

**A
GOSPEL-ORDINANCE**

**Concerning
The Singing of Scripture-Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs;
the Lawfulness of that Ordinance**

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CHAPTER I.

Concerning the singing of Scripture-Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs; the lawfulness of that Ordinance.

The next public controversy, which Satan hath raised to disturb the churches, is about the practice of singing scripture psalms, on purpose to deprive the saints of the benefit of that soul-raising and heart-ravishing ordinance by which God is publicly and solemnly praised, and the spirits filled with the glory of God; and because your hearts may be stablished in every truth, and not so easily persuaded to part with such an holy ordinance, I could not but endeavour to clear up this also, which you have in this method.

First, that singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, vocally with the voice and musically, is an ordinance of the New Testament, constantly to be practiced in the churches of Christ.

Secondly open unto you, the three expressions, Psalms, Hymns, and Songs, wherein they agree, and whether there be any difference between them.

Thirdly, shew you that it is the psalms of David, Asaph, Heman, and the hymns and spiritual songs of these holy men, which are recorded in scripture, that is the matter ordinarily to be sung.

Fourthly, answer the main objections of the dissenters; these are scattered up and down this small treatise.

For the *first*, it is clear from *Eph. 5:19*, he bids them "be filled with the Spirit, λαλουτες, speaking to one another;" and in *Col. 3:16*, "Teaching and admonishing one another," διδασκουντες και νοουθετουντες εαυτους ψαλμοις και υμνοις και ωδαις πνευματικαις. Whatever these be as to the matter of them, yet the singing of them is commanded as an ordinance, and a special ordinance for edification.

That the apostle exhorts here to this as an ordinance is clear:

First, because he speaks to the whole church, and as a public duty, not appropriated to any office, but as a commandment universal on all;

Secondly, he doth distinguish this ordinance from that of preaching or teaching doctrinally, which belongs to the officer, or occasionally to a gifted brother; for he doth not only say, as in other places, teach and admonish; but in psalms, and hymns, and songs, which shews the manner of the teaching and admonishing, not in the general, but in such a way as by singing with psalms, &c. and as Mr. Cotton well observes, if the apostle had meant the ordinary and common way of teaching, he would have said, 'one another *out of* the psalms,' or *from* them, rather than *in* or *with* them, which is the usual language of the Holy Ghost in expressing such a duty; so in Paul's example, *Acts 28:23*, and so Philip is said to preach Jesus to the eunuch, *Acts 8:35*, (απο της γραφης ταυτης) from that scripture in Isaiah; and surely he would never have added the word αδοντες in the following part, "singing with melody in your hearts," if this teaching and admonishing were not to be discovered in such a peculiar ordinance. To which places we must add that of *1 Cor. 14:15, 16*, where the apostle speaks to the church, as to the orderly administration of that ordinance, where he speaks of singing as a distinct duty, and to be done in public before the church; and that phrase of "singing with the spirit, and with the understanding," is very emphatical, as divines observe; for I cannot sing with the spirit, but I must also with understanding; but the understanding here, must be meant of others who hear me and join with me in that act; however, public singing was then an ordinance solemnized in the church; and we shall hereafter see what kind these psalms were they sung. Thus *James 5:13*, "If any be merry, let him sing psalms," though this be particular in the text, yet it is of the same consideration with the former; and these places hold forth the instruction "singing" as in ordinance and a special one in the gospel.

Secondly, that it is not only meant of an inward frame of rejoicing, but that it is of the voice, is most apparent:

First, from the very words of these texts, "Speaking to one another, teaching one another in psalms, and hymns," &c. Now no man can speak to edify others by inward workings, or silent rejoicings.

2. Besides the melody to be made in our hearts, we must sing with melody, which shews not only the inward frame, but the outward act, and order; for melody in the heart were enough to express the inward grace; but he adds an outward expression, "Singing with melody in your hearts;" so that it is with the voice as with the heart.

3. Singing in scripture is ever put in distinction from bare reading or speaking; and commonly signifies a modulation of the tongue, or expressing anything musically and in tune, and so it is a musical speaking.

4 There would be the greatest confusion of ordinances; for preaching and prayer would be made all one with singing; nay, internal works would be found contrary to outward expressions; and if there be any such thing as preaching and prayer and exhortation, it must be different from singing, even to the most ignorant; for no man will say, when a man merely speaks or preaches, he sings, without his tone do make them call him a singing preacher or talker, as too many either out of affectation or customs, have given just cause to suspect.

5. This is undeniable, if there be any such command as to sing, it is visible, for else no man could at any time be said to sing or not sing; it must be an outward act; for else we must say we have only souls for that ordinance, and bodies for all the rest.

6. All that ever sung in the gospel, as to practice, sung vocally, *Matt. 26:30*, "They went out and sung an hymn;" that must be with an audible voice. *Acts 16:25*, Paul and Silas sung, and all heard them; and if it be an inward act only, who shall know when men sing or think; or would they have men to be gods to judge when men sing psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs inwardly? What need these names outwardly? A more ungrounded opinion was never invented by the devil, and surely he hath fitted it for the weaker and most perfectly captivated sorts of proselytes, who have first lost their reasons, and then their consciences.

Can my inward joy teach another? Or my private ejaculations admonish another? I wish Satan have not these men at his will; they would have singing to be an ordinance, but no man to hear them; so that if singing be not a distinct, visible ordinance, then no man can tell what it is to sing at all; but the same with preaching, praying, talking, or only an invisible motion of the soul, known to God only; which is most absurd, when we look on the weight of these places of scripture mentioned formerly.

Objection. If any object, If singing be with the voice, why not with other instruments, as lute, and harp and organs, &c., as in the Old Testament?

Solution. *First*, in the New Testament the voice and the heart are only God's instruments; this holds forth the special way of worship from soul and body, as from one person; artificial instruments are laid aside, not natural ones.

Secondly, the voice is still required, because it is the most immediate interpreter of the heart, and no outward instrument besides, is so.

Thirdly, nothing can be expressed so significantly in outward characters, as by the voice; and the best expressions of God we have in words, and the tongue can best make out them.

Fourthly, the union of heart, and tongue, or voice, makes up the complete expression of God's praises, without any other consideration; for we have not now anything as typical to look at; as lute, and harp, &c. were in the Old Testament to praises; so ceremonies were to Christ's sacrifice; when the substance came, they ceased; there is no need of them now, the spirit being more abundantly poured forth; and they have no significance; but their needs soul and body always to sing out divine stories, while in this world.

