

THE

Christian's Pocket-Book:

OR, A BUNDLE OF

FAMILIAR EXHORTATIONS,

TO THE

PRACTICE OF PIETY.

BRIEFLY AND ADVISEDLY ADAPTED TO THE
MEANEST CAPACITIES BOTH AS TO
STYLE AND MATTER.

BY A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

I THESSALONIANS IV. I.

We beseech you, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that
as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to
please God, so ye would abound more and more.

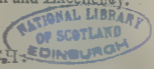
HEBREWS XIII. 22.

beseech you, suffer the word of Exhortation, for I have
written unto you in few words.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

DIRECTIONS FOR READING THE BI-
BLE; and shewing its Worth and Excellency.

EDINBURGH.



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P R E F A C E.

TH E R E are many who either are not able to buy books of great price, or not willing to carry about with them books of great bulk: therefore we have cast into this small portable Pocket-book, the following Bundle of Exhortations, which, we hope, compendiously contain the chief substantials of practical religion; which are of most common use, and that people should most carefully mind, and be daily exercised in: We have advisedly contracted matters into small bounds, and expressed them in plain terms, so that we expect none will grudge either the price they pay for this schedule, or their pains in perusing it. We would not have the Reader satisfy himself with once reading, or viewing it over, to please his curious or critical fancy anent what is written; it is not the feeding of fancy which the Author designs, but proposing duty and exhorting to the daily practice of it, and frequently to look over these exhortations, and to form your daily walk and conversation agreeably thereto.

EXHORTATION I.

CONSIDER your foul concerns with the greatest seriousness; all other concerns are but trifles and vanities in comparison hereof: inconsideration is the bane and ruin of souls, it is the parent of sloth and security, and the great hinderance of needful resolution: and specially consider, that you have precious and immortal souls, which after the end of this short life, will live for ever, either in everlasting happiness, or everlasting misery. It is your chief concern to see the salvation of your souls, as you would not be found inconsiderate fools, or stupidots, Mat. xvi. 20. Hof. ii. 12.

Exh. 2. Lay deeply to heart your natural state of sin and misery: bethink you that besides your original guilt, and the corruption of your whole nature, which was brought to the world with you, that you are also guilty of innumerable actual sins, by breaking all the commands of God, in thought, word, and deed: for all which you deserve God's heavy curse and

and wrath to pursue you, both in this world, and that which is to come: and neither can you relieve yourselves out of this dangerous condition. Psal. li. 4 5. Rom. v. 8, 16 Gal. iii. 10.

Exh. 3. Flee speedily to Christ Jesus, the only Son of God, and the only Saviour of sinners; renouncing your own righteousness, by true faith, rest and rely upon his merits, and imputed righteousness, firmly expecting to be justified, pardoned and saved thereby. Rom. v. 22, 24, 25. Rom. x. 4, 5.

Exh. 4. Reflect seriously on your baptismal vows and covenant, whereby you are fast bound to the Lord, and to renounce and resist the devil, the world, and the flesh, as the great enemies of your peace and salvation, and make conscience of keeping your solemn engagements, as ye desire and hope to partake of Christ and his benefits. Also, set apart some share of time on purpose to renew your baptismal covenant, in your own persons, expressly accepting Christ Jesus for your Propet, Priest and King; for your portion, guide, guard, and all in all, and

and devoting yourselves to him, to be his subjects and servants as long as ye live frequently renew your personal covenant with him, and faithfully keep it. Isa. xlv. 5. Rom. xii. 2. Exod. xix. 5.

Exh. 5. Make an entire resignation of yourselves to God, and of all that you enjoy, and have an affection for; referring frankly to his will, wisdom and goodness, to dispose of you and yours in all things, in all cases, and at all times, as seemeth good and right in his sight: live a life of dependance on him, and trust in him, who can make all things work together for good to you. Math. vi. 10. Rom. viii. 18.

Exh. 6. Daily read some portion of the holy scriptures, diligently meditate on what you read, and study to understand and remember what you meditate; that thereby you may come to know both sin and duty, and how to be both holy and happy; read also other good practical books; and seek the Lord's blessing on your readings. John v. 39. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17.

Exh. 7. Pray daily unto God Almighty.

ty morning and evening at least; and see you be not formal or lazy in your devotions; and, besides secret closet prayer, also make conscience of family duties; set up, and keep up the worship of God in your families, by reading in the Bible, and by prayer and praises to God, who only can bless you and yours in all your actions and interests. prayerless persons, are surely to be looked on as Godless persons. Ps. lv. 17. Mat. vi. 6, 7.

