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*The Worship of GOD in the Beauty of
Holiness.*

A
SERMON

Preach'd in the

P A R I S H - C H U R C H

• F

St. A U S T I N,

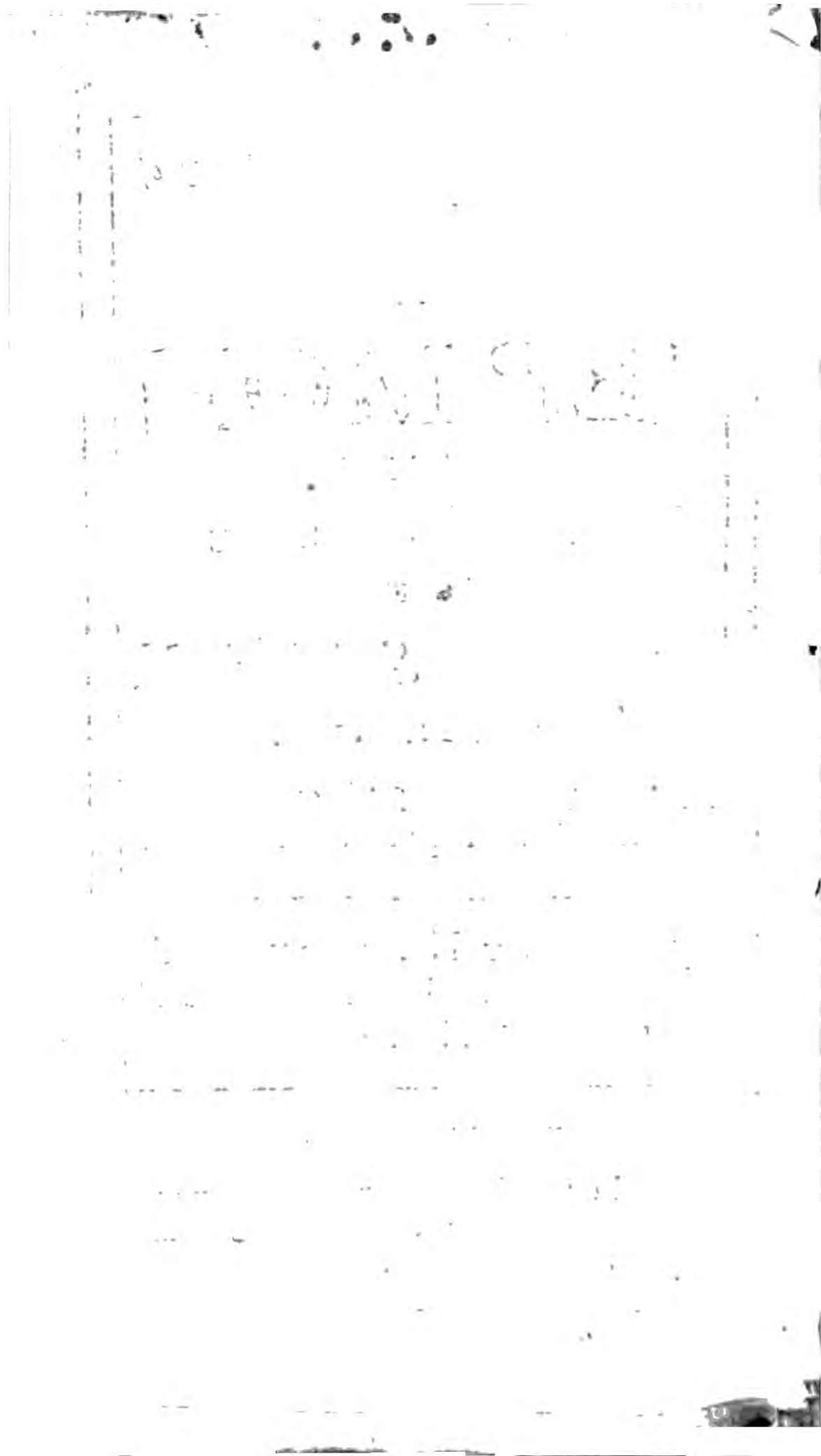
Decemb. 21. 1712.

