

**Psalm 23 in Common Meter (8.6.8.6) (1650) - Amazing Grace, O for a Thousand Tongues, Auld Lang Syne, O God Our Help in Ages Past, King of Love, Come all ye Pining Hungry Poor, House of the Rising Sun, Gilligan's Island**

1 The LORD's my shepherd, I'll not want.

2 He makes me down to lie

In pastures green: he leadeth me  
the quiet waters by.

3 My soul he doth restore again;  
and me to walk doth make

Within the paths of righteousness,  
ev'n for his own name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,  
yet will I fear none ill:

For thou art with me; and thy rod  
and staff me comfort still.

5 My table thou hast furnished  
in presence of my foes;  
My head thou dost with oil anoint,  
and my cup overflows.

6 Goodness and mercy all my life  
shall surely follow me:  
And in GOD's house for evermore  
my dwelling-place shall be.

**William Ames - *The Marrow of Sacred Divinity*, "Chapter 5: The Subsistence of God" (1627)**

1. The subsistence of God is that one Essence, as it exists with its Personal properties.

2. The same essence is common to three subsistences; and as touching the Deity, every subsistence is of itself.

3. Moreover, nothing is attributed to the Essence, which may not be attributed to every subsistence in regard to the Essence of it.

4. But those things that are attributed properly to every subsistence, in regard to its own subsistence, cannot be attributed to the Essence.

5. The subsistences are distinguished from the Essence, as the manners of subsisting growing together with the same Essence, are distinguished from the same, absolutely considered.

6. They are distinguished among themselves as Relatives, by certain relative properties; so as one cannot be another; yet they are together in nature; nor can they be said to be former or latter, except in the order of beginning, and in the manner of subsisting.

7. But seeing those relative properties are, as it were, individuating in an Essence that lives spiritually and most perfectly, therefore those subsistences are rightly called persons.

8. Now these properties are not inherent qualities, but relative affections, to which agrees all that perfection which is found in the like affections of the Creature; but no imperfection in the Creature agrees to them.

9. Hence it is that a relative property in God makes or infers a person, which in the Creatures does not have the same reason.

10. Those subsistences are either breathing, as Father and Son breathe; or they are breathed, as the Holy Spirit is breathed.

11. To breathe, or send forth, is a relation — not such that by itself it can make a person —but it is common to two persons.

12. The relative property of the Father is to beget. (Psalm 2:7, “You are my Son; this day I have begotten you.” John 3:16, “the only begotten Son.” Hebrews 1:6, “The first begotten.”) Hence the Father is the first in Order.

13. The relative property of the Son is to be begotten; that is, to so proceed from the Father, that he is partaker of the same Essence, and perfectly resembles his nature; and hence he is the second in order. (Hebrews 1:3, “The brightness of his glory, and the Character [or image] of his Person.”)

14. The property of the Holy Spirit is to be breathed, or sent forth, and he proceeds from the Father, and the Son. (John 15:26, “Whom I will send to you from the Father, that Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father.” Romans 8:9, “The Spirit of Christ.” Galatians 4:6, “The Spirit of the Son.”)

15. The difference between being begotten, which agrees to the Son, and proceeding, which is proper to the Holy Spirit, cannot be explained by us in proper words — except that the Son proceeds from the Father alone, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, making one relative together, or making together one relation.

16. Yet, in part, it may be shadowed in a similitude; namely the Father is as it were, *Deus intelligens*, God understanding. The Son, the express image of the Father, is as it were *Deus intellectus*, God understood. The Holy Spirit, flowing and breathed from the Father by the Son, is as it were *Deus dilectus*, God beloved.

The Son is produced, as it were, by an act of understanding or speaking, from the understanding or fruitful memory of the Father; the Holy Spirit is produced by an act of loving or breathing from the fruitful will of the Father and the Son. Hence the Son is called the Word, Wisdom, Image, which are not affirmed of the Holy Spirit. But because in the Creatures there is found the generation of a son, but there is nothing found which so immediately proceeds from two equally perfect (as the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son), the procession of the Son is therefore properly designed, noted, or set down in Scripture; but there is neither a special manner of proceeding, nor a special name absolutely proper, given to the Third Person. For it is truly said of the Father and the Son, that they are spirits, and holy; and the Son also proceeds from the Father by spiritual generation.