Fifthly, this hath been prophesied of, and long before the New Testament days, by the prophets, of singing to God with a lively voice, when the voice shall be as lute and harp, and all instruments to God, as in *Isa. 52:8*, (as Mr. Cotton in that precious treatise of his, worthy of all mens consideration) compared with *Rom. 10:14*, *Psa. 100:1*, *Psa. 95:1, 2*, all places referring prophetically to the gospel.

Sixthly, if they dare grant this, that there must be no singing by voice, then they cut off themselves from any sort of singing by gift, in psalms, or hymns, and spiritual songs, and any outward way of expressing God's praises; and must blot out singing in any way publicly as to be looked after, though a person never so much inspired by the Holy Ghost (after their own sense) should extemporarily compose, and breathe forth the most glorious sonnets, or heavenly anthems; for what is not a duty in itself, and general in the nature of it, is not a duty to the most raised spirit, if never so well gifted in such a mystery.

But the wiser sort of the contrary judgment, who consult with scriptures and the nature of things, will not own the dissent of others as to this, but confess singing of psalms must be by voice, & lay it on another foundation; that it is psalms, &c. but not these we sing, that the command speaks of, but psalms of another constitution, from a peculiar gift, and so to be looked on by the church, *viz.* not to sing David's psalms, or Asaph's, or the like; but from the fillings of the Spirit in such a person, and on a sudden breaking forth for the edification of the church.

I end this with what Zanchy saith on these places, These words, "εν χαριτι," and, "εν τη καρδια υμων," singing with grace in your hearts, *non excludunt vocero oris, verum excludunt hypocrisin et vanitatem, ex qua*

sere loquuntur ebrii vino (εν τη καρδια *valet atque* εκ της καρδιας) they do not exclude the voice, but hypocrisy and vanity, from which men drunk with wine do sing; and in your hearts, is as much as from your hearts, that is, not vainly, or as hypocritically, but as from inward sense. So the Greek Scholiasts, "Μη τοις χειλεσιν, αλλα εκ της καρδιας."

CHAPTER II.

What's meant by these three expressions, Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual Songs; how they are used in the Old Testament and the New Testament; from which, the matter of singing is cleared.

The next, difference is about the matter of singing, which all must grant to be psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; but what these psalms were, &c, and how to distinguish them one from another, must be debated ere we can clear the point between these three expressions. Some constitute one difference, some another.

ψαλμοι, *psalms*, say some, are such songs which were sung with other instruments beside the tongue. υμνοι, *hymns*, such as are made only to express the praises, and set out the excellencies of God. ωδαι, *songs*, such as contain not only praises, but exhortations, prophecies, thanksgiving; and these only sung with the voice and tongue.

Others difference them thus: *psalms* are those which were penned by David and others, drawn up into metre to be sung in the temple in a musical strain. *Hymns* are those extemporal praises which break forth upon occasion from a heart filled with the Spirit and observant of God's goodness. *Songs* or *Odes* they call such that were premeditated not without some art. These they call the Songs of Moses, Deborah, Hannah, Simeon, Mary, &c.

But we shall find, if we consult the use of the words, the difference will not be considerable between them, and that they are used promiscuously in the Old Testament, from whence we must learn how they are to be taken in the New: Now,

1. I find they are used in general as the title of David's psalms, which are named promiscuously by these three words.

2. That the three Hebrew words, viz. מזמור, *Mizmor*, שִׁיר, *Schir*, תְּהִלִּים, *Tehillim*, to which these three, ψαλμοι, υμνοι, ωδαι, do fully answer, are used in the psalms one for another, without distinction; and sometimes two of them joined together as the title of one psalm; sometimes all three joined together in one title; we could heap up examples in this kind. *Judges 5:3*, saith Deborah, אֲשִׁירָה אֲזַמְרָה, *I will sing, I will sing unto the Lord*; it's translated by the 70, ασσομαι ψαλω, here is two words; the one used for a psalm, the other for an ode or song put to express one act. *1 Chron. 16:9*, the two same words are translated thus in the 70, ασατε and υμνησατε, *Sing unto the Lord, sing a hymn unto the Lord*. In *Psa. 105:3*, which is the same psalm, only inserted into the body of the Book of the Psalms; the former word זָמַר is rendered by ψαλλετε, *sing psalms*: And thus the same word in the same verse is expressed by "these two words, yet hold forth one thing. In *Isa. 12:5*, זָמַר is rendered υμνησατε. In the title of *Psa. 38*, Mizmor is rendered by ωδοι, which is here translated a *song*: and in most of the titles one is used for another without distinction: and שִׁיר *Schir*, which is most usually rendered by ωδοι, *Song*, yet is also rendered by ψαλμοι, a psalm, *Psa. 45*, *Psa. 47*. And by υμνος, *hymn*, *Isa. 42:10*. As for the other word *Tehillim* that comprehends fully both *hymns* and *songs*; it is the general title of the Book of Psalms where the variety of them are contained. And as some particular psalms are called in the Greek *hymns* or *odes*, according to the two former words; so this word is put at top, holding forth the significancy of all the rest, and distinguishing the psalms from all other books of scripture, as these that know the superscription of that book understand; and it signifies the most universal and full way of praising God, especially by singing; and it is expressed by various words, as αινος, επαινος, to praise; ισκομιδζειν, to commend or set forth the reputation of another; δοξαζω, to glorify or discover the glory of another; ευλογεω, to bless, with many other expressions. So in particular, ψαλλω, *Psa. 145:1*, but most especially is this last word, תְּהִלָּה which is a word for all psalms expressed by υμνος, a *hymn*; as *2 Chron. 7:6*, and *23:13*. *Psa. 39:4*, *2 Chron. 29:30*, *Psa. 21:13*, *Psa. 64:1*, and *99:3*, where the one word is translated by the other.