At the first Opening of that **CHURCH,**
after its being Repair'd and Beautified.

By **ROBERT NEWTON, M. A.**
Rector of the United Parishes of
St. Austin and St. Faith.

L O N D O N :

Printed by *G. James,* for **JOHN WYAT,**
at the *Rose* in *St. Paul's Church-*
yard. **MDCCXIII.**





To his Worthy
Friends and Parishioners,
THE
INHABITANTS
OF THE
UNITED PARISHES
OF
St. Austin and St. Faith;

The following
SERMON,

Which receiv'd their kind APPROBATION,
when deliver'd from the PULPIT,

IS NOW DEDICATED,

As a Publick Testimony of his RESPECTS,

BY THEIR

Affectionate faithful Servant,

Robert Newton.

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MEMORANDUM

TO THE DIRECTOR

FROM THE DIRECTOR

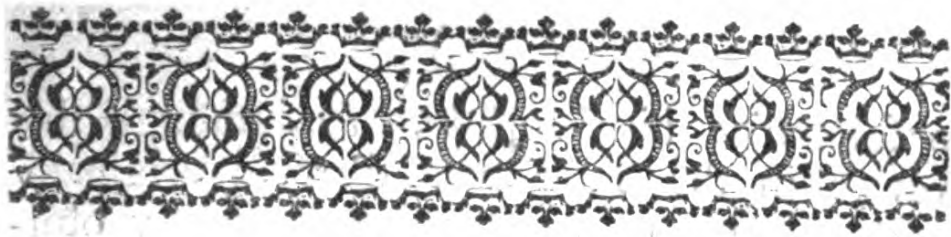
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REPORT

BY

DATE



PSAL. xcvi. the former Part of the 9th Ver.

*O worship the LORD in the
Beauty of Holiness.*



THIS is the first Opportunity I have had to congratulate your happy Return to this House of Prayer: And though it be proper at all Times to exhort you to worship GOD in the Beauty of Holiness, yet it cannot but be allow'd more particularly so at this Time, when we are again assembled to worship GOD in this His Temple; which, by your commendable Industry, and great Expence, is render'd so very beautiful and commodious for His Service.

THIS Psalm wants a Title in the *Hebrew*, but appears from *1 Chron. xvi.* to have been composed by *David* at the bringing the Ark from the House of *Obed-Edom* to *Sion*; and in this divine Hymn the Royal Prophet expresses the Joy he had in GOD's special Presence among them, and calls upon all People

to solemnize his Worship. And though this Advice in the Text was directed originally to the People of *Israel*; yet it is equally obliging under the Dispensation of the Gospel. In the Words, we have,

First, An Exhortation to a fundamental and necessary Duty, *viz.* the Worship of GOD; *O worship the LORD.*

Secondly, A Direction for the right Performance of it; *In the Beauty of Holiness.*

AND, *First*, The Psalmist exhorts us in the Text to a fundamental and necessary Duty, *viz.* the Worship of GOD; *O worship the LORD.*

To worship GOD, is to honour Him as GOD, with all the Powers and Faculties of our Souls and Bodies: And that we ought thus to honour and worship GOD, will appear highly reasonable and fitting, if we consider the transcendent Excellencies of His Nature, and the Right and Title He has to our Service. All Perfections by a natural Right, challenge a proportionable Esteem and Reverence. Now GOD is the most excellent and perfect Being: He is the greatest and best, and therefore we ought in the most eminent Degree to admire and love, to fear and reverence Him. If we consider Him as the first Cause of all Things, He has a natural Claim to the Praise and Glory of all His Works; and, there-

