

**FAMILY WORSHIP;
CONTAINING REFLECTIONS
AND PRAYERS FOR
DOMESTIC DEVOTION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649581375

Family Worship; Containing Reflections and Prayers for Domestic Devotion by Otis A. Skinner

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OTIS A. SKINNER

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BY OTIS A. SKINNER.

FOURTH EDITION.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY A. TOMPKINS & B. B. MUSSEY.
1860.

BV
245
153
1862

Entered, according to act of Congress, in the year 1843,
BY ABEL TOMPKINS,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

STEREOTYPED BY
GEORGE A. CURTIS,
W. ENGLAND TYPE AND STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY, BOSTON.

P R E F A C E .

THE value of a Prayer Book, as an aid in the devotional exercises of a family, has long been acknowledged by Christians of all sects. But few persons are capable of leading daily in religious exercises, without falling into a sameness which is tiresome, and calculated to destroy that interest necessary to make such exercises useful. Many neglect family prayer, on this account. Others are wanting in the gift of prayer, and are actually incompetent to perform the service in a manner calculated to benefit the heart, or give efficacy to religion. And others are wanting in confidence, and dare not attempt the performance of a duty which they feel binding upon them, and the neglect of which is a cause of painful reflections. A Prayer Book obviates all these difficulties. It also aids those who feel competent to lead daily in extemporaneous family prayer. It gives a variety of topics, forms and expressions, which will greatly enrich their prayers, and be an effectual guard against sameness.

Prompted by a consideration of these advantages, and feeling deeply anxious that an altar to the Lord should be erected in every family belonging to our Israel, I have been induced to prepare this work, which I trust will be found, in all respects, suited to the wants of Christian families. I know there are many excellent books designed for domestic worship; but it has appeared to the subscriber, that the prayers in all he has seen, except Rev. A. Fletcher's "Guide to Devotion," are much too long. Were not that excellent work so expensive as to pre-

clude its general use, it would, in most respects, meet the wants of all Christians. Its prayers are brief, and breathe a spirit of pure devotion; and the reflections accompanying them are highly valuable.

The plan of this little volume is somewhat different from any which the subscriber has seen. It has a large number of services, consisting of Reflections and Prayers, for Sabbath morning. It has also several similar services for particular occasions, such as Thanksgiving, Fast, &c. Besides this peculiarity, each Prayer, with a few exceptions, has a leading subject, and is thus calculated to make a deeper impression than if of a general character. It is unlike others also in the brevity of its prayers. It is also free from forms designed for public worship, though it has several which can be used in such a service. Besides, most other works contain a selection of hymns; but none has been made for this, because most families have a good supply of hymn books.

In the preparation of this work, some assistance has been derived from Wyatt's Christian Offices; Jay's Family Prayers; Brooks' Family Prayers; Furness' Domestic Worship; Fletcher's Guide to Devotion; Book of Common Prayer, and Griswold's Prayers. In a few instances, for the sake of a greater variety, sentences have been adopted from some of these works.

Those brethren who have kindly furnished Prayers for this work, will accept my cordial thanks for the aid they have rendered; and I trust they will find their reward in the approbation of a good conscience, and the beneficial influence which ~~the~~ volume will exert upon the hearts of the people.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

N. B. The Lord's Prayer, and some of the occasional Prayers, can be used, when desired, in connexion with others. For instance, the Prayers on pages 210 and 211 can be used in connexion with the Prayer on page 101.

Boston, May, 1843.

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