Exh. 8. Exercise yourselves also sometimes to spiritual meditations; think often of the joys of heaven, of the torments of hell, of the sweetness of God's promises, of terribleness, of his threatnings, of the hatefulnes of sin, of the beauty of holiness, of the vanity of the world, of the advantages of real godliness, of your hazards through manifold temptations, and of the readiness and ability of Jesus Christ to help and comfort you in all cases, &c. When ye rise up or lye down, when you walk in the streets, or in the fields, when you are employed in any part of your lawful calling, even at all times and every place, by night or by day.

you may have good thoughts toward God,
and about your soul concerns. Gen. xxiv.
3. Psal. lxxiii. 9, and civ. 34. Phil. iv. 8.

Exh. 9. Entertain and nourish tenderly
the motions and impulses of God's Spirit
on your spirits: when ye find kindly
inclinations to duty, fall in with them;
when you feel inward checks and fears
with respect to sin, improve them to re-
strain you from all iniquity; take special
heed you do not smother convictions, or
willfully resist and quench the Spirit's
workings in your hearts. Rom. viii. 1. 5.
3. 1 Theff. v. 16, 20.

Exh. 10. Wait punctually on public
ordinances, and always prepare for ap-
pearing before the Lord in the sanctuary;
hear the word reverently. Let it be your
earnest desire to meet with God, and to
get your souls edified in to the grace and
knowledge of Christ Jesus; make parti-
cular application both of promises and
threatenings agreeably to your cases.
When you are returned home, meditate
and confer on what you have been hear-
ing; and frequently pray that God may
give you good of his word: Neglect not

8 THE CHRISTIAN'S
to mind your minister in your supplica-
tions, that he may be blessed with divine
assistance and success. Psal. lxxiii. 1, .
Mat. xv. 10. Luke viii. 15. 18.

Exh. 11. Frequently take the sacrament
of the Lord's supper, but ere you venture
on that holy ordinance, prepare carefully
by examining yourselves anent the state
of your soul, try if you be in a holy, hum-
ble, lively, and tender frame; penitently
mourn over your sins: resolve on amend-
ment and newness of life; renew your per-
sonal covenant, and use the sacrament as
a seal of it; serve a bill of divorce against
all your idols and strange lovers, that
have courted and carried your affections
off Christ; hunger and thirst for close
communion with him: in the act of com-
municating, watch narrowly over your
treacherous hearts, that they gad not and
go astray from the Lord. And after you
have communicated, try what good ye
have gotten, let it appear in your after-
walk, that ye have been with Jesus, feast-
ing with him, and upon him. 1 Cor xi. 20.

Exh 12 Remember the Sabbath day,
to keep it holy, not only by public wor-

ship but by religious duties in your families, and in secret: put away all vain impertinent, and earthy thoughts; talk not of wordly affairs, neither do any wordly business, but what works of mercy and necessity may call you to; mispend no part of the Lord's day either in idle discourse, loitering at home, or strolling in the streets and fields Ex. viii. 20.

Exh. 13. Look on sin to be the worst thing in the world, as being defiling to your consciences, and damnable to both soul and body; and which is worst of all, dishonourable and displeasing to the great God of heaven. Jer. ii. 16.

Exh. 14. Shun and resist temptations, be still upon your guard; watching over your deceitful hearts, keeping the door of your lips, and being circumspect in all your ways; you are encompassed about on all hands with snares and temptations. Mat. xxvi. 41. Prov. vi. 23. Ps. xxxix. 1, 2. Eph v. 15. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9.

Exh. 15. Daily repent of sin; you are daily sinning in thought, word and deed, for which you should every evening take an account, of yourselves; and what faults

you find you are guilty of, confess them, mourn over them, resolve, by God's grace not to do the like again; have a care your repentance prove not a sighing and going backward: moreover, not only repent of your own faults, but over the sins of your relations, neighbours, and the places ye live in. Acts xvii. 30. Job xxxiv. 32. Psal. cxix. 136.