therefore, all the Works of GOD are said to praise Him. *The Heavens declare His Glory, and the Firmament sheweth His bandy Work.* And as to ourselves, we are entirely His by Creation and Purchase. We owe our Beings, and all we have, and can do, to Him; and this gives Him a natural Right to our Worship; and not to worship Him, would be the greatest Act of Injustice; or to join any other Thing with Him, as the Object of divine Worship, would be infinitely to debase and disparage Him; since it intimates, that something besides, is as excellent and perfect as Himself. And therefore GOD is declared in Scripture to be a jealous GOD, and tells us, *My Glory will I not give* *Isai. xlii. 8.* *unto another.* As divine Worship then is due to GOD, so it is due to Him alone. And to complete the Duty, GOD must have the Reverence both of the inward and outward Man; the inward Worship without the outward, being not only defective, but very unbecoming Creatures in their Addresses to their Creator, and scandalous and offensive to others; and the outward Worship without the inward, being mere Pageantry, and Hypocrisy, and therefore must be abhorr'd by GOD, who sees in Secret, and requireth Truth in the inward Parts.

HAVING thus shewn the necessary Obligation of worshipping GOD, and Him alone, proceed we in the

Second Place, to consider the Psalmist's Direction for the right Performance of this Duty, represented in these Words, *in the Beauty of Holiness*; which may relate either to the Place of Worship, or to the Form and Manner of our Worship, or to our decent and devout Behaviour in it.

I. THESE Words, *in the Beauty of Holiness*, may relate to the Place of divine Worship, which the Septuagint thus translate, *ἐν αὐτῇ ἀγίᾳ αὐτοῦ*, *in His Holy Court*; and in the Margin of the Bible is thus express'd, *in His glorious Sanctuary*. So that to worship the LORD in the Beauty of Holiness, is to worship Him in His Sanctuary, which is beautify'd and adorn'd, as becomes so holy a Place.

IN speaking to this Sense of the Words, I shall shew,

1. THAT it has been the general Practice of Mankind to set apart publick Places for divine Worship. And,

2. THAT 'tis a very reasonable and becoming Acknowledgment of Mens Honour and Esteem for the Object of their Worship, to beautify and adorn such Places, as are appropriated to His Service. And,

1. I AM to shew, that it has been the general Practice of Mankind to set apart publick Places for divine Worship. This Practice has been so universal, that it seems to be grounded

on

on the Law of Nature. The Heathens, in the darkest Times of Idolatry, built Temples and Altars for them, that were no Gods. Before the Law, the Patriarchs had their certain and determinate Places for divine Worship. *Noah* built an Altar unto the LORD, as soon as he came out of the Ark, and offer'd Burnt-Offerings, or Eucharistical Sacrifices for their Deliverance from the Flood *; and *Abraham* erected one †, and planted a Grove in *Beersheba*, where he called upon the Name of the LORD *; and *Jacob* built an Altar at *Bethel* ††.

* Gen. viii. 20.

† Gen. xiii. 4.

* Gen. xxi.

33.

†† Gen xxxv.

7.

UNDER the Law, the *Jews* had their Tabernacle, their Temple, and their Synagogues; where they assembled for divine Worship. The two former were of God's own Appointment; the latter of which, for its Beauty and Magnificence, was the Glory of the *Jewish* Nation, and the Wonder of the World.

AFTER the Law, when the *Messias* was come, He frequently repair'd to the Temple, and honour'd their Synagogues with His Presence; nor did His Disciples withdraw themselves from these publick Places for some time after His Death: And when they return'd from the Temple, the *ὑπερωροί*, or upper Room, so often mention'd in the *Acts* of the Apostles, was the Place where
 B they