17. The proper name of God, with his proper titles, is given in Scripture, not only to the Father, but also to the Son. (Jeremiah 23:6, “Jehovah our righteousness.” John 1:1, “The Word was God.” Romans 9:5, “God blessed forever.” 1 Timothy 3:16, “God manifest in the flesh.” Revelation 17:14, “Lord of Lords and King of Kings.”) It is also given to the Holy Spirit. (Acts 5:3-4, “that you should lie to the Holy Spirit, you have lied to God.” Acts 28:25 with Isaiah 6:9, “Jehovah said, the Holy Spirit spoke.” 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16, “the Temple of the Spirit; the Temple of God.”)

18. Divine attributes are affirmed not only of the Father, but also of the Son. (Isaiah 9:6, "The most mighty God, Father of eternity." John 2:25, "He knew what was in man," and 3:13, "The son of man is in Heaven;" and 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I am.") In the same way, also of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 139:7, "Where shall I fly from your Spirit?" 1 Corinthians 2:10, "The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God." Hebrews 9:14, "the eternal Spirit.")

19. The proper operations of God are attributed not only to the Father, but also to the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Election is attributed to the Son: (Matthew 24:31, "His elect.") And the eternal counsel of God is attributed to the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 40:13, "Who has weighed the Spirit of the Lord as the man of his counsel.") Creation is attributed to the Son (John 1:3, "All things were made by him, and without him, nothing was made that was made.") Also it is attributed to the Holy Spirit (Psalm 33:6, "By the Word of the Lord the Heavens were made, and all their strength by the breath of his mouth.") Upholding and Governing created things is attributed to the Son (Hebrews 1:3, "Who upholds all things by his mighty Word.") Also they are attributed to the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:2, "The Spirit moved upon the face of the waters;" Zechariah 4:6, "By my Spirit says the Lord of Hosts.") Proper power to do Miracles is given to the Son: "Acts 4:10, "Through the name of Jesus Christ, he stands before you whole," Acts 9:34, "Jesus Christ heals you.") It's also given to the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4, "They began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.") Communicating spiritual life, and all grace in vocation, justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification, is everywhere give to the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as well as to the Father; the ordaining, sending, and blessing of Ecclesiastical Ministry is given to the Son (Ephesians 4:8, 11, "He gave gifts, ...he gave some Apostles") And to the Holy Spirit: (1 Corinthians 12:11, "One and the same Spirit works all these;" Acts 20:28, "The Holy Spirit has made you overseers.") The very Resurrection of the flesh is ascribed to the Son, as the author. (John 6:54, "I will raise him up.") Also to the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11, "He shall raise up your bodies by his Spirit dwelling in you.")

20. Divine Honour also, and Worship, is given not only to the Father, but also to the Son: (Hebrews 1:6, "Let all the Angels of God worship him.") And to the Holy Spirit, when his Name together with the Father and the Son, is appointed to be called upon over the Baptised: (Matthew 28:19, "In the name of the Father, and the Son, and Holy Spirit.") In the same manner, the Son and Spirit are called upon in that solemn form of salutation: (2 Corinthians 13:13, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of the Father, and the communication of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.") And whatever pertains to worship is referred to Christ as well as to the Holy Spirit, in that the true worshippers of God, as they are such, are called Temples not only of God the Father, but also of Christ: (Revelation 21:22, "The Lord God Almighty is her Temple, and the Lamb." 1 Corinthians 3:16, "Do you not know that you are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you?" and 6:19, "Do you not know that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you.")

21. Finally, that authority and majesty which is proper to God, is given to the Son and the Spirit: (1 Corinthians 2:8, "The Lord of glory;" 1 Peter 4:14, "that Spirit of glory.") All holy prophecy is attributed to Christ and the Holy Spirit: (1 Peter 3:19, "Christ by his Spirit went

and preached to the spirits that are in prison;" 2 Peter 1:21, "Holy men spoke being moved by the Holy Spirit;" Act 28:25, "The Holy Spirit spoke by Isaiah the Prophet.")

