be avoided, except when required by bodily infirmity.

IV. The public ordinances of God's house, authorised and enjoined in Scripture, are prayer ; singing praise; reading, expounding, and preaching the word ; making offerings for the relief of the poor and other pious uses ; and blessing the people ;¹ also administering the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; and exercising discipline on suitable occasions.

V. On the Lord's day morning it is proper that the following parts of service be observed :

1. *Invocation.*—This should consist of a brief prayer, in which the Divine presence and blessing are earnestly besought.

2. *Singing Praise.*—The praise of God by singing appropriate psalms or hymns is to be regulated by the Session ; and in thus praising God as a part of public worship the whole congregation should endeavor to unite. Ordinarily, the selection of tunes, and the manner of singing them, should be such as to promote this end. And the Session should take such measures for training the people in singing, as will qualify them for the proper discharge of this duty.

3. *Reading the Scriptures.*—The public reading of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments should be by the minister, who should be careful to fit himself for the edifying performance of this office; and to his discretion it is left to determine how large a portion, and what particular part or parts, of Scripture shall be read. This reading of the Scriptures shall be from the most approved translation in the vulgar tongue, that

¹ Form of Government, Chapter II., Section IV., Article V.

all may hear and understand; and the minister, when he thinks it expedient, may expound any part of what is read.

4. *Prayer.*—That before sermon should embrace :

First. Adoration of God, as he is made known in creation and providence, and especially in the clear and full revelation of his holy word.

Secondly. Thanksgiving to God for his varied mercies ; above all, for the gift of his Son Christ Jesus, for the hope of everlasting life through him, and for the mission and work of the Holy Spirit.

Thirdly. Humble confession of sin, both original and actual; of sins against God, against our neighbor, and against ourselves, whether pertaining to us as individuals, or as a church, or as a people, together with their special aggravations.

Fourthly. Earnest supplication for the removal of guilt, for peace with God through the blood which cleanseth from all sin, and for all other fruits of justification ; for the Holy Spirit to regenerate and sanctify, and for abundant supplies of his grace in the discharge of every duty ; for support and comfort under trials; and for all needed mercies ; it being always remembered that they flow in the channel of covenant love, and are intended to subserve the preservation and progress of the spiritual life.

Fifthly. Intercession and petition for others, including the whole world of mankind; for the increase and spread of the entire Church, for the particular church then assembled, and all other churches associated in one body with it; for ministers of the gospel; for baptized children and other young persons; for the sick, dying, and bereaved ; for the poor and destitute ; for the community in which the church is situated ; for civil rulers ; and for whatever else may seem to be necessary or suitable to the occasion.

The prominence given to each of these topics must be left to the discretion of the minister.

While the Church has no authority to confine ministers to prescribed forms of public prayer, yet it is the duty of every minister to prepare for this as well as for the service of preaching, that it may be discharged with dignity and propriety, and to the edification of the people.

5. *Offerings for the poor and for other pious uses.*—It is both a privilege and a duty plainly enjoined in Scripture to make regular, systematic, and liberal offerings for the support of religion, and for the propagation of the gospel in our own and in foreign lands, as well as for the relief of the poor. And this should be done as an exercise of grace and an act of worship.

6. *Singing praise a second time.*

7. *Preaching the word.*—The minister, “whose work this is by Divine appointment, must apply himself diligently to it, and prove himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

It is recommended that ordinarily sermons should be preached without being read.

8. *Prayer after sermon.*—This should generally have relation to the subject treated of in the discourse; and all other public prayers to the circumstances that give occasion for them.

9. *Singing praise a third time, with a doxology; and*

10. *The congregation dismissed with the benediction.*

VI. A second public service, with preaching, should, when practicable, be held on the Lord’s day.

VII. The exercises appropriate to the Sabbath-school, are prayer, singing praise to God, and the study of the Holy Scriptures, together with the Catechisms of the Church. Its services must not be allowed to interfere with attendance upon the regular public worship of the Lord’s day on the one hand, or with parental instruction on the other. And the school is always to be under the supervision and control of the Session.

