

**PLAIN SERMONS ON
THE LITURGY OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

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Plain Sermons on the Liturgy of the Church of England by W. Weldon Champneys

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W. WELDON CHAMPNEYS

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THE LITURGY OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

PREFACE
TO THE FIRST EDITION.

TO THE
PARISHIONERS OF WHITECHAPEL.

MY DEAR FRIENDS.

My object in *writing* these 'Plain Sermons on the Liturgy' was to draw your attention to the excellence of that Form of Prayer which the Members of the Church of England are privileged to use. I endeavoured to show that it is *scriptural* in its words and matter—*spiritual* in its character—*comprehensive* in the variety of its subjects—*clear* in its arrangement—and *primitive* in its origin. It was also my wish to state fairly the most common objections, and to answer them, and all this in

language, which the simplest of my congregation could understand.

My hope in *printing* them (which is done at the express wish of members of my congregation) is, that those impressions, which (through the divine blessing) may have been made by the hearing of them, may be deepened and strengthened by the reading of them. With prayer to God that they may do some little 'to set forth his glory, and set forward your salvation,' by leading you to worship him here on earth "in spirit and in truth," and so assist to prepare you 'or praising him eternally in heaven, I commend them to your kindness and candour, requesting you to read them with prayer ; and am,

Your affectionate friend and minister,
W. WELDON CHAMPNEYS.

Rectory, February, 1840.

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PLAIN SERMONS

ON

THE LITURGY.

SERMON I.

PSALM cxxxiii. 1. *“Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity.”*

GOD'S own word tells us, that “His ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts,” and almost every thing around, above, beneath us, (when looked into and seen with the *mind's* eye, as well as with that of the body) declares the same. Perhaps no one subject more plainly shows us

this truth than the fact, that while *we* can only listen to the words of *one* person speaking at the same time, the Almighty is listening to the voices of *millions at the self-same moment*—is weighing each want and wish of every single petitioner—not confounding one with another, but ready to give to each his answer in due season.

We may and do look with wonder upon the Being who makes the flying cloud to pour its shower on each field, according to its appointed wants, and who gives, to every foot of land throughout the wide world, its due share, both of rain and sunshine; but when we think of the same Being, listening to the million prayers that are coming up (like steaming incense) from the earth—when we consider that He marks and remembers each and every one of those prayers, and notes them all, how does the mind then acknowledge it as true, that “God’s ways are not our ways.”

We believe it, (though the understanding it is far above out of our reach) that God

hears prayer wherever it is made—the first tear and sigh of the repenting spirit—the glance of the eye turned upwards to his mercy-seat—these, from the lisping of the infant's tongue to the full outpourings of the grown Christian's earnest and fervent heart, are all known to Him:—the wild and free *American*, in his Canadian forest or his rude church of logs—the poor *Negro*, “servant of servants to his brethren”—the dark *Hindoo*, by his once worshipped Ganges—the *Islander* of the Pacific Ocean, amidst the scenes of his noble home—all who have been taught to “call on the name of the Lord,” are heard by “the God and Father” of that Lord: and when, on some Sabbath morn, we think of the prayers which the universal church shall have offered up before the morrow, each one noted down, to receive its proper answer in the Almighty's own good time and manner, we are lost in the immensity of the thought. The different tongues and languages—the various words of the same language, and the