Exh. 16. Mortify and bear down the inward passions and corrupt affections of your heart, such as anger, envy, malice, privy hatred, revenge, lustfulness, covetousness, pride, ambition, and all secret inclinations to impiety; untill your souls be purged of these, you cannot expect the Holy Ghost will dwell in you as a temple. Col. iii. 5, 8. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

Exh. 17. Keep at the utmost distance from the common sins of the times, from cursing, swearing, drunkenness, stealing, cheating, lying, reviling, fornication, bad language, and all uncleanness, deriding or mocking true godliness, or wishing evil to the godly, &c. For because of these things comes the wrath of God on the guilty. Eph. v. 3, 4, 5.

Exh. 18. Keep out of ill company, bad examples corrupt good manners: 'Tis no shame to converse familiarly with openly profane and debauched persons; this will neither be for your credit, comfort, or profit, rather chuse virtuous, sober and godly people to be your companions: Such a man as ye would be, draw to like company. Prov. xxii. 24. Psal. cxix. 63.

Ex. 19. Lead a holy and religious life, walking sincerely according to the righteous commands of God: Set the Lord always before your face; content not yourselves with a bare form and outward shew of godliness without the power of it; be out entirely holy in all your ways. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. 2 Tim. iii. 5.

Exh. 20. Be good in all relations: not only a good Christian in general, that daily reads and prays, and runs to preachings and communions; but be a good husband, a wife; be a dutiful parent, and an obedient child; be a righteous master, and diligent and honest servant, be a good and peaceful neighbour; wrong nobody either with tongue or hands; thus be good and godly in all relations and ca-

capacities. Rom. vii. 18. Col. iii. 18. — 24.

Exh. 21. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ; be not satisfied with small measures of grace; use all proper means for growing in grace, and keeping it in lively exercise; without the exercise of grace ye can do nothing to purpose, either in performing duties, subduing corruptions, resisting temptations, or bearing afflictions, &c. Have a care of spiritual sloth, unwatchfulness: daily make use of Christ for quickening your graces. John i. 16. 1 Pet. i. 5, — 9. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

Exh. 22. Look and fix your affections right: love not the world, nor any earthly comfort immoderately: Give your heart's love to precious Christ above all things, who is only worthy of your chief desires. Col. iii. 1, 2. 1 John ii. 15, Mat. xxii. 27.

Exh. 23. be not vain or proud of any temporal thing; neither riches or honour, beauty, strength of body, parts nor gifts of the mind, nay, not of grace itself: all earthly possessions and goods are uncertain, vain and liable to innumerable chances and changes. Eccl. i. 2, 14.

Exh. 24. Be moderate in all things in,

your judgement of yourselves, and opinion of others; be moderate in eating, that you be not gluttonous, in drinking, that it be not to excess; in apparel, that you be not prodigal; in your house-keeping, that ye stretch not beyond your rank or ability; in your recreations, mispend not precious time; sobriety is always safe and commendable. Phili. iv. 5 Ti. ii. 12.

Exh. 25. Make as much conscience of your duty in secret before God alone, as you do in the sight of men: have a care of Pharisaical righteousness. Gen. xix. 9. Mat vi. 1, 4, 5, 6.

Exh. 26. Follow your lawful calling diligently, never be idle, but have your hand always in a turn, the hand of the diligent maketh rich; yet be not so much swallowed up with your worldly affairs, that you forget God, or your souls, or justice, or religious duties; keep a good mind in all your affairs, swaying to no extreme, either of neglecting your lawful calling, or under the pretence of constant devotion, or of too much engagement in thronging worldly business, under the pretence of careful providing for your families;

every thing is beautiful in its season.
Eccl ix. 10. Rom xii. 11.

Exh 27. Look more to God's providence and blessing for making you thrive and prosper in the world, than to your own skill or industry; and as you would expect God's blessing, be just, upright and honest in your dealings; cheating no man, defrauding no man by equivication, lying, or over-reaching. Prov. xxii. 10.

Exh. 28 Be content with your lot, whatever be the circumstances and ingredients thereof; be not your own carver, lest you cut your fingers; whatever God gives to you, whatever he takes from you, acquiesce in his will, which should never be quarrelled; own your needy dependence on his providence, and in all the changes of your condition, say, Good is the will of the Lord. Heb xiii 3. Job i 21.