CHAPTER II.

PUBLIC WORSHIP ON OTHER OCCASIONS.

I. Under the New Testament dispensation no day is commanded to be stately kept holy, except the Lord’s day, which is the Christian Sabbath. Nevertheless, it is scriptural occasionally to observe days of fasting and humiliation, as well as days of thanksgiving, and of prayer for special objects, set apart as the extraordinary dealings of divine Providence may prompt. And when such seasons are appointed by the proper ecclesias-

tical authorities, the people should be assembled for public worship, and the entire service be adapted to the occasion.

It is left to Sessions to determine upon the propriety of complying in this matter with any similar appointment by the civil authorities.

II. Special services, protracted from day to day, may be held when in the judgment of Sessions it appears expedient; but it is highly important that such exercises should not in any way be permitted to bring about the depreciation of the stated ordinances of the gospel, or the labors of a settled ministry.

III. It is in accordance with Scriptural example that meetings for prayer be held on other than Sabbath-days, and it pertains to Sessions to take order concerning them. They may be maintained either statedly, where that is possible, or at seasons specially appointed where the scattered condition of congregations renders stated meetings of this kind impracticable. Such meetings should be conducted by ministers, by some other members of Sessions, or by any duly qualified members, of the Church ; and the exercises should be prayer, singing of praise, the reading of the Scriptures, and exhortation.

CHAPTER III.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM.

I. The nature of baptism, and the scriptural authority therefor, are fully set forth in the Confession of Faith, Ch. XXVIII, and the Larger Catechism, Answers 165–167.

II. Baptism is not to be unnecessarily delayed, nor to be administered in any case by a private person, but by a minister of the word, and, ordinarily, by the minister of that particular church with which the household is connected. It is usually to be administered in the presence of the congregation, on the Lord's day, yet there may be cases when it will be expedient to administer this ordinance in private houses, of which the minister is the judge.

III. The Scriptures teach that the children of a professed believer are born members of the visible Church. Their baptism involves now, as their circumcision did under the Old Testament,

a public acknowledgment both by the Lord and his Church of their relation to the covenant.

IV. THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

1. When this sacrament is to be administered, the congregation ought, ordinarily, to be instructed in regard to its nature, and its scriptural warrant.

2. *The parents presenting the child shall be addressed in some, such words as these :*

You present your child, that it may, by God's appointment, receive the sign and seal of membership in his visible Church, and of its covenant relation to him; and you profess your sense of its dependence for salvation upon the atoning blood of Christ, and the renewing grace of the Holy Ghost.

The parents shall answer, We do.

Do you, then, in humble reliance upon the grace of God promise to teach this child to read the word of God ; to instruct it in the principles of our holy religion, as contained therein, and as set forth in the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms; to pray with and for it; to set before it an example of piety and godliness; and thus to endeavor by all the means of God's appointment to bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ?

The parents shall answer, We do.

3. Then the minister is to pray that what is signified and sealed in this sacrament may be accomplished by the Spirit in the child; after which, calling it by its name, he shall say, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." As he pronounces these words he is to baptize the child with water, by pouring or sprinkling, without adding any other ceremony, and the whole shall be concluded with prayer.

V. THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS.

1. Baptism is to be administered to adults upon a credible profession of saving faith in Christ, and involves the public and solemn acknowledgment of the fact, that the person receiving it has been admitted by proper authority into communion with the visible Church. When there is an existing church the baptism should be administered by order of the Session, and usually in

the presence of the congregation on the Lord's day and by the minister of that church.

2. When the profession of faith is to be made in public, the minister, addressing the person to be baptized, may say: Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his Spirit ; of our partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace; and our engagement to be the Lord's.

3. And it is deemed advisable that he should then propound to the candidate the following questions :

Q. 1. Do you, in the presence of God and of this church, profess your adoption of these fundamental articles of the Christian faith ?—

That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired and only infallible rule of faith and practice.