22. Now, in all these the Holy Spirit is propounded to us as a person subsisting, as manifestly appears by this: that life, understanding, will, and power are given to him everywhere, together with all those acts which are proper to a person.

23. Also the Spirit's distinction from the Father and the Son is clearly taught when he is called another, or he is sent, as coming from the Father and the Son (John 14).

24. Hence, God as the object of our Faith, is in every way sufficient to impart salvation to us. For all love, grace, and the communication of those things which pertain to living well, flow from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14).

### **Richard Baxter - Christian Directory, "Directions for Profitable Hearing the Word Preached" (1673)**

I shall give you such directions about the personal, internal management of your duty of hearing the Word preached, as I think most necessary to your edification. And seeing that your duty and benefit lies in these four general points:

1. That you hear with understanding.
2. That you remember what you hear.
3. That you be duly affected with it.
4. And that you sincerely practice it.

I shall more particularly direct you in order to all these ends and duties.

#### *1. Directions for the UNDERSTANDING the Word which you hear.*

Direction 1. Read and meditate on the holy Scriptures much in private, and then you will be the better able to understand what is preached on it in public, and to test the doctrine, whether it be of God. Whereas if you are unacquainted with the Scriptures, all that is treated of or alleged from them, will be so strange to you, that you will be but little edified by it.

Direction 2. Live under the clearest, distinct, convincing teaching ministry that possibly you can procure. There is an unspeakable difference as to the edification of the hearers, between a judicious, clear, distinct, and skillful preacher — and one that is ignorant, confused, general, dry, and only scrapes together a mangle-mangle of some undigested sayings to fill up the hour with. If in philosophy, physics, grammar, law, and every art and science, there is so great a difference between one teacher and another — it must needs be so in divinity also. Ignorant teachers, who don't understand what they say themselves, are unlikely to make you men of Scriptural understanding. And erroneous teachers are unlikely to make you orthodox and sound.

Direction 3. Come not to hear with a careless heart, as if you were to hear a matter which little concerned you. But come with a sense of the unspeakable importance, necessity, and consequence of the holy Word which you are to hear. And when you understand how much you are concerned in it, and truly love it, as the Word of life — it will greatly help your understanding of every particular truth. That which a man does not love, and does not perceive the importance of — he will hear with so little regard and heed, that it will make no considerable impression on his mind. But a good understanding of the excellency and necessity, exciting love and serious attention — would make the particulars easy to be understood. Otherwise, you will be like a stopped-up or narrow-mouthed bottle, which keeps out that which you desire to put in. I know that understanding must go before affections; but yet the understanding of the importance and worth of your own souls, must first procure such a serious care of your salvation, and a general regard to the Word of God, as is needful to your further understanding of the particular instructions, which you shall after hear.

Direction 4. Do not allow vain thoughts or drowsy negligence to hinder your attention. If you do not clearly hear what is taught — how should you understand and learn? Set yourselves to listening, as for your lives; be as earnest and diligent in attending and learning, as you would have the preacher be in teaching. If a drowsy, careless preacher is bad — then a drowsy, careless hearer is also bad. Says Moses, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you — they are your life!" Deuteronomy 32:46-47

You would have God attentive to your prayers in your distresses — so why will you not then be attentive to his words. "He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, even his prayer is an abomination." Proverbs 28:9. "All the people were hanging on to every word He said!" Luke 19:48. "When Ezra read the law He read it aloud from daybreak until noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law." Nehemiah 8:3. When Paul continued his Lord's-day exercise and speech until midnight, one young man that fell asleep, fell down dead as a warning to those who will sleep, when they should hear the message of Christ, Acts 20:9. Therefore you are excused that day from worldly business, "that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord" 1 Corinthians 7:35. Lydia's listening to the words of Paul, accompanied the opening of her heart and her conversion, Acts 16:14.

