

DIRECTORY FOR PRIVATE WORSHIP (Westminster Confession of Faith, 1647)

BESIDES the publick worship in congregations, mercifully established in this land in great purity, it is expedient and necessary **that secret worship of each person alone**, and private worship of families, be pressed and set up; that, with national reformation, the profession and power of godliness, both personal and domestick, be advanced.

Art. I. And first, for secret worship, it is most necessary, that every one apart, and by themselves, be given to prayer and meditation, the unspeakable benefit whereof is best known to them who are most exercised therein; this being the mean whereby, in a special way, communion with God is entertained, and right preparation for all other duties obtained: ...

Art. II. The ordinary duties comprehended under the exercise of piety which should be in families, when they are convened to that effect, are these: **First, Prayer** and praises performed with a special reference, as well to the publick condition of the kirk of God and this kingdom, as to the present case of the family, and every member thereof. **Next, Reading of the scriptures**, with **catechising** in a plain way, that the understandings of the simpler may be the better enabled to profit under the publick ordinances, and they made more capable to understand the scriptures when they are read; together with **godly conferences** tending to the edification of all the members in the most holy faith: as also, **admonition and rebuke**, upon just reasons, from those who have authority in the family.

Art. VIII. On the Lord's day, after every one of the family apart, and the whole family together, **have sought the Lord** (in whose hands the preparation of men's hearts are) **to fit them for the publick worship, and to bless to them the publick ordinances**, the master of the family ought to take care that all within his charge repair to the publick worship, that he and they may join with the rest of the congregation: and **the publick worship being finished, after prayer, he should take an account what they have heard; and thereafter, to spend the rest of the time which they may spare in catechising, and in spiritual conferences upon the word of God: or else (going apart) they ought to apply themselves to reading, meditation, and secret prayer, that they may confirm and increase their communion with God: that so the profit which they found in the publick ordinances may be cherished and promoted, and they more edified unto eternal life.**

**Art. IX. So many as can conceive prayer, ought to make use of that gift of God;** albeit those who are rude and weaker may begin at a set form of prayer, but so as they be not sluggish in stirring up in themselves (according to their daily necessities) the spirit of prayer, which is given to all the children of God in some measure: to which effect, they ought to be more fervent and frequent in secret prayer to God, for enabling of their hearts to conceive, and their tongues to express, convenient desires to God for their family. And, in the meantime, for their greater encouragement, let these materials of prayer be meditated upon, and made use of, as followeth.

"Let them confess to God how unworthy they are to come in his presence, and how unfit to worship his Majesty; and therefore earnestly ask of God the spirit of prayer.

"They are to confess their sins, and the sins of the family; accusing, judging, and condemning themselves for them, till they bring their souls to some measure of true humiliation.

"They are to pour out their souls to God, in the name of Christ, by the Spirit, for forgiveness of sins; for grace to repent, to believe, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and that they may serve God with joy and delight, walking before him.

"They are to give thanks to God for his many mercies to his people, and to themselves, and especially for his love in Christ, and for the light of the gospel.

"They are to pray for such particular benefits, spiritual and temporal, as they stand in need of for the time, (whether it be morning or evening,) as anent health or sickness, prosperity or adversity.

"They ought to pray for the kirk of Christ in general, for all the reformed kirks, and for this kirk in particular, and for all that suffer for the name of Christ; for all our superiors, the king's majesty, the queen, and their children; for the magistrates, ministers, and whole body of the congregation whereof they are members, as well for their neighbours absent in their lawful affairs, as for those that are at home.

"The prayer may be closed with an earnest desire that God may be glorified in the coming of the kingdom of his Son, and in doing of his will, and with assurance that themselves are accepted, and what they have asked according to his will shall be done."

Art. X. **These exercises ought to be performed in great sincerity, without delay**, laying aside all exercises of worldly business or hinderances, notwithstanding the mockings of atheists and profane men; in respect of the great mercies of God to this land, and of his severe corrections wherewith lately he hath exercised us. And, to this effect, persons of eminency (and all elders of the kirk) not only ought to stir up themselves and families to diligence herein, but also to concur effectually, that in all other families, where they have power and charge, the said exercises be conscionably performed.

# **PERSONAL DEVOTIONS**

**July 4, 2018 – Speech, Rev. R. Kleyn  
Western Young People's Retreat**

**1. The Pattern**

**2. The Purpose**

**3. The Practice**

**4. The Priority**

**5. The Profit**