they met together for Prayer and Supplication, and where they continued breaking of Bread, *i. e.* celebrating the Eucharist. Afterwards, the Places for their sacred Conventions, were some part of the Houses of Christian Believers, which they piously set apart for the Worship of G O D. Accordingly, *S. Paul* salutes the Churches in such or such an House, *i. e.* the Congregations that met in the Houses of such pious Christians: Such were the Houses of *Nymphas*, *Philemon*, *Priscilla*, and *Aquila*. And that in the Apostles Time, the Christians had Places set apart for the Worship of G O D, seems plain from that Passage of *S. Paul*, *1 Cor. xi. 22.* *Have ye not Houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the Church of G O D?* Where he reproves the *Corinthians*, for their intemperate and indecent Practices in so sacred a Place. For, that by Church here, is meant the Place in which they us'd to assemble, is evident from what went before; for their coming together in the Church, *ver. 18.* is explain'd by their coming together into one Place, *ver. 20.* by which it evidently appears, that the Apostle meant not the Persons, but the Place. Besides, the Church of G O D being oppos'd here to their own Houses, or private Dwellings, must signify not the Assembly, but the Place appointed for holy Duties. And

† *Clemens*

† *Clemens Romanus*, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, which is allow'd by all to be genuine, assures us, that CHRIST did not only appoint the Times when, the Persons by whom, but the Places where, He would be solemnly serv'd and worshipp'd, that all Things might be done religiously, and in Order.

IN the second Century, * *Ignatius*, in his Epistle to the *Magnesian*, exhorts them to meet together to pray in one Place, which he calls † *ναὸν θεοῦ*, the Temple of GOD.

IN the third Century, the Word *Ecclesia*, or Church, is us'd in the Sense which we contend for. Such a Place †† *Tertullian* calls *Domus Dei*, and † * *S. Cyprian*, *Domini-cum*; which Words import an Appropriation of such a Building to the Service of our LORD. The Heathens, indeed, us'd to object against the Christians, that they had no Temples, and therefore charg'd them with the grossest Impiety; and the Christian Apologists seem to acknowledge, that they had no Temples. In answer to this, we must consider the Heathens Notion of a Temple: by which, they understood the Places devoted to their Gods; wherein, as they suppos'd, their Deities were inclos'd by an

† *Clem. Ep. 1. ad Cor. n. 40.*
 †† *Tert. de Idololatriâ.*
 ††† *Eleemosynis.*

* *Ignat. Ep. ad Magnesian.*
 * * *Cyp. de Opere & Veritate.*

Idol, and kept from wandring Abroad by Magical Incantations; that so their Votaries might know where to have them, when they had Occasion to address to them. Now as for such Temples as these, the Christians freely own'd they had none, nor ought to have any: for that the true GOD did not dwell in Temples made with Hands, as one contain'd in, or confin'd to them; (*Heaven being His Throne, and the whole Earth His Footstool*) Neither is He worshipped with the Works of Mens Hands, as though He needeth any Thing, or could be apply'd to only in a Temple, or in a consecrated Image. When the ancient Apologists then deny Christians to have had any Temples, they must be understood to mean such Temples, as were in Use amongst the Heathens; otherwise they must contradict themselves: For * *Arnobius* and *Lactantius* own, that the Christians had their Houses of Assembly for divine Worship, which they complain were furiously demolish'd by their Enemies.

HAVING thus shew'd that it has been the general Practice of Mankind to set apart Places for the Worship of GOD; and that the primitive Christians had their certain and appropriate Places for their Joint