For their conjunction of each of them together in one title of a psalm, is very usual, and often inverted: The title of *Psalm 29* is in the Hebrew, שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר *Mizmor Schir*; in the Greek translation it's ψαλμος ωδοις, a *psalm of a song* or a *song and a psalm*. So *Psa. 64*, *47*, *86*, but in *Psa. 65* there the title is שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר, and translated ωδοις ψαλμα, A *song of a psalm*, or a *song and psalm*. So *Psa. 83*. But unto the title of *Psa. 75*, the 70 Greek interpreters (from whom these words are borrowed in the New Testament) do add all the three together; εις το τελοσ εν υμνοισ ψαλμοσ τω ασαφ ωδη προσ τον ασσυριον, A *Psalm to Asaph in or with Hymns; A Song to the Assyrians*. By all which we see, and might by many more,

1. That there is not such a critical distinction to be made between a spiritual psalm, and a hymn, and song, but that they are put indifferently one for another.

2. Having opened the words with their use (I hope with advantage to those that know the language of the Hebrew with the Septuagint) let us now consider them as the matter to be sung, and what these psalms, hymns and spiritual songs are; whether David's, Asaph's, Heman's, and such other which are found in scripture penned by holy men upon special occasions, or another of a new composure; the former of which I affirm to be an ordinance of the New Testament.

1. These are the titles given solely to David's psalms, and the other scripture songs, which these holy men, divinely inspired, breathed forth, and left on record. And as Mr. Cotton, excellently argues, What reason can there be why the apostle should direct us in our singing to the very title of David's psalms, and other scripture songs, if he meant we should not sing these psalms and songs? Either we must exclude David's psalms and the rest from being called psalms, or hymns or spiritual songs, or else they must be sung as well as others.

2. The names are borrowed from the Greek translators of the Old Testament, and there is no distinction of them in the New; neither can anyone tell what they mean, but as by their use in the Old Testament. Now these names were used there as peculiar characters to express and distinguish the works of David, and the rest, which were penned to be sung in the church. Let these which are against singing David's psalms, and of other holy men, shew us any one word or syllable in the New Testament where any of these words are taken in any other sense than as they were in the Old, and yet we are commanded to sing them in the New; on this ground the case would be soon concluded; when the question is propounded (granting this is a command for singing), What shall we sing? Why, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. How shall we know what these are? We must look in scripture, where these words are used. Now we find them nowhere explained so properly as in the Old Testament; where they are the usual titles of David's psalms, and the songs of other holy men, and no other use of them expressed in the New. Why may not we judge then, these are the, psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs we are there commanded for to sing? But,

3. Come to the New Testament, and there whenever Christ or his apostles speak of psalms they refer us to scripture psalms. *Luke 20:42*, (Christ saith) "As it is written in the Book of the Psalms," that is the 110th psalm, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand." in *Luke 24:44*, when Christ would make an exact division of the Old Testament, he divides them into the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, distinguishing the psalms from all other scripture, as a peculiar book by itself; and as when we are commanded to read the Law and the Prophets, we cannot think them to be any other then the writings of Moses and Samuel, and the rest of the prophets in the Old Testament. So, when we are commanded to sing psalms, not the Law or the Prophets, how can we imagine it unlawful to sing that part of scripture which is properly called the Psalms, as the writings of David, Asaph, &c.? So the apostle, *Acts 1:20*, speaking of Judas, his fall and ruin, saith as it was written of him in the Book of the Psalms, "Let his habitation be made desolate," &c. *Psa. 69:25*, and in the *16th verse* (saith Peter) the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake this concerning Judas, & *v.20*, "for it is written in the Book of Psalms." *Acts 2:25, 29*, instead of saying "as in the psalms," he saith, David speaketh of Christ thus and thus in *Psa. 16. Acts 13:33*, speaking of Christ again, he saith, "As it is written in the second psalm," and *v. 35*, "As it is written in another psalm," which is the 16th. By all which is clear what Christ and the apostles would have us understand by psalms (when we are commanded to sing them) especially these psalms which are called the Book of the Psalms, and there is no other psalms spoken of in the New Testament, and the Holy Ghost is the best expositor of his own commands. Now men must either deny these of David's (as before) to be psalms, or else they are bound to sing them as for hymns and songs; they are comprehended under this general word "Psalms" being all expressed in the Book of the Psalms, as hath been demonstrated.

4. Let us consider the vanity of the contrary opinion, in regards it utterly makes way for will-worship, which they seem to be so much against. For first, I am commanded to sing psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; the Old and New Testament speak of no other psalms than of David and Asaph, and of such like inspired persons; and they are called the Psalms by Christ and his apostles. But you must not sing them (say they). I ask what psalms then must you sing? There is no light in Old or New Testament to warrant any other. Either you must fancy a psalm, and say Christ meant this way, when he spake of the Book of the Psalms, and devise a new way of worship out of your own brains, or else sing these psalms, which Christ and his apostles call psalms. Besides, 2, How can any man persuade himself, or others, when he sings, that he sings a psalm, when he doth not sing that which in scripture is only called a psalm? Or how can any man distinguish, now I sing a psalm, now a hymn, now a song, when there is not one word in the New Testament to distinguish them one from another, or the two latter from the Book of the Psalms? If any man from the New Testament can distinguish a psalm from a hymn, or a hymn from an ode, or song, or any one from another, but as they borrow it from the Old Testament, *erit mihi magnus Appollo*, he shall be an oracle; I will consult more than with scripture. They tell us David's psalms and the like are not to be sung. Christ and his apostles call them specially by the name of psalms, and command us to sing psalms. Now let them shew us any other psalms from scripture, and we are satisfied; but it is hard to be persuaded from such a precious ordinance by a mere negative, and the workings of a melancholy fancy, or the presumption of a hot brain that he hath right of composing psalms, and songs, and hymns, for the edification of the church.