Exh. 26 Bear afflictions patiently and submissively, and be more concerned to get the sanctified use of your troubles, than how to be freed from them, look to the hand of God in all pains, sicknesses, crosses, losses, disappointments, reproaches and vexations ye meet with; in faith and hope

Cast your cares and burdens upon the Lord. Heb. vii. 3, 9, 11. Ps. lv. 22. 1 Pet. v. 7. Exh. 30. Thank God heartily for all the mercies you receive, whether with respect to your bodies or your souls; freely acknowledge you get more mercies than you are worthy of, more than you improve or guide well, more than you are habitually thankful for, and more mercies than many others get, who are better and more serviceable to God than you: Recognize it a great mercy that you are out of hell, and that you have the opportunity of the precious gospel of Christ: Notice and record all the mercies of God; and at times take a while on purpose to thank and praise God for them. Psal. ciii.

Exh. 31. Specially remark and treasure up spiritual experiences; such as the answer of prayer, victory over temptations, the sensible presence of God in ordinances and duties, &c. Never deny, hide, or smother Christ's kindness, this is bastard humility, and true ingratitude. Psal. xlii, 6, 8. and xlvi, 16, 17, 20.

Exh. 32. be charitable to the poor, as far as you are able; if you cannot help

them with your purse, help them with your prayers and sympathy, and such offices of kindness and humility, as may make the miserable to bless you. Prov. xxii. 9 and xix. 17. Job xiii. 26.

Exh. 33. Study more to be well grounded in the fundamental principles of religion, than spending your time about matters debatable, or disputable; see you do nothing that may break the peace and unity of the church; go not without the bounds of your station, under a pretence of zeal and public spirit. John xvii. 23. 1 Pet. iii. 15. Psal. cxxxii. 1.

Exh. 34. Carry a due respect both to magistrates and ministers; obey them in all things lawful, if in any thing you be public faulters and offenders, willingly subject both to civil punishment, and church discipline and censures; regard and reverence rulers as your superiors. Rom. xiii. 1,—8. Heb. xiii. 13.

Exh. 35. Do all you can in your station for promoting the interests of the gospel; as God doth call and enable you; join not with any persecutors, to trouble any one for their religion and conscience.

ympathize with the persecuted people
of God in foreign churches; daily pray
for the blinded Jews and heathen nations,
that God may take pity and convert them
and make the light of the gospel shine
throughout the world. Acts ix. 26, 29.
Obadiah,—18. Psalm li. 18.

Exh 36. Resolve upon sufferings for
Christ; be at least martyrs in resolution
if you have a mind for Christ and the
crown, you must also be content to take
Christ and the cross; this is one of the
special articles in his new covenant bar-
gain with sinners; prepare for trials, you
know not what you may meet with ere
you go off the stage of time: Arm your-
selves against all peradventures Math.
xvi. 24

Exh 37 Mind religion as your main
business; and all your other affairs but
as petty by businesses; be not as the bulk
and body of the blinded demented world,
who live without God, without Christ,
and without hope; who live as if they
were not to die, as if there were neither
heaven nor hell, nor a day of judgement
after this life. Eph ii. 12 Tit i. 19.

Exh 38 Propose God's glory as the chief end of all your actions, and make his word the rule of them: take heed that base, selfish by-ends be not your main end either in duties towards God, or towards man: He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely. 1 Cor x 31
Prov x 9

Exh. 39, Spend your time well and profitably; time is a precious but a passing thing, and, when once past, cannot be brought back again. When you are to leave time, nothing will more gall you than the tormenting thoughts of having mispent it; on the other hand, nothing will be more comfortable, than the consideration of managing your golden hours profitably: Mind God will call you to an account for every minute of time, how you have improv'd that excellent gift, O what a valuable, yet what an abused mercy is precious time. Eph, v, 16,
Exh 40. Mind seriously ye are frail mortal creatures, liable to a thousand dangerous accidents, : Must certain it is you must die, but when, where, or how, nobody knows: Neither young nor old can

promise themselves a day, or an hour, beyond the moment they breath in; therefore, account it the care of cares to prepare for death judgment and eternity. Study to be always ready, by making our peace with God, by securing an interest in Christ, by living near God in the daily practice of piety, and by avoiding all wickedness, that when the Lord shall send you a summons to remove to your long home, you may be fit to step into eternity. Deut. xxxii. 29. Ps. ix, 3, 12. Heb. ix. 27. 1 Pet. i. 14. Jam. iv. 8.

DIRECTIONS FOR READING THE BIBLE.

1. In reading the Word of God, if ye would profit by it, then look to God for his blessing upon it when you begin, and pray that he may bless it to you, and to open your ears and hearts to hear and comply with it as the voice of God.