Direction 5. Mark especially the design and drift, and principal doctrine of the sermon. Both because that is the chief thing that the preacher would have marked; and because the understanding of that will much help you to understand all the rest, which depends on it, and relates to it.

Direction 6. Mark most those things which are of greatest weight and concernment to your own souls. And do not fix upon some little sayings, and by-discourses, or witty sentences; like children that bring home some scraps and words which they do but play with.

Direction 7. Learn first your catechisms at home, and the great essential points of religion, contained in the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments. And in your hearing, first labor to get a clearer understanding of these; and then the lesser branches which grow out of these, will be the better understood. You can scarcely bestow too much care and pains in learning these great essential points. It is the most fruitful of all your studies.

I especially advise you to avoid feeding upon dry and barren theological controversies, and delighting in the chaff of jingling words, and impertinent, unedifying things, or discourses about formalities and circumstances.

Direction 8. Meditate on what you hear when you come home, until you better understand it.

Direction 9. Inquire, when you have question, of those who can resolve and teach you. It shows a careless mind, and a contempt of the Word of God, in most people who never come to ask the resolution of one perplexity, from one week's or year's end to another, though they have pastors who have ability and willingness to help them. "As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables." Mark 4:10

Direction 10. Read much those holy books which treat best of the doctrine which you would understand.

Direction 11. Pray earnestly for wisdom, and the illumination of the Spirit.

Direction 12. Suitable practicing what you know, is an excellent help to understanding.

## *2. Directions for REMEMBERING what you hear.*

That lack of memory, which comes from old age and decay of nature, is not to be cured; nor should any servant of Christ be over-much troubled at it; seeing Christ will no more cast off his servants for that, than he will for old age or any sickness. But for that lack of memory which is curable, and is a fault, I shall give you these following directions.

Direction 1. It greatly helps memory to have a full understanding of the matter spoken, which you would remember. Ignorance is one of the greatest hindrances to memory. Common experience tells you this — how easily you can remember any discourse which you thoroughly understand; and how hard it is to remember any words which are insignificant, or which we do not understand. Therefore labor most for a clear understanding according to the last directions.

Direction 2. A deep, awakened affection is a very powerful help to memory. We easily remember anything which our lives depend on, when trifles are neglected and soon forgotten.

Direction 3. Method is a very great help to memory. Therefore be acquainted with the preacher's method; and then you are put into a path or tract, which you cannot easily depart from. And therefore it is, that ministers must not only be methodical, and avoid prolix, confused, and involved discourses, and that malicious pride of hiding their method — but must be as oft in the use of the same method, as the subject will bear, and choose that method which is most easy to the hearers to understand and remember, and labor to make them perceive your tract.

Direction 4. Numbers are a great help to memory. As if the reasons, the uses, the motives, the signs, the directions — are six, or seven, or eight; when you know just the number, it helps you much to remember, which was the first, second, third, etc.

Direction 5. Names also and signal words are a great help to memory. He may remember one word, who cannot remember all the sentence; and that one word may help him to remember much of the rest. Therefore preachers should contrive the force of every reason, use, direction, etc. as much as may be, into someone emphatic word. (And some do very profitably contrive each of those words to begin with the same letter, which is good for memory, so long as it is not too much strained.)

As if I were to direct you to the chief helps to your salvation, and should name:

1. Powerful preaching.
2. Prayer.
3. Prudence.
4. Piety.
5. Painfulness.
6. Patience.
7. Perseverance.

Though I opened every one of these at large, the very names would help the hearers' memory. It is this which makes ministers, who care more for their people's souls, than the pleasing of curious ears, to go in the common road of doctrine, reasons, uses, motives, helps, etc. and to give their uses the same titles of information, reproof, exhortation, etc. And yet when the subject shall direct us to some other method, the hearers must not be offended with us: for one method will not work exactly for every subject, and we must be reluctant to wrong the text or topic.

