

PRIVATE PRAYERS

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Private prayers by Walter Farquhar Hook

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WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK

**PRIVATE
PRAYERS**

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COMPILED BY THE

REV. WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, M.A.

VICAR OF TRINITY PARISH, COVENTRY,

AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY.

Be not rash with thy mouth, nor let thine heart be hasty
to utter any thing before God.—*Eccles. v. 2.*

Quascunque sibi preces aliquis describit, non eis utatur,
nisi prius eas cum instructoribus contulerit.

Conc. Carthag. S. Can. 23.

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PREFACE.

THE following Prayers are derived, almost exclusively, from ancient sources. The business of the compiler has chiefly been to adapt them for modern use, and the purposes of private devotion; in doing which he has endeavoured to adhere to the system so wisely and judiciously adopted by the venerable Prelates and Divines, who, in the reigns of Edward and Elizabeth, reduced the ancient services of the Church of England to our present forms of Morning and Evening Prayer. Commencing with

the Confession of Sins, and the Lord's Prayer, we proceed to the Praise of God, then to Intercession and Supplication, and after having resumed our Thanksgivings, we conclude with a Benediction.

There are many forms of private prayer now in circulation far better adapted than the following to the religious taste and feeling of the day. These are intended for those only who love to tread in the old paths, and to participate in the spirit of primitive devotion. And although to such persons the incomparable Manual of Bishop Andrews must be familiar, yet this can hardly be considered as superseding the necessity of the present publication, as the work of

Bishop Andrews is rather a directory than a form of a prayer.

For the importance of using a regular form of prayer at our private devotions, to which we may make what occasional additions we please, the reader is referred to Newman's parochial Sermons, vol. i. Sermon 20. The arguments there adduced appear to the writer unanswerable.

In the early days of Christianity there were cubicula, cells, or little chambers, provided in the Church, or within its consecrated precincts, for the purposes of private meditation and prayer¹. As no such provision is made

¹ Bingham, viii. 5. §. 8.

in our own sanctuaries, and as the custom of resorting to church for private prayer has, unfortunately, in this country fallen into disuse, ever since the great rebellion, when so many pious usages were abolished, the following directions may be found useful :

“ If you were to use yourself, as far as you can, to pray always in the *same* place ; if you were to reserve that place for devotion, and not allow yourself to do any thing common in it ; if you were never to be there yourself but in times of devotion ; if any little room, or, if that cannot be, if any particular part of a room were thus used, this kind of consecration of it, as a place holy unto God, would have an effect upon your

mind, and dispose you to such temper as would very much assist your devotion. For by having a place thus sacred in your room, it would, in some measure, resemble a chapel, or house of God. This would dispose you to be always in the spirit of religion when there, and fill you with wise and holy thoughts when by yourself. Your own apartment would raise in your mind such sentiments as you have when you stand near an altar. And you would be afraid of thinking or doing any thing that was foolish, near that place of prayer and holy intercourse with God¹.”

In the present state of society the

¹ Law's Serious Call, chap. xiv.