That there are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these three, while different as Persons, are not three Gods, but one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

That the eternal Son of God became man; that he obeyed the law, in his life and in his death on the cross, as the atoning Saviour of sinners ; that he was buried ; that on the third day he rose from the dead ; that he ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, where he intercedes as Priest and reigns as King ; and that thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

That in our natural, fallen condition we are depraved, liable to eternal death, and wholly unable to save ourselves.

That the Holy Spirit convinces us of our sin and misery, enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Christ, renews our wills, and persuades and enables us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel.

That by the works of the law, that is, by our own personal righteousness, we cannot be justified before God, but by his grace are freely pardoned and accepted as righteous in his sight,

only on account of the righteousness of Christ received by faith alone.

That as we are justified in Christ, so we must be sanctified in him by his Spirit; and that it is our privilege and our duty, in humble dependence upon divine grace, to obey the holy commands of Christ as the indestructible rule of life.

That thus all Christ's people are brought into union and fellowship with him, and with one another, in one body which is the holy catholic or universal Church.

That at death the souls of believers do immediately pass into glory, and the souls of unbelievers into the place of torment; that there shall be a general resurrection of the bodies of the dead ; and that from the Judgment Bar the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into everlasting life.

Do you so believe ?

The candidate shall answer, I do.

Q. 2. And do you now profess, that, out of a true sense of your sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, you do, with grief and hatred of your sin, turn from it unto God with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience; thus, as far as you know your own heart and in reliance upon divine strength, engaging to be the Lord's, to receive his word as the rule of your faith and practice, to take his cross, to renounce the vain pomps and the sinful indulgences of the world, and to submit yourself in the Lord to the constituted authorities of his Church ; walking in brotherly love with its members, studying its peace, and praying and laboring for its prosperity ? Do you ?

The candidate shall answer, I do.

4. After prayer, the minister shall baptize the candidate with water, by pouring or sprinkling, saying: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Then the minister may give his hand to the person baptized, in token of his cordial reception into the communion of the Church; and let the administration of the sacrament be concluded with prayer.

VI. The baptized children of the Church are entitled to come

to the Lord's table, upon a credible profession of saving faith in Christ made before the Session, without any other formality.

Should it, however, be deemed expedient that they make a public appearance before the congregation, let it be only that they may receive from the minister an address suited to their circumstances, and that they may be personally known to the members of the church.

VII. The names of persons making a profession of faith, and of those admitted to the communion of a particular church upon letters of dismission from other churches, shall be announced to the congregation from the pulpit.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

I. The nature of the Lord's Supper, and the scriptural authority therefor, are fully set forth in the Confession of Faith, Chapter XXIX., and the Larger Catechism, Answers 168—177.

II. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper, commonly called the Communion, is to be administered frequently ; but how frequently is a question to be determined by the Session of each particular church. It is proper that public notice should be given to the congregation, at least one Sabbath before the administration of the ordinance; and that, either then or on some other day of the week, the people be instructed in regard to its nature, and urged to make due preparation for it, that all may come in a suitable manner to this holy feast.

Since, by our Lord's appointment, this sacrament sets forth the communion of saints, the minister, before the administration begins, should invite all communicants in good standing in evangelical churches, who may be present, to participate in the ordinance.

It is proper that non-communicants be invited to remain during the sacramental service.

Ordinarily, the minister shall read the account of the institution of the sacrament as contained in Matt. xxvi. 26-30, or Mark xiv. 22-26, or Luke xxii. 19, 20, or 1 Cor. xi. 23-34. He may then, if to him it appear expedient, either read consecutively

the Answers to Questions 169, 170, 172, and 174 of the Larger Catechism, or explain and apply the truth taught in the passage of Scripture, read, showing, substantially, that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament, wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, his death is shewed forth; and they that worthily communicate feed upon his body and blood to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, have their union and communion with him confirmed, testify and renew their thankfulness and engagement to him, and their mutual love and fellowship each with the other as members of the same mystical body, and that this sacrament is to be observed in the Church until he come.