Direction 6. It is a great help to memory, often in the time of hearing, to repeat to yourselves the heads that have been spoken. The mind of man can do two things at once: you may both hear what is said, and recall and repeat to yourselves what is past: not to stand long upon it,

but off and quickly to name over, e.g. The reasons, uses, motives, etc. To me, this has been (next to understanding and affection) the greatest help of any that I have used; for otherwise to hear a head but once, and think of it no more until the sermon is done, would never serve me to remember it.

Direction 7. Grasp not at more than you are able to hold, lest thereby you lose all. If there are more particulars than you can possibly remember, lay hold on some which most concern you, and let go the rest; perhaps another may rather take up those, which you leave behind. Yet say not that it is the preacher's fault to name more than you can carry away, for,

1. Then he must leave out his enlargement much more, and the most of his sermon; for it is likely you leave the most behind.

2. Another may remember more than you.

3. All is not lost, when the words are forgotten: for it may breed a habit of understanding, and promote resolution, affection, and practice.

Direction 8. Writing is an easy help for memory, to those who can use it. Some question whether they should use it, because it hinders their affection. But that must be differently determined according to the difference of subjects, and of hearers. Some sermons are all to work upon the affections at present, and the present advantage is to be preferred before the after-perusal: but some must more profit us, in after digestion and review. And some hearers can write much with ease, and little hinder their affection; and some write so little and are hindered so much, that it recompenses not their loss. Some know so fully all that is said, that they need no notes; and some who are ignorant need them for perusal.

Direction 9. Peruse what you remember, or write down, when you come home: and fix it speedily in your mind, before it is lost. Pray it over, and confer about it with others who have heard the sermon.

Direction 10. If you forget the very words, yet remember the main drift of all; and get those resolutions and affections which they drive at. And then you have not lost the sermon, though you have lost the words; as he has not lost his food, that has digested it, and turned it into flesh and blood.

### *3. Directions for holy Resolutions and Affections in hearing.*

The understanding and memory are but the passage to the heart — and the practice is but the expression of the heart. Therefore how to work upon the heart is the principal business.

Direction 1. Live under the most convincing, lively, serious preacher that you possibly can. It is a matter of great concernment to all, but especially to dull and senseless hearts. Harken not to those who tell you, because God can bless the weakest, and because it is your own



fault if you do not profit by the weakest; that therefore you should make no difference, but sit down under an ignorant, dumb, or senseless man.

Ask first whether they had as willingly have a bad physician, as a good one, because God can bless the labors of the weakest? Ask whether they would not have their children duly reproofed or corrected, because it is their own faults that they need it? and whether they would not take a medicine, though it be their own fault that made them sick? It is true, that all our sin is our own fault; but the question is, What is the most effectual cure? What man that is alive and awake, who does not feel a very great difference between a dead and a lively preacher?

Direction 2. Remember that ministers are the messengers of Christ, and come to you on his business and in his name. Hear them therefore as his officers, and as men who have more to do with God himself, than with the speaker. It is the phrase of the Holy Spirit, Hebrews 4:13, "All things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." It is God with whom you have to do, and therefore accordingly behave yourselves.

Direction 3. Remember that this God is instructing you, and warning you, and dealing with you, about no less than the saving of your souls. Come therefore to hear as for your salvation. Can that heart be dull that well considers, that it is Heaven and Hell which is the matter that God is dealing with him about?

Direction 4. Remember that you have but a little time to hear in; and you know not whether ever you shall hear again. Hear therefore, as if it were your last sermon. Think when you hear the calls of God, and the offers of grace, I know not but this may be my last sermon: how would I hear if I were sure to die tomorrow? I am sure it will be before long, and may be today for anything I know.

Direction 5. Remember that all these days and sermons must be reviewed, and you must answer for all that you have heard, whether you heard it with love, or with unwillingness and weariness, with diligent attention or with carelessness; and the Word which you hear shall judge you at the last day. Hear therefore as those that are going to judgment to give account of their hearing and obeying.