* *Arnob. lib. 4. cont. Gent. p. 152. Lact. Instit. lib. 5. c. 2.*

Celebration of Divine Worship ; I proceed now,

2. To shew, that 'tis a very reasonable and becoming Acknowledgment of Mens Honour and Esteem, for the Object of their Worship, to beautify and adorn such Places, as are appropriated to His Service. And that this is agreeable to Reason, and the natural Sentiments of Mankind, is plain from the Practice of the *Heathen* World: who, tho' under no other Direction, but that of Nature ; yet, from thence concluded their Obligation to spare no Charge in beautifying the Temples erected to the Honour of their suppos'd Deities. And as to those, who profess the Belief of the True God, we find that they are forward enough to expend their Wealth in furnishing and adorning their own Houses ; and those, whom they particularly value and esteem, shall not fail of the distinguishing Mark of their Respect, in being receiv'd and entertain'd in their richest Apartment. And for such Men, to shew any Backwardness in contributing towards the Beauty and Lustre of God's House, must needs be a very great Shame and Reproach ; and is too plain a Testimony that they have not that just and honourable Regard for God, as they ought. For, how is it possible that Men can be wanting in any proper and becoming Expressions of Honour and Gratitude

titude to GOD, who are sensible they derive all their Blessings from Him? The Divine Majesty, 'tis true, is not, as Man, affected with the Beauty and Splendour of material Buildings; yet, since Christian Churches may as reasonably be call'd the Houses of GOD, as the Temple was by our LORD, where, in an especial manner, He vouchsafes His Presence; those, who have a due Apprehension of His Greatness and Majesty, and of His Mercy and Goodness to Man, will not decline the Expence of any decent Ornaments for those Places, which are set apart for His Honour and Service. And tho' in the first Ages, while the Christians were persecuted for their Religion, it cannot be imagin'd that they should have such stately and magnificent Churches, as the Peace, and Affluence, and Emulation of After-Ages produc'd; yet, when the Emperors were become Christians, they built and endow'd such Churches, to the Honour of CHRIST, as were eminent for their curious Architecture, Richness, and Beauty. And, particularly, that religious Emperor, *Constantine the Great*, as he erected several noble Churches, so he spar'd no Charge to beautify and adorn them, as the * Ecclesia-

* Euseb. de vitâ Constant. lib. 3. c. 50. & 51. Socrat. lib. 1. c. 18.

tical Historians inform us; judging it a most proper way of expressing his Piety, and grateful Sense of the Divine Mercy and Goodness.

AND herein, You have signaliz'd yourselves.

SEVERAL other Churches in this famous City, have been repair'd at the Charge of the Publick: This Church, tho' not equal in Extent to many others, yet in Beauty superiour to any; (to Your Honour and Commendation be it spoken) has been Repair'd and Adorn'd at Your own Charge. That the Charge has been very considerable, cannot but be obvious to all: And that the Improvements answer the Charge, must be own'd by every impartial Judge. 'Tis owing to Your liberal Contributions, that this pious Work was undertaken; and to Your prudent Care and Management, that it is now happily effected. And having thus improv'd and beautified the House of GOD, You have given a publick Testimony of the distinguishing Regard You bear to the Place, where *His Honour dwelleth*. And as You have thus *honour'd GOD with Your Substance*, may He multiply and encrease Your Store: And as You have set a noble Pattern to other Parishes, of a pious Zeal for GOD's House, worthy of their Imitation; so may They, out of the same just Regard for that Honour, which
is

is due to GOD, be provok'd to imitate Your Example. And, may GOD so guide and influence all our Hearts, so compose our Minds, and spiritualize our Affections, that our joint Devotions in this Beauty of Holiness may be always acceptable to Him. Which brings me,

II. To consider these Words *in the Beauty of Holiness*, as they may refer to the Form, and decent Manner of our Worship. And, certainly, were not Men blinded by Prejudice and Partiality, they could not but discern and acknowledge, that a stated Form of Prayer contributes more to the Decency and Solemnity of Publick Worship, than sudden and extemporary Effusions. For if he, that prays *Ex-tempore* in the publick Congregation, be deficient in his Memory, or Invention, it is impossible he should pray with that Decency and Solemnity, that is necessary to affect the Minds, and raise the Devotions of the People. But if we suppose him to be a Man of pregnant Parts and Abilities, yet, in an *Ex-tempore* Prayer, which admits of no long Deliberation, he cannot be always certain that he shall express himself intelligibly to the People; and if they understand not his Words and Phrases, their Devotions must be interrupted; and so much of his Prayer as is unintelligible, might