As the ignorant, the scandalous, the profane, and those who secretly indulge themselves in any known sin are not entitled to partake of this holy ordinance, the minister should warn them against coming to the Lord's table. On the other hand, he should tenderly invite to this table such as, being instructed in the gospel doctrine, have a competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body; such as, sensible of their lost and helpless state of sin, depend upon the atonement of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God ; and such as desire to renounce their sins and are determined to lead a godly life.

Now let a suitable psalm or hymn be sung.

The table on which the elements are placed being decently covered, the bread in convenient dishes and the wine in cups, and the communicants orderly and gravely sitting, around the table (or in their seats before it), in the presence of the minister, let him offer prayer with thanksgiving, in which the elements may be set apart from a common to a sacramental use.

The minister is then to take the bread and break it in the view of the people, saying, in expressions of this sort:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the same night in which he was betrayed, having taken bread, and blessed and broken it, gave it to his disciples, as I, ministering in his name, give this bread unto you: saying [here the bread is to be distributed], Take, eat : this is my body, which is broken for your this do in remembrance of me.

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After having given the bread, he shall take the cup, and say :

After the same manner our Saviour also took the cup; and having given thanks, as hath been done in his name, he gave it to the disciples, saying [while the minister is repeating these words, let him give the cup], This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins: drink ye all of it. For, as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

The minister himself is to communicate at such time as may appear to him most convenient.

The minister may, in a few words:

Put the communicants in mind of the grace of God, in Jesus Christ, held forth in this sacrament; and of their obligation to be the Lord's; and exhort them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called; and, as they have professedly received Christ Jesus the Lord, to be carefull so to walk in him, and to maintain good works.

The minister may also give a word of exhortation to those who have been only spectators :

Reminding them of their duty ; stating the sin and danger of their living in disobedience to Christ, by neglecting this holy ordinance; and calling upon them to be earnest in making preparation for attending upon it at the next time of its administration.

It is expedient that a part of, the time occupied in the distribution of the elements should be spent by all in silent communion with their Lord and Saviour, who is peculiarly present with them at his own board.

It is proper that the minister should call upon any of the communicants who may have been passed by in the distribution of the elements, to signify it by rising (or holding up the hand) ; and if there be any, they should now be served.

Then let the minister offer prayer :

Giving thanks to God for his rich mercy and inestimable goodness vouchsafed to the communicants in that sacred ordinance ; imploring pardon for their sins and defects in the whole service ; pleading for the acceptance of their persons and performances ;

and for the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit, to enable them, as they have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him; to the end that they may hold fast that which they have received that no man take their crown; that their conversation may be as becometh the gospel; that they may bear about with them, continually, the dying of the Lord Jesus; that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in their mortal body; and that their light may so shine before men, that others, seeing their good works, may glorify their Father who is in heaven.

Now let a psalm or hymn be sung, and the congregation dismissed with the following, or some other, gospel benediction :

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

It is fitting that a collection for the poor be made in connexion with the communion service, at such time as to the Session may seem meet.

CHAPTER V.

SECRET AND FAMILY WORSHIP.

I. Besides the obligation resting upon all to worship God in public with the congregations of his people, the Holy Scriptures also make it the indispensable duty of each person in secret, and of every family by itself, to worship him.

II. Secret worship, which should not be hastily and carelessly performed, consists of prayer, reading the Scriptures, and, if practicable, singing of praise, which are usually to be accompanied by holy meditation and serious self-examination; but of the time and attention to be devoted to the several elements of that worship the enlightened conscience of each individual must be the judge.

III. Family worship, which should be observed by every household morning and evening when practicable, consists of prayer, reading the Scriptures, and singing praise.

IV. The head of the family, who is, ordinarily, to lead in this service, should be careful that all the members of his household are present; that none withdraw unnecessarily from any part of it; and that, abstaining from their common employments, the whole family reverently attend to its observance.