Direction 6. Make it your work with diligence to apply the Word as you are hearing it, and to work your own hearts to those suitable resolutions and affections which it bespeaks. You have work to do, as well as the preacher, and should all the while be as busy as he: as helpless as the infant is, he must suck when the mother offers him the breast; if you must be fed, yet you must open your mouths, and digest it, for another cannot digest it for you, nor can the holiest, wisest, powerful minister, convert or save you, nor deliver a people from sin and Hell — one who will not stir for his own deliverance. Therefore be all the while at work, and abhor an idle heart in hearing, as well as an idle minister.

Direction 7. Chew the cud, and call up all when you come home in secret, and by meditation preach it over to yourselves. If it were coldly delivered by the preacher — then consider the

great weight of the matter, and preach it more earnestly over to your own hearts. You should love yourselves best, and best be acquainted with your own condition and necessities.

Direction 8. Pray it over all to God, and there lament a stupid heart, and put up your complaints to Heaven against it. The name and presence of God has a quickening and awaking power.

Direction 9. Go to Christ by faith, for the quickening of his Spirit. Your life is hid in him, your Root and Head; and from him all must be conveyed: he who has the Son has life; and because he lives, we shall live also. Entreat him to open your hearts, and speak to you by his Spirit, that you may be taught of God, and your hearts may be his epistles, and the tables where the everlasting law is written.

Direction 10. Make conscience of teaching and encouraging others. Pity the souls of the ignorant around you. God often blesses the grace that is most improved in doing him service; and our stock is like the woman's oil, which increased as long as she poured out, and was gone when she stopped, 1 Kings 17:12, 14, 16. Doing good is the best way for receiving good: he who in pity to a poor man that is almost starved, will but fall to rubbing him, shall get himself heat, and both be gainers.

#### *4. Directions to bring what you hear into PRACTICE.*

Without this, the rest is vain or counterfeit, and therefore somewhat must be said to this.

Direction 1. Be acquainted with the failings of your hearts and lives, and come on purpose to get directions and help against those particular failings. You will not know what medicine you need, much less how to use it — if you know not what ails you. Know what duties you omit or carelessly perform, and know what sins you are most guilty of, and think when you go to church: I go to Christ for remedy for my own disease. I hope to hear something before I come back, which may help me more against this sin, and fit me better for my duty, or provoke me more effectually. Are those men likely to practice Christ's directions, who either know not their disease, or love it and would not have it cured?

Direction 2. The three aforementioned are still presupposed, namely, that the Word have first done its part upon your understandings, memory, and hearts. For that Word cannot be practiced, which is not understood, nor at all remembered, nor has procured resolutions and affections. It is the due work upon the heart, which must prevail for the reformation of the life.

Direction 3. When you understand what it is in point of practice which the preacher drives at — observe especially the uses and the moving reasons, and plead them with your own hearts; and let conscience be preaching over all that the minister preaches to you. Take them to be soul-murderers — who silence able, faithful preachers; and also those preachers who silence themselves, and feed not the flock committed to their care. And do you think it a small matter to silence your own conscience, which must be the preacher that must set home all, before it can come to resolution or practice? Keep conscience all the while at work —

preaching over all that to your hearts, which you hear with your ears; and urge yourselves to a speedy resolution.

Remember that the whole body of divinity is practical in its end and tendency, and therefore be not a mere notional hearer. Consider every word you hear, what practice it is that it tends to, and place that deepest in your memory. If you forget all the words of the reasons and motives which you hear — be sure to remember what practice they were brought to urge you to. As if you heard a sermon against uncharitableness, censoriousness, or hurting others, though you should forget all the reasons and motives in particular — yet still remember that you were convinced in the hearing, that censorious and hurtful uncharitableness is a great sin, and that you heard reason enough to make you resolve to obey the Scripture. And let conscience preach out the sermon to the end, and not let it die in bare conviction; but resolve, and be past wavering, before you stir: and above all the sermon, remember the directions and helps for practice, with which the truest method usually shuts up the sermon.

