

THOUGHTS ON FAMILY-WORSHIP

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Thoughts on family-worship by James W. Alexander

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JAMES W. ALEXANDER

**THOUGHTS ON
FAMILY-WORSHIP**

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ON

FAMILY-WORSHIP.

BY
JAMES W. ALEXANDER,

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TO
MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER;
BY WHOSE HANDS I WAS FIRST LED TO
FAMILY-WORSHIP,
AND FOR WHOSE CONTINUANCE IN LIFE AND HEALTH AT A PERIOD
IN WHICH MOST SONS ARE BEREFT OF THIS BLESSING
I AM BOUND TO GIVE THANKS,
THIS VOLUME,
WITH HUMBLE PRAYERS FOR EVERY DIVINE FAVOUR
TO REST ON THEM AND THEIRS,
IS,
IN LOVE AND DUTY, RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED.

P R E F A C E.

ALTHOUGH this is but a small book, there may be some by whom it will be thought too large for its subject. Such persons must differ in their estimate of domestic religion from the writer, who has been impelled to study the institution by a profound conviction of its value. In a period when the world is every day making new inroads on the church, it has especially invaded the household. Our church cannot compare with that of the seventeenth century in this regard. Along with Sabbath observance, and the catechising of children, Family-Worship

has lost ground. There are many heads of families, communicants in our churches, and (according to a scarcely credible report) some ruling elders and deacons, who maintain no stated daily service of God in their dwellings. It is to awaken such to their duty that this volume has been prepared.

The richest inheritance which some of us have is the domestic rite, which has been in our houses as far back as record or tradition goes. A venerable parishioner of the author has enjoyed Family-Worship with no less than six generations, including a grandfather and great-grandchildren. Let other heirlooms perish, but let us not deny to our offspring the worship of that God, who has been "our dwelling-place in all generations."

While the chapters which ensue are any thing but controversial, they have not been

written on any scheme of compromise. As issued by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, they need no apology for containing Presbyterian doctrine, and a decided and affectionate allusion to the history and usages of our church.

Valuable extracts have been made from several books on the subject of prayer, and from none more largely than from a little tract entitled "The Church in the House," by the Rev. James Hamilton, of London.

If it should please the adorable Head of the Church to make this book instrumental in extending the domestic worship of God's people, and especially in arousing the children of the covenant to honour the God of their fathers, it will be to the writer an unspeakable satisfaction. With earnest desires and prayers for this, he submits it to the mem-