One who is subject to the temptation, arising from diffidence, to neglect this duty, should endeavor to overcome it by resolute effort, and by supplicating the assistance of the Holy Spirit who helpeth our infirmities, and who, the Lord Jesus assures us, will be given by our heavenly Father to all them that ask him.

The worship should not be so protracted as to render it tedious to the young or infirm ; and care should be exercised to make it attractive as well as useful, by adapting it to the varying circumstances of the family and to the differing ages and capacities of its members.

V. The heads of families should be careful to instruct their children and servants in the knowledge of our holy religion. Every proper opportunity should be embraced for such instruction; but especially should some hour of the Sabbath be set apart for this purpose. And to this end, the practice of paying unnecessary private visits and, except when necessity or charity requires it, of admitting strangers into the family, on that day, should be avoided; and any other practices, whatever plausible pretences may be offered, in their favor, which interfere with the discharge of this vitally important duty.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

I. The Lord Jesus, who when on earth dispensed healing to the diseased bodies of men, and who from the Judgment throne will say, "I was sick and ye visited me," has laid upon all his people the obligation to minister to such as are afflicted with bodily maladies. Yet this office he has made eminently incumbent upon ministers of the word and ruling elders.

Hence, it is a duty, before the strength and understanding of sick persons fail them, that they or their friends should send for the minister or some other elder of the Church, and make known

to him, with prudence, the spiritual state of the sick, in order that the instructions and consolations of the gospel may be judiciously and tenderly administered to their immortal souls.

II. It is proper, when the condition of the sick person will allow of it, that a suitable portion of Scripture be read, and that prayer be offered with and for him.

The ministrations should be carefully adapted to his spiritual state. If he be ignorant or careless or hardened, let the instructions and warnings of the divine word be applied to the end that, being convinced of his guilt, danger, and need of salvation, he may, by the blessing of God, be led to believe in Christ and repent of his sins.

If he be troubled by doubts, temptations, or fears, let such instructions be afforded as are suited to remove his difficulties.

If he appear to be a child of God, mourning under the hidings of his face, misapprehending the purpose of his fatherly chastisement, or laboring under bondage to the fear of death, let him be directed to the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, the freeness and unchangeableness of God's love, and the compassionate sympathy of a merciful and faithful High Priest.

And even if he seem to have passed beyond the reach of all human communications, still let the invitations and promises of the gospel be uttered in his dying ear.

In fine, let instruction, warning, or consolation be administered as the case of each sick person may require; and these occasions may be profitably used for the speaking of a word in season to attending relatives and friends.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

I. The exercises suitable for funeral occasions are :

1. The singing of an appropriate psalm or hymn.
2. The reading of some suitable portion or portions of Scripture, with such remarks as the officiating minister may deem proper.
3. Prayer, which should have reference to the teachings of

God's afflictive providence, and should be adapted to the needs of the living, especially of the surviving relatives of the deceased person.

4. The benediction.

The order and details of these services must be left largely to the discretion of the officiating minister, with these brief cautions : That the circumstances of the bereaved family should not be too minutely dwelt upon in the prayer; that the discourse should not be indiscriminately eulogistic ; that in such allusion as may be made to the gifts and graces of deceased persons the purpose should be to magnify the grace of God ; that the principal design of the service is the spiritual benefit of the living, it being borne in mind that some of them are only on these occasions brought into contact with the pure gospel; and that care be had to avoid abusing God's word by associating the hope of salvation with any other manner of life, or experience in death, than one which springs from faith in Christ.

II. *A Funeral Service which may be used when there is no minister present to officiate :*

1. The service may begin with reading all, or any, of the following passages of Scripture :

"Man that is born of a woman is of a few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down. He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

"For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers : our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is gross. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

“The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.”

“Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.”

2. Let a suitable psalm or hymn be sung.

3. Then one or both of the following passages of Scripture may be read :

Psalm xc. : “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night. Thou earnest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up ; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten ; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow : for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of thine anger ? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Return, O Lord, how long ? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. Oh, satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish

thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.”