Direction 4. When you come home, let conscience in secret also repeat the sermon to you. Between God and yourselves, consider what there was delivered to you in the Lord's message, that your souls were most concerned in — what sin reproved which you are guilty of — what duty pressed which you omit. And there meditate seriously on the weight and reasons of the thing, and resist not the light, but yet bring all to a fixed resolution, if until then you were unresolved: not ensnaring yourselves with dangerous vows about things doubtful, or peremptory vows without dependence on Christ for strength — but firmly resolving and cautiously engaging yourselves to duty; not with carnal evasions and reserves, but with humble dependence upon divine grace, without which of yourselves you are able to do nothing.

Direction 5. Hear the most practical preachers you can hear. Not those that have the finest notions, or the cleverest style or words; but those that are still urging you to holiness of heart and life, and driving home every truth to practice: not that false doctrine will at all bear up a holy life, but true doctrine must not be left in the porch, or at the doors, but be brought home and used to its proper end, and seated in the heart and placed as the poise upon the clock, where it may set all the wheels in motion.

Direction 6. Take heed especially of two sorts of false teachers; antinomian libertines, and antinomian Pharisees. The first would build their sins on Christ; not pleading for sin itself, but taking down many of the chief helps against it, and disarming us of the weapons by which it should be destroyed, and reproaching the true preachers of obedience as legalists, who preach up works and call men to doing — when they preach up obedience to Christ their King, upon the terms and by the motives which are used by Christ himself, and his apostles. Not understanding aright the true doctrine of faith in Christ, and justification, and free grace — they pervert it and make it an enemy to the kingly office of Christ and to sanctification, and the necessary duties of obedience.

The other sort (antinomian Pharisees) do make void the commandments of God by their traditions, and instead of the holy practice of the laws of Christ, they would drive the world with fire and sword to practice all their superstitious fopperies; so that the few plain and necessary precepts of the law of the universal King, are drowned in the greater body of their man-made laws; and the ceremonies of the pope's imposing are so many in comparison of the institutions of Christ, that the worship of God, and work of Christianity, is corrupted by it, and made as another thing. The wheat is lost in a heap of chaff, by those who will be lawgivers to themselves, and all the church of Christ.

Direction 7. Associate yourselves with the most holy, serious, practical Christians. Not with the ungodly, nor with barren opinionists, that talk of nothing but their controversies, and the way or interest of their sects, (which they call the church,) nor with outside, formal, ceremonious Pharisees — who are pleading for the washing of cups, and tithing of mint, and the tradition of their fathers — while they hate and persecute Christ and his disciples. But walk with the most holy, and blameless, and charitable — who live upon that truth which others talk of, and are seeking to please God by the "wisdom which is first pure, and then peaceable and gentle," James 3:17, 18; when others are contending for their several sects, or seeking to please Christ, by killing him, or censuring him, or slandering him in his servants.

Direction 8. Keep a just account of your practice; examine yourselves at the end of every day and week, how you have spent your time, and practiced what you were taught; and judge yourselves before God according as you find it. Yes, you must call yourselves to account every hour, what you are doing, and how you do it — whether you are upon God's work, or not: and your hearts must be watched and followed like unfaithful servants, and like loitering scholars, and driven on to every duty, like a dull or tired horse.

Direction 9. Above all, set your hearts to the deepest contemplations of the wonderful love of God in Christ, and the sweetness and excellency of a holy life, and the certain incomprehensible glory which it tends to, that your souls may be in love with your dear Redeemer, and all that is holy, and love and obedience may be as natural to you. And then the practice of holy doctrine will be easy to you, when it is your delight.

Direction 10. Take need that you receive not ungrounded or unnecessary prejudices against the preacher. For that will turn away your heart, and lock it up against his doctrine. And therefore abhor the spirit of uncharitableness, cruelty, and faction, which always bends to the suppressing, or vilifying and disgracing all those, who are not of their way and for their interest. And be not so blind as not to observe, that the very design of the devil, in raising up divisions among Christians, is, that he may use the tongues or hands of one another to vilify them all, and make them odious to one another, and to disable one another from hindering his kingdom and doing any considerable service to Christ. So that when a minister of Christ should be winning souls — either he is forbidden, or he is despised, and the hearers are saying, 'O, he is such or such a one,' according to the names of reproach which the enemy of Christ and love has taught them.