

**THE CHRISTIAN FATHER'S
PRESENT TO
HIS CHILDREN, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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The Christian father's present to his children, in two volumes, vol. I by J. A. James

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J. A. JAMES

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BY J. A. JAMES.

"And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek him he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever." *1 Chron. xxviii. 9*

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." *3 John 3.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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CONTENTS.



VOL. I.

An Address to Christian Parents	5
CHAPTER I.	
On the anxiety of a Christian Parent for the Spiritual Welfare of his Children	21
CHAPTER II.	
On the Dispositions with which we should enter upon an Inquiry into the Nature of Religion	29
CHAPTER III.	
On Right Sentiments in Religion	37
CHAPTER IV.	
On the Nature of True Religion	51
CHAPTER V.	
On the Advantages and Responsibility of a Pious Edu- cation	64
CHAPTER VI.	
On the most Prevailing Obstacles which prevent Young People from entering on a Religious Life	73
CHAPTER VII.	
On the Deceitfulness of the Heart	84
CHAPTER VIII.	
On Transient Devotions.....	94
CHAPTER IX.	
On Decision of Character in Religion.....	107
CHAPTER X.	
On the Pleasures of a Religious Life	119
CHAPTER XI.	
On the Advantages of Early Piety.....	141

CHAPTER XII.	
On the Influence of Religion upon the Temporal Interests of its Possessor	159
CHAPTER XIII.	
On the Choice of Companions	170



VOL. II.

CHAPTER XIV.	
On Books	3
CHAPTER XV.	
On Amusements and Recreations	16
CHAPTER XVI.	
On Theatrical Amusements	27
CHAPTER XVII.	
On the Period which elapses between the time of leaving School, and the Age of Manhood	39
CHAPTER XVIII.	
On Public Spirit	45
CHAPTER XIX.	
On Female Accomplishments, Virtues, and Pursuits ..	56
CHAPTER XX.	
On Modesty, Prudence, and Courtesy	84
CHAPTER XXI.	
On Redeeming Time	98
CHAPTER XXII.	
On the Obligation to enter into Fellowship with a Christian Church	112
CHAPTER XXIII.	
On the Choice of a Companion for Life	127
CHAPTER XXIV.	
On Keeping in View the Great End of Life	137
CHAPTER XXV.	
On the meeting of a Pious Family in Heaven	160

PREFACE.



As a *christian*, the author of the following volumes believes that there is a state of everlasting happiness prepared beyond the grave for those, and those only, who are partakers of pure and undefiled religion, and, as a *parent*, he will freely confess his supreme solicitude is, that his children, by a patient continuance in well doing, might seek for glory, honour, immortality; and finally possess themselves of eternal life. He is not insensible to the worth of temporal advantages; he is neither cynic nor ascetic; he appreciates the true value of wealth, learning, science, and reputation, which he desires, in such measure as God shall see fit to bestow, both for himself and his children; he has conquered the world, but does not despise it; he resists its yoke as a master, but values its ministrations as a servant. Still, however, he views the present state of sublunary affairs as a splendid pageant, the fashion of which passeth away, to give place to the glory which shall never be moved: he looketh not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. It is on this ground that he attaches so much importance to a *religious* education. To those, if such there should be, who ima-

ine that he is too anxious about this matter, and has said too much about it, he has simply to reply, that "he believes, therefore has he spoken." The man who does not make the religious character of his children the supreme end of all his conduct towards them, may profess to believe as a Christian, but certainly acts as an atheist: besides, if *this* end be secured, the most likely step is taken for accomplishing every other; as "Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."

With these views, the Author has embodied in the following volumes his own parental wishes, objects, and pursuits. Much that is here written, has been the subject of his personal converse with his children, and should God spare his life, will still continue to be the topics of his instruction.

What is beneficial to his own family, the Author thought might be no less useful to others: and this was another reason which induced him to publish. The multiplication of books of this kind, even if they make small pretensions to classic elegance of composition, is to be looked upon as a benefit, provided they contain sound scriptural sentiments, and an obvious tendency to produce right moral impressions. Books are sometimes read merely because they are new; it is desirable therefore to gratify this appetite for novelty, when at the same time we can strengthen and build up the moral character by a supply of wholesome and nutritious food. Nor is it always necessary that new books should contain new topics, or new modes of illustration, any more than it is necessary that there should be a perpetual change in the kinds of food, in order to attain to bodily strength. Whatever varieties may be introduced by the wisdom that

is sensual, bread will still remain the staff of life. So there are some primitive truths and subjects, which, whatever novelties and curiosities may be introduced for the gratification of religious taste, must still be repeated, as essential to the formation of religious character.

The author has not selected the sermonic form of discussion, because some of his subjects did not admit of it: and also because sermons are perhaps the least inviting species of reading to young people. Letters would not have been liable to these objections; but upon the whole, he preferred the form of chapters, in which the style of direct address is preserved. The advantage of this style is obvious; it not only keeps up the reader's interest, but, as every parent who presents these volumes to his children adopts the advice as his own, such young persons, by an easy effort of the imagination, lose sight of the Author, and read the language of their own father. If any thing is necessary to secure this effect, beyond the simple act of presenting the book, it might be immediately obtained by an inscription to the child, written by the parent's own hand upon the fly-leaf.

The Author scarcely need say that his work is not intended for young people below the age of fourteen. In the composition of the book, a seeming tautology sometimes occurs: what is just touched upon in one place, is more expanded in others: and some subjects are intentionally repeated. To give additional interest to the volumes, numerous extracts, and some anecdotes are introduced, which tend to relieve the dullness of didactic composition, and prevent the tedium of unvarying monotony.

In the references which the author has given