Let us go on further, and try the Scripture examples; and begin with our Lord Jesus Christ., and his disciples, after the administration of his Supper. It is said in *Matt. 26:30* and *Mark 14:26*, "when they had sung an hymn (or a psalm) (as the margin expresseth it), and it is all one, "they went forth to the mount Olivet;" the words are, και υμνησαντες εξηλθον ει το ορος &c. Take it either as all translators interpret "having sung an hymn," Hymn *dicto Arab*: "They went forth, or "they went forth hymning," (or singing of a psalm), it is not material; but, 1. Its clear they sung openly with their voice. 2. They sung a psalm or hymn; now what this hymn should be is the question whether one of David's psalms or any in that book; to which I answer, 1. it is only said they sung a hymn or psalm, and it is most probable, yea, demonstrative, that it was one of these psalms or hymns of David and the other holy men, because Christ himself speaks of no other, as before. 2. Because Christ was so much prophesied of in the psalms, which were formerly sung prophetically, and with thanksgiving for these very acts beforehand. 3. Because Christ did still quote the same psalms, to prove both his divinity and sufferings; so did his apostles. Now it was no more dishonour, or unsuitable to Christ to sing with his disciples one or more of these hymns or psalms, than it was to prove himself, and his mediatorship by them, which he doth in all the former places, yea, the very nature and manner of his sufferings. 4. We have scripture ground from Christ's expression to believe the one, and only our own conjectures that he sung any other psalms or hymns; and that Christ both before and after his death should bring his choice proofs of his person, and humiliation, and glory from the book of the psalms, and when he was to suffer it should be found they sung a psalm or hymn, and yet not one of these psalms is very hard to press on a scripture conscience, especially when the act expressed is in general, and the same word used for singing such psalms, and no other determination of it in the New Testament. Let men but weigh things in an equal balance of the sanctuary, and judge; yea, let them who are so high on the other side, shew us from scripture what that hymn or psalm was which Christ and his disciples sung after the Supper, and give us any place as a comment on it, and but the hint to our demonstration, and we shall think ourselves well quit of such a mistake. In the meanwhile the argument stands thus untouched, Christ and his disciples sung an hymn, and Christ and the apostles speak of no other hymns or psalms but these recorded in the Old Testament, especially these in the book of the Psalms; therefore they sung none other. And surely Christ would conform his praise to his expressions, or would have made some distinction.

The second great example of singing, is that of Paul and Silas, *Acts 16:25*, where it is said, "They sang an hymn to God," or "gave praises in the prison at midnight." We are still on the same account as formerly, and ask what this hymn was they sang, if not one of the psalms of scripture which they might have chosen for this present condition? If any one can say it was an extemporary ejaculation, let them shew us then proof; we shew them the scripture use of the word, and which was known to them; and these that oppose must have something from the reason of the text, or use of the word to contradict us, and confirm themselves; they did not barely sing, but υμνου του ψεου, they sung hymns; and do not we go on surer grounds that sing these psalms and hymns, which in the New Testament Christ and his apostles do call so, than what we imagine to be psalms and hymns &c. by an unscriptural supposition? So that the sum of all may be drawn up thus to argue:

1. It is our duty to obey divine commands. It is a command to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, *ergo* it is our duty.

2. It is a command to sing psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, as to the matter; but there is no other psalms, hymns, or spiritual songs mentioned in the Old or New Testament, but these which are penned by holy men, inspired to that end; *ergo*, it is our duty to sing them.

CHAPTER III.

An answer to that Objection concerning Singing by a Gift, not set Psalms.

One special objection that is made against singing scripture psalms, &c. is that it hinders the exercise of gifts, and so it is but formal; all duties in the church must be done from a gift.

Answer. 1. You see here is a duty laid on us, no such limitation as from a gift.

2. The matter is prescribed you, Psalms, and Hymns, and Songs, and to these you are especially enjoined. Now the limitation of the matter limits the duty.

3. There is no promise of such a gift in the gospel, to compose psalms and hymns; God hath provided matter sufficient; there is a promise for the spirit of prayer and supplication, *Zech. 12*, and of preaching and prophesying, in *Joel*, repeated in *Acts 2*; but no distinct promise for a gift of spiritual poetry, or singing; for these are but three things required to sing: fit matter, a voice, and heart; all which may be performed without any such special gift of composing; the matter is ready, if the heart and voice be present.

4. It is a duty laid generally on the whole church, without any distinction of gifts: all are commanded to sing, &c. Here is no hint of a gift required.

5. Christ would not ordain an ordinance of such consequence which the churches should want the use of; some utterly; and not one among many should know what it means, for there is hardly one among a thousand of saints which hath such a gift of composing psalms, and hymns, &c; and if it be an ordinance in one church, all others may want it, and so be deprived of the comfort of such a sweet ordinance for want of a pretended gift, when they have matter enough of praises before them.

6. It is lawful to make use of the gifts of others, as well as to use our own; when a man hath a gift of prayer, I join with him, and make use of his gifts, &c. So is it much more lawful to make use of the gift of holy and blessed men in Scripture, who had that glorious gift of composing all sorts of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, and when we sing them with melody in our hearts, we manifest all those treasures of the gifts of the spirit that breathed in these psalms, &c. as if we had from a personal gift composed them ourselves; for if we sing them with the same understanding, with the same inward affection of love, joy, &c., we sing them with the same spirit.

7. If there were such a gift promised, it would have been mentioned by Christ or his Apostles, as the gift of tongues and miracles were, and saints would have been instructed to seek for it, and these that had it would have been commanded to wait on it, as the elders are on exhortation, teaching, ruling, the deacons in administering, and distributing, &c. *Rom. 12:6-10*.

8. It is antichristian to introduce an ordinance to be practised among the churches which hath not been commanded by Christ and his apostles, (these that differ, make much use of the word Antichristian) and cannot but grant this principle to be undeniable; now I assume but to introduce; a way of singing by a gift with casting off scripture-psalms, and hymns, and songs was never commanded by Christ or his apostles, *ergo*, it is Antichristian; the minor hath been proved before; there is no mention in the writings of Christ or the apostles of singing psalms by a personal gift, or of a gift of composing psalms either for ourselves or the church; neither is there mention of any other psalms hymns and songs, as the matter to be sung, but such as are penned in scripture, and left to be sung by all in the churches. Thus if men will bring in a new ordinance, they must shew their authority from the word or else apply the word Antichristian to themselves.

For that expression in *1 Cor. 14:26*, "when you come together (εκαστος υμων ψαλμον εχει) every one hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, &c. from whence they gather they had a gift of composing psalms by the spirit, which they were to sing in the church if they did it orderly.

To which I further answer, there is not anything to explain what psalm this was.

2. We have more reason to think it was one of these scripture psalms which the New Testament always calls a psalm (as he saith, in the second psalm, and in another psalm as before) far more reason than they have to say it was a psalm of their own composition by a gift. Every one hath a psalm; that is, this and the other have a psalm, that is, one had this psalm in scripture which he thought most proper; another, another of these psalms; for εκαστος is not to be taken universally for all, but singularly; one hath this, another that; thus some; but rather the meaning is not as if one had this psalm, and another another; but one hath a psalm, another a doctrine, another to

speak with tongues, another to prophesy; now thus there was a confusion among them; one would have a psalm sung, another would have his doctrine, or word of construction as most fit, another his revelation. Now the apostle only tells them they might all be done one by one, and in order; he that had a psalm to be sung, might in its proper place; but this doth not prove that it was a psalm extemporarily composed, or by personal gift, or that it was not one of the psalms in that which the scripture calls the Book of the Psalms.