might as well have been deliver'd in an unknown Tongue. And how absurdly or immethodically soever he prays, the People must pray after him, or not pray at all: For, tho' an *Ex-tempore* Prayer is not a Set-Form to the Minister, who conceives it, yet it is a Set-Form to the People, who join in it. They cannot vary from it, without breaking off the Publick Worship; and if they do join in it, they join in a Prayer which is generally attended with many Imperfections, both as to the Matter, and the Expressions of it. Whereas this Inconvenience is prevented by a well-compos'd Form of Prayer, which the People may be throughly acquainted with afore-hand, and so, without any Difficulty, join in every Part of it. In a word, the Reform'd Churches abroad, have their publick Forms of Prayer; but none of them, so complete a Form of Publick Worship, as the establish'd Liturgy of our Church; which justly deserves that extraordinary Commendation, which has been given of it by a late celebrated * Writer; that it is so judiciously contriv'd, that the Wisest may exercise at once their Knowledge and Devotion; and yet so plain, that the most Ignorant may pray with Understanding; so full, that

* *Dr. Comber.*

nothing is omitted that is fit to be ask'd in publick; so particular, that it compriseth most things which we could pray for in private; and yet not so long, as to tire out any that have true Devotion; the Variety, and Change of Parts, taking off from the Tedioulness of the Whole. So that by this excellent Provision, which is made for us, we may *pray with the Spirit, and pray with the Understanding also*. I shall only add upon this Head, that our Saviour shew'd His Approbation of a Form of Prayer, by teaching His Disciples so to pray, and by using one Himself; for *He prayed the third Time, saying the same Words*. And since, as it appears, the Use of Publick Forms does so manifestly conduce to the Glory of GOD, and the Decency of Publick Worship; it were to be wish'd, that as those amongst us of a different Communion, have been forward and generous in their Contributions towards the beautifying of this sacred Place, so they would unite with us in our publick Devotions to the common LORD, and Father of us all. And would they be persuaded to lay aside their Prejudices, and to peruse our Liturgy with Care and Impartiality; would they sincerely endeavour to affect their Minds with the Sense and Matter of our Prayers, they could not but be charm'd with the Excellency of them; and

and their Experience would soon convince them, that our publick Forms would be so far from deadning their Devotion, that they would be a considerable Help and Advantage to it. But,

III. THESE Words, *worship the LORD in the Beauty of Holiness*, may relate to our decent and devout Behaviour in the House of GOD. And the Reasonableness of such a Deportment will appear, if we consider the Nature of GOD'S House; which being set apart for His Service, there accrues a peculiar Holiness to it. We affirm not that there is any absolute or inherent Holiness in Places thus consecrated. Certain it is, that the House of GOD is built of the same Materials, that other Houses are; but nevertheless it is as certain, that there is a relative Holiness belonging to such Places; in as much as they have Relation unto GOD Himself, being dedicated to His Service. Accordingly we find GOD Himself bears a different Regard to Houses thus set apart; for we read, *Psal. lxxxii. 2. GOD hath loved the Gates of Sion more than all the Dwellings of Jacob*: And surely since GOD'S Will is to be the Measure of ours, and His Love to be the Rule and Standard of ours, we should always endeavour to enter His House with Hearts enflam'd with holy Zeal, and with such awful Devotion, as becomes the great Owner of it. But,

