

**SACRAMENTAL MEDITATIONS AND  
ADVICES, FOR THE USE OF  
COMMUNICANTS, IN PREPARING THEIR  
HEARTS, AND EXCITING THEIR AFFECTIONS,  
ON SACRAMENTAL OCCASIONS. AND, A  
CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY; PP. 1-267**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649696956

Sacramental Meditations and Advices, for the Use of Communicants, in Preparing Their Hearts, and Exciting Their Affections, on Sacramental Occasions. And, a Christian Directory; pp. 1-267  
by John Willison

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Cover @ 2017

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AND,  
A CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY,  
CONSISTING OF FORTY SCRIPTURE DIRECTIONS, PROPER FOR  
ALL THOSE INTENDING HEAVEN.

BY  
THE REV. JOHN WILLISON,  
LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, DUNDEE.

ABERDEEN:  
GEORGE & ROBERT KING,  
ST. NICHOLAS STREET.

1854

## P R E F A C E.

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THE eternal Son of God, when taking leave of an ungrateful world, instituted the sacrament of the supper as a lively resemblance and memorial of his bloody sufferings and death in the room of his people; and also to be a bright and lasting evidence of the amazing love of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to perishing sinners.

As God once sent his Son into the world in a lowly habit, clothed with human flesh, to save sinners; so now he sends him in a homely dress, clothed with the elements of bread and wine, to assure us of his love, and to engage us to come to him. Kings expect that their children will be respected, though their officers be neglected. "Surely (saith God) they will reverence my Son;" they will make him welcome, and hearken to him.

In this most august ordinance of the New Testament the great God approaches very near to us, and we to him; and yet it is to be deeply regretted, that many who profess to believe this, come to it with so little thought and preparation, and with so much indifference and carelessness of spirit. Oh, shall we venture so near the great God, who is infinitely holy, in whose sight the heavens are not pure, and in whose presence the sun and stars are dimmed, and the brightest seraphim do gather in their wings, and account themselves as little flies before him; and shall we, who are creatures so mean and so vile, be careless and unconcerned, when we make the nearest approach to this great and holy God that we can make on this side heaven.

Ought we not to go blushing, ashamed, and deeply humbled on many accounts, and particularly for our in-

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gratitude for redeeming love, that love "which passeth knowledge," and for our contempt of "God's unspeakable gift,"—the greatest sin in the world; yea, we should go wondering that we are out of hell, for many thousands are burning there who have not sinned so heinously, in making light of precious Christ, as we have done.

Moreover, Reader, consider if you go to this ordinance unpreparedly, or with indifference, you not only make light of the Lord Jesus Christ, but you are "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," 1 Cor. xi. 27. Surely that word may cause you to quake and tremble: blood-guiltiness of any sort is a dreadful sin, and especially to be guilty of the "blood of the Lord." Murder is a sin that cries for vengeance on the actor, and gives God no rest till he punish it, Gen. iv. 10, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground." If it be a crying sin to murder a common person, what must it be to murder a king? "Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" 1 Sam. xxvi. 9. O, then, what a crime must it be to murder the eternal Son of God, who is thy exalted King, thy everlasting Father, thy dear Redeemer, and thy God who gave thee a being. Child-murder is a heinous crime, but what Christ-murder is, no tongue can tell! If on him that slew Cain (that wicked man) vengeance should be taken seven-fold, what vengeance will be taken on him that crucifies afresh the Lord of glory? This consideration should make all of us afraid of careless and unworthy communicating.

If we would communicate worthily, we must be earnest, not only for the life of grace, but also for the liveliness of grace; not only for the truth and sincerity of grace, but likewise for the activity and vigorous exercise of grace. So that a believer doth not eat and drink worthily, unless the grace that is in him be excited and exercised at this ordinance. There must be not only faith in the

truth of it, but there must be faith realizing, applying, appropriating, and making use of Christ's death and purchase in this ordinance. Not only must there be a disposition of soul to be humbled for sin, but there must be actual mourning and melting of heart for sin, and for particular sins, when we look on him we have pierced by them. Not only must there be a principle of love to Christ, but also an exciting of love to flame out to Christ, who loved us, and gave himself for us.

Worthy communicating being a work of such importance, the following Scripture Meditations and Advices are humbly offered to Christians, as an help in their preparations for it. Reading and thinking much on the subjects here proposed may, through God's blessing, be useful to promote their habitual preparation for the holy supper. Christ's body and blood, herein exhibited, are pure and holy things, and should be received in prepared and cleansed hearts. His body never saw corruption in the grave nor will be mixed with it in hearts where corruption is allowed. It lay in a virgin's womb and in a virgin sepulchre, and will still be entertained in virgin souls and affections; in hearts purified and consecrated to God. In these Christ chooses to reside, and not in those where sin and the world, with the lusts thereof, are harboured. O had we grace to maintain and cherish the fear of God and the love of Christ habitually in our souls, we might, without much pains, be prepared for coming to him at his table.

Did we always bear in our minds, that sacramental occasions are solemn appointments, and Bethel-meetings with God, for renewing covenant, and entertaining fellowship and communion with him, we would guard more against formality creeping in upon our preparations for, and in our attendance upon this ordinance, than, alas, we do. Oh, such formality will provoke the master of our solemn feasts to withdraw from them; and then what poor, dry, melancholy, and lifeless things will they be? What are



the sacraments without Christ's presence in them? O let us never be satisfied with communion Sabbaths, without communion with Christ in them.

On the other hand, if we would keep up communion with Christ in these ordinances, let us beware of relying on our previous pains or preparations, either for our right performing of our duty, or for our acceptance in it; for we are never more ready to miscarry, and to be disappointed, than when we are guilty of this resting. Sundry go to the Lord's table with great humiliation for sin, and yet come away without comfort. Why? Because they make a Christ of their sorrow. O what worth can we see in our best preparations, confessions, prayers, tears, humiliations, &c., if we compare them with the law of God? We have more cause to be ashamed of them, than to lay any stress on them. Would we renounce all self-confidence, and disclaim all our provision in point of dependence, and cast ourselves wholly on Christ for strength, through-bearing, and acceptance, we would have better success at the Lord's table than commonly we have.

We are never more fit for this holy table, than when we are most humbled, and most ashamed of ourselves, because of our unfitness for this solemn approach; and we are never less fit, than when we think ourselves most fit and prepared for the duty. A holy deniedness to all self-sufficiency, and a deep sense of unworthiness and unfitness, is the best preparation we can attain to for this solemn ordinance. Let us make holy David our pattern, when going to partake, Psalm lxxii. 16, "I will go on in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." And let us pray with the spouse, Cant. iv. 16, "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Amen.

Doxors, August, 1747.

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