Objection: If any say further, It must needs be from a gift, because it is joined with other acts which were merely from a gift, as doctrine, tongues, revelations, prophecies, interpretation.

I answer, Of these things here named, some are accounted extraordinary and peculiar, as gifts of tongues, revelations, fitted for these times; the other ordinary, as doctrine, interpretation, prophesy (though some think this last extraordinary also) so having a psalm may be accounted ordinary, and not from an extraordinary gift, as the gift of tongues was; however you must not make a particular argument from things of divers considerations and uses.

2. Other scriptures have determined what a psalm is, and it may be easily gathered what it is in the Corinthians for one to have a psalm: we prove they had a psalm; let them prove what the psalm was, besides these scripture psalms only mentioned in the New Testament.

It is most evident that the matter of singing is determined by the words of the apostle in *Col. 3:16*, "Let the word of God dwell richly in you" &c. which in *Eph. 5* is more general, "Be filled with the Spirit," which does not make any difference; for the word and the spirit must make up the melody in our hearts; but still the word of God is the matter to be sung with the spirit as it is the matter for reading, preaching, interpretation; but he here names that part of the word which belongs to the duty he enjoins, as a special part of that word which ought to dwell richly in them, as to such duty of singing. So that,

1. If psalms, and hymns, and songs be part of the word of God, then they may be sung.

2. If that part of the word be more properly fitted to the duty commanded than any other, it must be so restrained here.

3. That it is so, appears because he speaks so particularly, "That the word might dwell in them richly, teaching and admonishing one another;" not in general, as by preaching, doctrine, or the like, but in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, which must needs be the great duty in the text, and all before restricted to that.

4. Then the word of God in general, or any special word of God may be said to dwell richly in a person, when the spiritual intent, sense and meaning of it, with the inward spirit, and power of it, upon all occasions doth appear in the duties commanded by it; and thus you may see the verse in its parts.

1. Here is the duty: singing.

2. The word of God: the matter.

3. The specialty of the word so fitted to the nature of that duty: psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

4. The peculiar way how to be a perfect spiritual singer: it is to have this word dwell in a man, and richly, having the true sense, sweet experience of this word in the heart, being upon all occasions able to call out in the language of scripture, psalms, hymns and songs, suitable to our own conditions or others.

If the apostle had meant here a gift of composing new psalms &c. as he would not have used the Old Testament language without an explanation; so he would not have mentioned the word of God in such a close limitation as in psalms, and hymns, and songs, which are exegetical to the word of God to be sung, if he had not intended that part of the word as fitted for that ordinance; for no man knows what these expressions hold forth, but as they are found in the word of God, and as a distinct and eminent part of it. It were more proper to say, "Let the grace of God dwell in you," or "the goodness of God," that you may from the sense of it break forth upon all occasions to praises. But to name the word of God, and name it with that modification as psalms, hymns, songs, which we all know is a part of it, and bid us sing, and deny us in his intention for to sing these psalms which are part of that word, is too unworthy a reflection on the Holy Ghost, and the pen-men of scripture. And that seems very strange to affirm, that I may not sing that word of God which is called by the name of psalms, hymns and songs, when this word must dwell in me richly to that end and use.

Lastly, the singing of these psalms, hymns and songs, as the word of God, is most adapt and proportioned to the particular use the apostle intended, by singing in the church, which was to teach and admonish one another. Now, no gift of any saint can be so powerful, and authoritative to teach, as the word of God in these psalms, which were penned by the Spirit, as a rule to all saints, and their gifts; and as the word of God is made use of several ways to teach, and admonish, so this is one special way, by psalms, hymns and songs. When I sing by a pretended gift, I see cause of jealousy, that it may be more a fancy than the spirit; every man hath cause of suspicion from whence it comes, and ere I can be satisfied I must compare it with, and try it by the scripture strain of psalms, hymns and songs. But by singing the very words of scripture with sense and experience, I teach both by my holy carriage in the action, and the word itself commands by its own authority as when it is read.

But that I may more clearly open this, how that the word of God in psalms, hymns and songs is the most fit matter of singing, let us view that part of the word called by these names and see how far it will reach this kind of edification, beyond all that which may come from a present gift to compose matter for such a duty.

1. Besides the spiritual elegance of phrase, the inspired style of that part of holy writ, which is beyond ordinary with the height of matter, of no vulgar composure, it having such a standing stamp of divine authority on it, must needs convey its sense with more weight and power than anything from particular invention, though assisted by a gift of the spirit, which comes but in the second place, and cannot be put in any consideration with that authority as the other, nor inferred among the heavenly canons and scripture rules for saints to build their faith on or direct their lives.

2. The largeness and comprehensiveness of the scope of the shortest psalm is so that it will give matter to study and ponder on, and give advantage to enlarge our thoughts and affections on more than any particular gift of any saint now can be rationally conceived to afford; for commonly the best gifts are but an enlargement of the first text, and bring forth nothing *de novo*, no new thing; and all these saints with all their gifts must be glad to have recourse to that part of the word, as the rest, for the fulness of teaching and admonition.

3. The variety of matter in these psalms &c. is so wonderful that they do provide beforehand by an eternal wisdom, for the conditions of all saints, either personally or mystically, that no man sing anything, but if that word dwell in him richly, he may find a suitable psalm prepared for him by the foresight and wise and infallible directions of the Almighty; and in this, the Book of the Psalms transcends all other parts of scripture, and may be called the epitome of the whole Bible. In some scriptures you have little but matter of precept, in others little but historical relations of persons and actions; but in the Book of the Psalms, you have the variety of matter contained in all the whole scripture most suitable to the vast duty of singing praises.