2. A DEVOUT Behaviour in GOD's House, is very decent and reasonable, because He is more peculiarly and eminently present there; not only by the Administration of His Word and Sacraments, by the powerful Assistances of His Spirit, and by His peculiar Readiness to hear our Prayers, but in a more especial Manner, by the Attendance and Ministry of His Angels. Thus upon *Jacob's* divine Vision at *Bethel*, where having seen a Ladder reaching from Heaven to Earth, and the Angels of GOD ascending and de-

scending upon it, *surely*, says he,
Gen. xxviii. 16. the LORD is in this Place, and I knew it not. *Jacob* could not

but know that GOD was substantially present in every Place; that the Heaven of Heavens could not contain Him: but having seen a Multitude of Angels, he infers from thence, that GOD was more eminently pre-

sent there; and therefore crys
Gen. xxviii. 17. out, This is none other but the House of GOD, and this is the Gate of Heaven. And *David*

takes it for granted, that the Angels do attend in the House of GOD; and therefore says, *before Ps. cxxxviii. 1. the Gods, i. e. the Angels, will I sing Praise unto Thee:* And for

this Reason, doubtless, it was, that *Cherubims* were the Ornaments both of the Tabernacle, and the Temple. And *St. Paul* supposes, that the Angels are present in
 Christian

Christian Assemblies; for pleading for Decency in the Womens Dress, when they appear'd in the House of GOD; he thought the Presence of the Angels, a sufficient Argument to enforce the Necessity of it: *For this Cause ought the Woman to have Power of her Head, because of the Angels; i. e.* to be decently habited or cover'd with a Veil, in respect to those Spirits, who are continually present in GOD's House, to inspect their Behaviour; and *are sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation.* In a word, that we should be serious and devout in GOD's House, is what His Majesty requires, and the Care of our own Souls exacts from us.

HAVING now prov'd that GOD is to be worshipped, and He alone; and that to render our Worship acceptable to Him, it must be performed in the *Beauty of Holiness; i. e.* in a decent publick Place set apart for His Service, in a decent and regular Manner, and with such a becoming Reverence, as may testify the awful Regard we have to His Majesty and Presence: What remains, but that as you've sumptuously adorn'd this Place for the Worship of GOD, so you should proceed to manifest your high Esteem of Him, by a constant Attendance upon Him here; and by adorning the holy Religion you profess, by such a Conversation, as becomes the Gospel of CHRIST.

That

That as you have unanimously join'd in this pious Work, and are Servants of the same LORD, who lov'd us to that Degree, as to die for us, and has commanded us to love one another; so you should always live in Love, and Peace, and Unity: That whenever you appear in this sacred Place, you should behave yourselves with a suitable Gravity and Seriousness: That you should join in the publick Prayers of our Church, with Zeal and Devotion; Prayers, which cannot but be acceptable to GOD, being so admirably well compos'd, and all put up in the Name of CHRIST, that *Lamb which was slain from the Foundation of the World*, in all the Sacrifices of the ancient Patriarchs, and of the *Jewish Pædago*gy; and who is set forth in Scripture as the *Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*, and the *only Mediator between GOD and Man*. That you should hear the Word of *James i. 21.* GOD, *which is able to save your Souls*, with Reverence and Attention; and frequent the Holy Communion, which is as necessary to our spiritual Growth and Improvement in Holiness, as Bread is to keep our Bodies in constant Repair; which Holy Sacrament, if receiv'd with a penitent Heart, and a lively Faith, will be a Means to convey Grace to us, and is a Pledge to assure us of the divine Favour. To conclude, let us carefully wait upon GOD in all His Ordinances, and neglect

neglect not the Means and Opportunities of Salvation: And let us resolve, since this material Temple of GOD is now beautify'd, to date from henceforth the beautifying of our inward Man; to become new and better Creatures: And may this Beauty of Holiness prove an Emblem of our own Reformation: May our Bodies, the Temples of the Living GOD, be no longer infested with Disorder and Pollution, but be beautify'd and adorn'd with a well-order'd Mind, with a pious and devout Temper of Soul, and be presented unto GOD as a living, pure, and holy Sacrifice. And if we thus glorify GOD with our Bodies and our Spirits, He will hereafter advance us from worshipping of Him in this His material Temple, to praise and adore Him with Angels, and Arch-Angels, and glorified Spirits, in a Temple, not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.

To which, &c.



F I N I