2. Read it with reverence, not as the word of man; but, as it is indeed, the word of the great God.

Endeavour to get your hearts impressed by his blessed word. The doctrines,

laws, and very Spirit of our Bibles should be transcribed to our very souls. Let then God's word stand not only in your Bibles, but dwell in your hearts

III. Have an eye to Christ in every thing ye read; for he is the end, scope and substance of the whole Bible; and every thing in it is reducible to him

IV. Mark the special passages of the word, either these that are of most importance in themselves, or most applicable to you. Mark the duties enjoined, and sins forbidden, with the promises to the one, and threatenings against the other; Fasten these upon your memories, and hide them in your hearts. Meditate on them, and pray, that God may keep them in your minds, ready for use against the time of need. There are sundry evangelical laws and precepts in the word of God, which you should observe; as, believing in God, doing all religious exercises in his name, depending upon his merits, grace, and intercession; looking only for acceptance in him; a persuasion of the necessity and usefulness of his offices, as Mediator, Prophet, Priest

King: An apprehension of your own ignorance, guilt, weakness, misery, and nothingness without Christ, a relying on him in all his offices. We also should mark concerning the Spirit, that he is a Spirit of conviction, illumination, prayer, holiness, conduct, comfort, and blessing: So we would accept of his help, cherish his motions, and influences.

5. Consider the worth and excellency of the word, and how suitable it is in any state or condition we may be in. It is a rich mine of heavenly treasures, a store-house of all spiritual consolation; a common shop of medicines for the soul, full of rich privileges, promises, and large legacies to the people of God: It is a staff and stay to the old, an ornament and guide to the young. In the word of God, we read the love which God bears to his children from all eternity, and will continue to have for them, when time shall be no more. Here are found the leaves of the tree of life which God hath ordained for the healing of the nations. In a word, here is the true judge of controversies, a ham

mer for hereticks, a touch-stone for doctrine, a rule for our lives, a comforter and counsellor in this house of our pilgrimage: a soveraign cordial in all our souls distresses; David found it so to his sweet experiencce, Psalm cxix. 50. "This is my
 "comfort in my afflictions, for thy word
 "hath quickened me." O! how excellent is the word, and who can set forth all its excellency? It is a glass to discover our spots, a lamp to guide us in the dark, a fire to warm our cold affections, a magazine to supply us with armour against our spiritual enemies. Here are suitable cordials for all our various cases, be it desertion, temptation, poverty, sickness, reproach or persecution; here is the heavenly train, for making soft and tender hearts, here is meat for strong men, and milk for babes; which through the divine blessing will be both food and physic to our souls.

It is surely the Christian's duty to read and meditate much on God's most holy word, and that with pleasure and delight: the child delights to read his father's will and testament, and see what is be-

ateed to him; citizens delight to read
eir charters, to see their privileges;
e malefactor who is acquitted, delights
read his pardon; and the prodigal that
received into favour, delights to read
e affectionate letters of his father to
m: Then if ye are received into fa-
our, and born of God, you cannot but
e the lovers of his most excellent word;
d read and meditate on it both day
d night. Psal. i. 2.

6. We are to contend for the scrip-
res; the precious jewel is too good to
parted with, Prov iv. 13, 'Keep her
e is thy life.' It is our duty, not only to
ve, read and understand the scriptures,
ut also to contend for the same: Here-
cks fight against it, we must therefore
ntend for it, Jude, 3. The scriptures
e our book of evidence for heaven, shall
e part with our evidences? The saints
old were both advocates and martyrs
r the truth, they held fast by scripture,
ough it was at the expence of their
es. David spends the whole cxix Psal,
show his intimate affection to it: Mo-
s esteems it above all the learning of

other nations, Deut. iv. 5, 6. Solomon prefers it before pearls, Prov. iii. 15. Job prefers it before his food, xxii. 12. Jeremiah makes it his joy, Jer. xv. 16. In a word, all the children of God have been great lovers of God's word, and could never be prevailed on to part with it, though persecuted for the same.

7: Read this excellent word with application to yourselves, as if God spake to you by name and surname in every line of it. Read it as a love-letter sent straight from heaven to you, and to stir you up to faith and holiness. Let us accept of its reproofs and admonitions with thankfulness: and say what a great mercy is it, that we may read our Father's will in our mother tongue? And that God speaks his mind so plainly to us in his word, shewing us what we are to believe, what we are to do, and what we are to pray for, in order to God's glory, and our own happiness.

F I N I S.