1. Matter of all sorts of prophesies refering to the very latter end of the world.

2. All sorts of general and special directions, either for faith or life.

3. All sorts of promises fitted to particular conditions.

4. All sorts of experiences in what condition a soul may be in, either of trial or triumph, either to soul or body.

5. All sorts of signs and characters of heavenly motions and frames to God.

6. All sort of thanksgivings and prayers for spiritual mercies, with their various discords, which make up the harmony of the whole. He is a child in the scripture that doth not admire the unparalleled variety of truth in that book, so that if I were raised by some extraordinary gift to the greatest enlargement of composing a psalm or spiritual song on a special occasion, I should come short of the variety and fulness of the least of these psalms, and yet the ignorant standers by might more admire my gift and there would be more danger in it than to sing the scripture psalms which have nothing from men to grace them but their own native majesty and authority. And truly it is somewhat odd for one to be set up by others or for anyone to be set up himself a spiritual poet in the church, and the church to sing his thoughts, with the neglect of the word of God, which is furnished with such variety for the condition of souls.

And as the word of God in general is so large and vast and various that all the saints with their highest improvements can never come up to the fulness of it, and all the vast folios that have been written by commentators of all sorts, have hardly pierced the bark, the shell, the letter, and all saints of the highest attainment must dig into it as the only visible mine, and we must not exclude the psalms as to singing from that fulness and variety, seeing Christ himself when he distinguisheth the whole scripture, gives the psalms an equal part.

CHAPTER IV.

Concerning the Translation of David's Psalms, and other Spiritual Hymns and Songs, with the Answer to the Objection arising from it.

I have endeavoured to prove the duty; let us consider the strength of the main objection against it.

Objection. The first in order is that which carps at the translation, and that into metre, as the human invention; the translation (say they) is corrupt, and especially as into metre and tune. If you will sing David's psalms, sing them in Hebrew, as they were sung formerly. This they much stick on.

Solution. To which I answer that in the psalms and songs, there was a set metre, fitted to tunes, and voices, and musical instruments; none can deny that observes the dedications of most psalms, and those of understanding that can read learned Gomarus may see it fully, and with great exactness; where the spiritual poetry of these psalms is excellently set forth.

2. So far as there is corruption in the translation, it is spurious, and not to be approved of but corrected.

3. But translations according to the import of the words and sense of the text, are as much the word of God, as the text in the original; for the coherence of word and sense make up the copy entire and perfect.

4. Which follows, the translation of the words in metre, if it have the full sense of the words, is as much the word of God as if it were translated in prose or ordinary sentence for reading; for it is not the way or method, but the sense and meaning of the words that is the word of God. So that I may as well say when I sing in such a composition, it is as much the word of God as when I read the same words in the Bible, only they are orderly disposed for that action. None must by this reason pretend to know the word of God in reading or expounding, but he that knows the Hebrew and Greek; and that must be also in the first perfect copy, immediately transcribed from inspired understandings; for all things besides are either translations, or additions, or subtractions, from which two last comes perfect corruption.

So that a translation for singing, or reading, is the same word of God as long as it hath the same substantial truth in it; and sing them which way you will, either as they lie in the verse, or as the same verse is digested into staves, and with musical notes, it is all one as to the nature of singing, and the translation may be as orthodox in metre as in prose; so that you see what force, efficacy, that objection from the translation carries with it. I confess there are many defects in the translation into metre, but there are the like in some copies in prose or continued sentence; but as to the nature of the thing, one verse may as well be made two, according to musical notation, and yet retain the same continued sense as remain one, only bounded by arithmetical figures as 1, 2, 3, &c.

Objection. But if anyone say the psalms, as the true translations into metre, are but an human invention, and you worship God only after a human form.

Solution. The answer is at hand:

1. To know the significancies of the tongues, and how to translate them to edification, is a special gift of God's spirit, *1 Cor. 12:28,29; 1 Cor. 14:1-6.*

2. On this ground we read human inventions when we read the Old or New Testament in any translation but the first copies of Hebrew and Greek wherein they were first written.

3. Is it not a more human invention for to sing any thing of my own composing, than for to sing the very matter and sense of the word of God in my own tongue? And yet it is usual among these that are against this ordinance to cry aloud: It is a human invention, Antichristian.

4. The translation of the scripture for to be read, is as much a human invention as in poetry to be sung; but this is an objection urged for want of a better.

Objection. The next grand objection is, that we may as well use a set form of prayer, as of singing psalms; the one is as lawful as the other, the one stints the spirit as much as the other.

Solution. 1. There is no divine holds that a set form of prayer is absolutely unlawful, for then no man may meditate beforehand what he ought to pray for, nor consult with his own mouth or God's promises. For if I

meditate on what I need, and what God hath promised, I form such petitions and tie myself to them as necessary to be petitioned for, and it may be I may have no occasion for a long while to beg anything of God but the substance of these premeditated considerations of my want.

2. Here lies the unlawfulness of set form of prayer, that it is composed by one and imposed by another, to which I am limited, let my wants be what they will, requiring further additions when I neither study my own wants, nor am permitted to urge them to God in my prayer.

3. This is a more suitable objection against those that pretend to sing by a gift, and do make psalms, or hymns, or songs for themselves and others, with neglect of inspired psalms and hymns. So singing of psalms and using a set form of prayer are very nigh of kin and hold much correspondency.

4. But to sing the very words of these scriptures with understanding is a command, as hath been formerly proved; and if you take a set form of praying, for praying scripture words, and speaking to God in that language, it is not only lawful but is the excellency of some saints, who seldom make a petition but they urge it in scripture dialect, and shew the word of God to dwell richly in them; thus for singing to praise God; or sing to God in his own form of words in the spirit, and understanding, what can be more suitable to God, and sweet to the soul?

5. There is a great deal of difference between praying and singing, as to the method of performance, though praying and praises may be considered in the same duty, yet praying and singing require a distinct method; for the very words, to sing psalms, and hymns, and songs, import a special method of the voice in a set tune, and proportion, whereas prayer in the method of performance requires no such exactness; if one should take on him to sing, and not in a set form and tune, he would be ridiculous to all hearers; but a man hath a larger liberty in prayer, and is not tied to such strait connexions, heights, and falls, stops, and pauses; but the nature of this ordinance calls for it, else it cannot be done gracefully, though there be grace in the heart. And if the apostle had not meant by singing of psalms, singing musically, he would have only bid them praise in the general, and have left out the outward expression of it, which cannot be acted but in a set form.