1 Corinthians xv. 20-58: “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order ; Christ the first fruits ; afterward they that are Christ’s, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all ? why are they then baptized for the dead ? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour ? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not ? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived : evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not ; for some have not the knowledge of God : I speak this to your shame. But some man will say, How are the dead raised up ? and with what body do they come ? Thou fool ! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die : and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial : but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There

is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars : for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption : it is sown in dishonor ; it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power : it is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul ; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy : the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy : and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery : We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

4. Here another psalm or hymn may be sung, if it be deemed expedient.

5. After the body has been lowered, into the grave [or sea], the following words, or the like, may be said :

Forasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God, in his wise provi-

dence, to take out of this world the soul of our deceased friend [or this child], we do now commit his [or her] body to the ground [or deep], till the great day of the Lord Jesus Christ; when he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; the earth and the sea, at his call, shall give up their dead; and we shall all appear before his judgment-seat, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

G. Then the service may be concluded with the following prayer, or any other appropriate to the occasion :

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come ; thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. *Amen.*

CHAPTER VIII.

MARRIAGE.

I. Marriage is of divine institution, yet it is not a sacrament, nor peculiar to the Church of Christ. And as it is of a public nature, and the welfare of society is involved therein, every commonwealth ought to regulate it by statutes not at variance with the laws of God, which enactments all citizens are bound to obey.

Marriage should always be solemnised before a competent number of witnesses, and, ordinarily, on some other day than one of public humiliation or the Sabbath ; and in performing it, the minister should be careful that he transgress neither the laws of the commonwealth nor the laws of God; of which last a brief summary is given in the Confession of Faith, Chapter XXIV.

II. When the parties present themselves to be married, the minister may say, in these or like words :

You have presented yourselves before God and these witnesses to be united in the bonds of matrimony ; and I charge you, that, if either of you know any lawful impediment to your being joined together in this relation, you will now confess it; and if

there be any one here present who can show just cause why these parties may not be lawfully married, let him now make it known, or ever after hold his peace.

If no sufficient impediment be alleged, let the minister pray for the divine blessing upon the relation about to be constituted.

Now let the minister address the parties to the following effect :

That God hath instituted marriage for the comfort and happiness of mankind, in declaring that a man shall forsake his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife; and that marriage is honorable in all ; that he hath appointed various duties, which are incumbent upon those who enter into this relation : such as a high esteem and mutual love for one another ; bearing with each other's infirmities and weaknesses, to which human nature is subject in its present fallen state ; encouraging each other under the various ills of life; comforting one another in sickness; in honesty and industry providing for each other's temporal support; praying for and encouraging one another in the things which pertain to God, and to their immortal souls; and living together as the heirs of the grace of life.

Then the minister shall cause the bridegroom and bride to join their right hands, and shall first address the man in these or like words :

You take this woman, whom you hold by the hand, to be your lawful and married wife; and you promise, and covenant, in the presence of God and these witnesses, that you will be unto her a loving and faithful husband until God shall you part. Do you ?

The bridegroom shall express his consent by saying, I do.

The minister shall next address the woman in these or like words :

You take this man, whom you hold by the hand, to be your lawful and married husband ; and you promise, and covenant, in the presence of God and those witnesses, that you will be unto him a loving, faithful, and obedient wife until God shall you part. Do you ?

The bride shall express her consent by saying, I do.

Thon the minister is to say, in these or like words:

Forasmuch as these parties have consented unto wedlock, I do

now, in conformity with the ordinance of God, pronounce them husband and wife; what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

It is proper that the ceremony be concluded with the following benedictions :

The Lord bless you and keep you ; the Lord be gracious unto you, and make his face shine upon you ; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you. *Amen.*

Let the minister keep a proper register for the names of all persons whom he marries, and of the time of their marriage, for the perusal of all whom it may concern.

J. B. ADGER.

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