6. If singing were not in a musical manner, (as before) it were the same with prayer, for you may sing out a prayer, and praise in praying. Thus in David's psalms. How many psalms which were matter only of petition, yet were sung with faith, and confidence in God? For performance, the apostle James distinguisheth them apparently, "Is any sick? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms;" and the other apostle, "Let us pray with the spirit, and understanding, and sing with the spirit," &c. Now wherein lies the difference? In prayer you have the variety of workings and considerations; there is deprecation, imprecation, acclamation and admiring, pleading and arguing promises and the like. So in singing, there are the like; the difference is only in the set and musical way of expression, which requires a more set form beforehand to rule my outward carriage by, in that ordinance, whereas in prayer we are not tied to such a severity of method, and so need not have our words so formed.

Another plea which is somewhat scurrilous, by the ruder sort, yet much urged, is that we lie when we sing psalms, and affirm that we cannot but lie when we sing the phrases of many psalms. As that of David, "O Lord I am not puffed up in mind, I am as a weaned child," &c.

To which I reply, in general, that some may not have the frame of these expressions when they sing, and so may perform a duty which may be but as a lie to them. But,

1. In special, there is no saint but can in some measure say whatever David saith in that or any other psalm, describing the spiritual qualification of his heart; all graces are in every saint there in the seed, and habit, and in a proportion, though all are not so eminent and apparent in the bud and fruit; though no godly man is free from pride, yet he cannot be a godly man that is a proud man *in actu signato*, which hath never been humbled, and brought out of himself. Thus all along the 119th psalm, that anatomy of a saint's inward parts, when David saith, "He delights in the law of God, He hopes in God's mercy, His soul longs after God, He keeps his commandments, He hates every evil way," &c, Every godly man may sing these and all other psalms, and speak truth; for the reality of these frames are the same in every gracious heart.

2. Whatever I find to be the case of any saint, I may make it mine according to the likeness of my condition to it, and yet not a lie.

3. One great use of singing is to commend the excellency of such graces which are and have been in others, to sweeten the harshness of other duties, and to stir and quicken the heart to the endeavouring after such like frames; therefore some lawgivers have put their laws into verse first, that the people might take a pleasure in them, and sing them as their recreations, and be the more insinuated into obedience.

4. I can tell no lie so long as in the sincerity of my soul I study my duty, and sing with desire after such qualifications, from the contemplation of the beauty of them in such holy men, though I do not find the present frame so high as I breathe after, and such men sound at present.

Objection. But this objection, grant it in its full latitude, proves nothing against the nature of the ordinance of singing, but the persons who sing, who are not fitly qualified to some expressions.

Again, others plead, psalms that are sung are not suitable to my condition.

Solution. 1. That is nothing still against the ordinance of singing; if it do not fit you, it fits others. But,

2. There is nothing in scripture-expressions but all saints at all times may make some use of in the very reading or singing; if not so particularly, yet as to the general nature of instruction and edification it is profitable; saints must read all scripture with faith and understanding; though every place may not so directly open their present condition; and why may not they sing as well all psalms?

3. It should be the care of officers in the church to be very choice in picking out psalms fit for the church, according to the nature of the body, and times, and seasons; and I could wish there were more choiceness observed in that particular; yet the ordinance remains still the same.

4. When I sing any of these psalms, I should by faith personate the same state of the church, or the saints, as when I apply promises made to others, I do their conditions, as if it were spoken to me.

5. It is for want of divine study of the nature of these scripture-expressions, and the mystery of them, that we say such a psalm is unsuitable to our conditions; for if when I read understandingly, I can get profit by them, I can the same when I sing them.

6. If it do not reach my condition, as to a particular case I am troubled withal, or the providence I am eminently under; yet it concerns the state of the church, and I may sing them as a member of the same body, and sympathising with them either in sorrow or joy, in afflictions or triumphs; which is a special way to act the graces of saints, sometimes to sing what concerns others as themselves, as to pray for others as themselves; this is like Christ's heart in heaven.

Lastly, you have opportunity enough to choose psalms for your emergencies. It is good to keep the harmony of the whole body in the main.

Objection. That which follows next as urged against this truth, is that it is confusion to sing together, and that but one should sing at one time.

Solution. Still this is not against the ordinance of singing. But,

1. Singing is more melodious and suitable when performed by many than one several instrument at one time; and so several voice make the greater harmony; the excellency of singing lies in the church, which is made up of divers voices.

2. Christ and his disciples sung together, *Matt. 26:30.* ὑμνησαυτες, they sang. Paul and Silas, *Acts 16:25,* sang together in the prison, not one after another, but together.

Objection. But if anyone say when one prays, all may be said to pray, though he doth but consent; it may be so in singing of psalms.

It is answered, 1. All ordinances must be considered according to their proper nature; some ordinances are so to be administered, as that only one at once can perform it., as public prayer and preaching, and yet there must be a distinction even in these. My silence in prayer ought to be when I pray with another, and yet I may be said to pray as well as he which is the mouth of the whole, because my heart is with him in the same petitions, and my desires go equally with him; but it is not so in preaching, where silence must be likewise from the nature of the ordinance; yet though I consent fully with the matter, and agree in all that is said with never so much affection; yet I cannot be said to preach, but only he that speaketh preacheth. So now as to singing there is a difference likewise of another consideration; if only one sing, none else can be said to sing, though they join with the matter, and agree to it in their hearts; for its an outward act, and terminated in the person that performs it; and though in my silent conjunction, I may really praise God, yet I can in no sense be properly said to sing with others, without I do use

my voice and organs as they do. This consideration will give light to men that mind the nature and distinction of ordinances in their outward administrations.

2. That which is the confusion of other ordinances, is the beauty of this; for two to preach or pray together at the same time and place, were the greatest confusion imaginable; but for a hundred to sing together is most harmonious, and pleasant, so far from the breach of order, that harmony is most discovered by it.

3. It hath been the custom of the churches always thus to practice; and there is nothing in the nature of the ordinance, or divine precept, or example against it. I shall conclude this with a word from antiquity, concerning the practice:

Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, lib. 3, cap.3, quotes two epistles of Plinius Secundus to Trajan the Emperor, testifying that Christians were wont to gather themselves before day to sing psalms and hymns together: the same doth Plato Judaus testify, who lived in the apostle's time, as the same Eusebius saith, lib. 2, cap. 22. Now in the time of Plinius and Trajan, did John the beloved disciple live, saith Zanchius, in *Eph. 5:18, 19*, whereby it appears an apostolical institution.

Tertullian, in his *Apol. 19*, saith that it was a usual custom among the Christians, after their love feasts, *canere de Scripturis Sanctis*, to sing of the scriptures; his meaning is doubtless out of or from the scriptures. In the Western churches this hath become the constant practice, though much corrupted by the Roman additions to saints method; but yet that blessed ordinance is now more specially recovered, and made pure for saints according to primitive institution.

CHAPTER V.

The great abuses of the Roman and Episcopal church about this ordinance, whereby many stick not to call it Antichristian, hath been;

1. The introducing musical instruments together with, as organs, harps, viols &c., whereas in the New Testament God requires the voice as the only organ of the heart in worship.
2. They had a mere order of singers to whom they gave pensions unto for that purpose, and excluded the church from the persons of that duty, which is of so universal a concernment.
3. They would sing in Latin, and with such strains of their voices that the words might not be understood.
4. They spent most of the time in singing, and gave not other ordinances, as preaching and praying, their due time of exercise. Thus have precious ordinances been abused by the corruptions of men; but are now restoring unto their purity, and will every day be more gloriously practised in the churches.

CHAPTER VI.

How we may be said to teach and admonish one another in Psalms, Hymns and Songs, according to that of Col. 3:16, 17.

Many think there can be no such use of singing as to teach and admonish one another by it; but if we consider, there are many lessons to be learned one another from this public conjunct, singing scripture psalms.

1. They teach one another, and by the very act admonish one another to get the same frames these holy men had in the penning the psalms and in the variety and spirituality of them; to get David's frame in singing David's psalms. And so for the rest.

2. It is by this they teach one another the unity and harmony that is and should be among saints as one body, that their happiness and joys are bound up together, and so the misery of one is the misery of the whole, and this is a glorious lesson to know their union together as a body equally concerned in the glory or shame of one another, equally interested in the praises of God; there is no duty practised in all the gospel that doth fully express the communion of saints, and represent heaven, as the saints singing together; the Lord's Supper doth represent the communion of saints very lively, but not so as mutual singing, when all at once, not by consent only, but expressly speak the same thing in the same moment, in the Lord's Supper, though afterwards they were all one bread, yet they all do not receive it as the same instant of time, but take successively the elements; but in singing they all join perfectly at once to sound God's praises as if they had but one lip and one voice. This is the perfect emblem of heaven, no jarring, all with one voice and heart crying, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

3. They teach one another this lesson also, *viz.* with what alacrity and cheerfulness they should perform all their duties together; with sweetness of love and joy they ought to walk together.

4. They teach one another how to carry themselves in all conditions with joyful and praising frames of spirit, for matter of the psalms; and are various, not only affording matter of exultation and gratulation, but also reciting the sadness and low condition of the church; yet all are fit matter to be sung; *Lachryme* must be sung, sad things with a spiritually joyful heart in God and his promises, mercy and judgement in the same song, expressed in melody of the voice and heart; and it shews a soul is not in a right temper when he cannot sing over his condition.

5. They teach one another by singing and admonish one another to avoid anything that may hinder their joys in communion, and break their harmony in spiritual actings, all which and many more are great exhortations, and are taught naturally by saints mutually singing together.

CHAPTER VII.

Concerning singing with a Mixed Multitude.

Many who want singing to be an ordinance among saints, yet stumble to sing in promiscuous manner with others, especially because there are so many psalms of such composition that doth not seem to concern a mixed multitude.

For opening of this, I must lay down this general position; that prayer and praises are natural duties belonging to all men as men; though only the saints can do them best, and spiritually. It is upon all men by the law of creation, to seek to God for what they want, and to thank him for what they have. This is due unto God, owning him as a creator and benefactor; and though singing be a part of instituted worship, yet it is only an addition of order, and a regulation of a natural duty. And as there is no man but is bound to pray for mercies, so none are exempted from praising God for mercies, though they sing in a lower tune than saints. Thus David calls in all creatures to bless and praise God, as a natural duty according to their several capacities, *Psa. 136, Psa. 117, Psa. 107, Psa. 103, Psa. 20, Psa. 21, Psa. 22*. Praises, its natural duty of all, the proper duty of saints, the perfect act of angels.

Objection. You will say they cannot perform it aright and glorify souls.

Solution. 1. Their want of ability doth not discharge them from such a duty engraven on their consciences, and arising from the natural respects they have to God as a Creator; to perform which, God gave full power at first.

2. Let every man do his duty conscientiously, he may afterwards come to do it spiritually; though I should lose the sense of a duty in my conscience, yet the duty lies on my conscience from God's authority, and my relation to him.

1. By the same rule, every one should abstain from performance of a duty for want of present ability, whereas the duty must be done, and the strength expected from heaven, and waited for according to the divine manner of dispensation.

2. It is not unlawful to join in any act with others or to countenance them in it, which is really their duty as well as our own. I cannot sin in joining with anyone in that act to perform which is the duty of another, as mine, though he may want the present ability.

For duties must be measured according to the rule, not the abilities of the performer. Now it is no duty for any man to receive the Lord's Supper or be a member of a church in order to communion without he find himself in some measure fitted by grace; these sealing ordinances of the gospel, suppose, and require some other qualification, and are peculiar to visible saints. But where there is a natural character, or an ordinance as to the substance of it at least equally concerning all; there it is no sin to join in the administration of it; and if we consider of it warily, unregenerate men are great sharers in the mercies of the churches; besides their own particular, that they may well afford their voice without sin, and we join with them in setting forth God's praises. But more closely, and particularly,

1. When the church and saints of God are gathered together to worship him in singing; it is no more unlawful to sing with others that stand by and join their voices, than when in prayer they stand by, and give their consent, we do not so much join with them as they do own God's actings among us. It is no sin in them to join with us in such a duty, neither can it be any sin in us to sing, though others very carnal will outwardly praise God with us.

2. The carriage of saints in their hearty and real expressions of prayers may convince others in the coldness and lowness of their spirit, and stir them up to some spiritual apprehensions.

3. Though it be lawful to join with them in such a duty generally considered, yet it were to be wished in mixed multitude, there were more care in the choice of psalms, to fit them to the very duty of praise and thanks, which is so really belonging to all the congregation; and that must be lamented, that the choice of psalms, to a mixed multitude, is not so considered as it ought to be, which makes the ordinance so much blighted in its public administration. But however the incapacity of others to their duty, should not hinder me from performing mine, especially when I cannot, nor ought not to hinder others from such an act.
