

## INTRODUCTION

“Heaven forbid that we should never read—and praise—any poems less than perfect.” With those words C. S. Lewis summarized his own ability to enjoy many works of literature that would not make the top grade, yet still had enough beauty in them to deserve our attention. In this way he was far better off than the snob whose taste is so *refined*, so *discriminating*, that he is able to enjoy and learn from very little in life and art.

If we are going to enjoy and learn from Henry Vaughn’s *Mount of Olives*, we are going to have to have Lewis’s generous taste. Vaughn is a second-tier poet in English literature (a poor man’s George Herbert, if you will), but his prose style won’t even register on any scale. His inattention to punctuation and consistency of capitalization renders his writing almost cryptic—at least till you get the hang of it. In order to get the hang of it quickly you may want to try reading him aloud. For Vaughn’s prose sounds more like the unedited record of a man pouring out his heart to God, as if we are eavesdropping on his very private devotions. Once you get past the erratic application of grammatical principles (his excess of exclamation points may remind you of a *Seinfeld* episode), you sense his tenderness, his brokenness, his honesty. So *The Mount of Olives*, I think, is worth our time and reflection, though no one will ever confuse Henry Vaughn with á Kempis or Brother Lawrence.<sup>1</sup>

*The Mount of Olives* appeared in 1652, during England’s interregnum. Vaughn was a faithful Anglican and likely fought in the king’s army. So these were dark years for him, and now and then a hint of bitterness against the Puritans creeps through the text—but he would have needed to be careful how he expressed himself. Though we Presbyterians trace our ecclesiastical heritage to the Puritans, remember that the English civil war pitted men of God against each other in horrible battle. We live in a time when we can happily learn from both the Westminster and the Caroline Divines—but only because we are so far removed from the deadly rivalry.

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<sup>1</sup> The spelling and some vocabulary has been modernized to ease some of the pain

## THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

OR,

## SOLITARY DEVOTIONS

HENRY VAUGHN

(1621 - 1695)

## ADMONITIONS

FOR *Morning-Prayer*

The night (says *Chrysostom*) was not therefore made, that either we should sleep it out, or pass it away idly; and Chiefly because we see many worldly persons to watch out whole nights for the Commodities<sup>2</sup> of this life. In the *Primitive Church* also the *Saints* of God used to rise at midnight to praise the *Rock of their salvation* with *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*. In the same manner should you do now, and Contemplate the *Order* of the Stars, and how they all in their several stations praise their Creator. When all the world is asleep, you should watch, weep and pray and propose to yourself that *Practice* of the Psalmist, *I am weary of my groaning, every night wash I my bed, and water my Couch with my tears*; for as the *Dew* which falls by night is most fructifying,<sup>3</sup> and tempers the heat of the *Sun*; so the tears we shed in the night, make the soul fruitful, quench all Concupiscence,<sup>4</sup> and supple<sup>5</sup> the

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<sup>2</sup> **commodities** – benefits, selfish interests

<sup>3</sup> **fructifying** – making fertile

<sup>4</sup> **concupiscence** – desire for worldly things

<sup>5</sup> **supple** – make submissive or compliant

hardness we got in the day. *Christ* himself in the day-time taught and preached, but continued all night in prayer, sometimes in a Mountain apart, sometimes among the wild beasts, and sometimes in solitary places.

They, whose Age or Infirmity will not give them way to do thus, should use all Convenient<sup>6</sup> means to be up before the Sun rising, for *we must prevent<sup>7</sup> the Sun to give God thanks, and at the day-spring pray to him* (Wisdom of Solomon 16:27-28). It was in the morning that the Children of *Israel* gathered the *Manna*; and of the Just man it is said, *That He will give his heart to resort early to the Lord that made him, and will pray before the most high,* (Ecclesiasticus 39:5). So soon therefore as you awake, shut your door against all profane and worldly thoughts, and before all things let your God be first admitted, offer to him your first fruits for that day, and commune with him after this manner.

*When you awake*

O God the Father! who said in the beginning, *Let there be light*, and it was so; *Enlighten my Eyes that I never sleep in death*: lest at any time my Enemy should say, *I have prevailed against him*.

O God the Son! light of light; the most true and perfect light, from whom this light of the Sun, and the day had their beginning; you, who are the light shining in darkness, Enlightening every one that comes into this world, expel from me all Clouds of Ignorance, and give me true understanding, that in you, and by you I may know the *Father*; whom to know is to live, and to serve is to reign.

O God the Holy Ghost! the fire that enlightens, and warms our hearts, shed into me your most sacred light, that I may know the true Joys of Heaven, and see to escape the illusions of this world. Ray yourself into my soul that I may see what an Exceeding weight of glory my Enemy would bereave me of for the mere shadows and painting of this world. Grant that I may know those things that belong to you, and nothing else; Inflamm me with your

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<sup>6</sup> **convenient** – suitable, proper

<sup>7</sup> **prevent** – come before

divine love that with a true Christian Contempt I may tread on all transitory Pleasures, and seek only those things that are eternal.

Most blessed Trinity! and one eternal God! as you have this day awaked me—from this bodily sleep, so awake my soul from the sleep of sin, and as you have given me strength after sleep, now again to watch, so after death give me life, for what is death to me, is but sleep with you, to whom be ascribed all glory, wisdom, majesty, dominion, and praise now and for Ever, Amen.

*When you arise*

Arise, O my soul that sleeps, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. Arise O daughter of *Sion*, O my soul redeemed with the blood of Christ! Sit no more in the dust of your sins, but arise, and rest in that peace that is purchased by your Savior's merits.

*Christ Jesus!* my most merciful and dear Redeemer! as it is your mere goodness that lifts up this mortal and burdensome body, so let your grace lift up my soul to the true knowledge and love of you; grant also that my body may this day be a helper and servant to my soul in all good works, that both *body* and *soul* may be partakers of those Endless Joys, where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one true God world without End, *Amen*.

*As soon as you are dressed, before you come forth from your Chamber, kneel down in some convenient place, and in this, or the like<sup>8</sup> Prayer commend yourself for that day to your Creator's Protection.*

Almighty, eternal God, the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, I bless and praise your holy name, and with my whole heart give you all possible thanks, that out of your infinite goodness you were pleased to watch over me this night, to resist my adversary, and to keep me from all perils of body and soul; O you! who never

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<sup>8</sup> **the like** – a similar

slumber nor sleep, how careful<sup>9</sup> have you been of me! how have you protected me, and with your holy angels, your ministering spirits sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation, encompassed me about! yea, with what immeasurable love have you restored to me the light of the day, and raised me from sleep and the shadow of death, to look up to your holy hill; justly might you, O God, have shut the gates of death on me, and laid me for ever under the bars of the Earth, but you have redeemed me from Corruption, and with your *Everlasting arms* enlarged<sup>10</sup> my time of Repentance.

And now O Father of mercies, and God of all Consolation, hear the voice of your Suppliant, and let my cry be heard in your highest heavens: As I do sincerely love you, and beg for your Protection, so receive me under the shadow of your wings, watch over me with the Eyes of your mercy, direct me in the ways of your Law, and enrich me with the gifts of your Spirit, that I may pass through this day, to the glory of your great name, the good of others, and the comfort of my own soul. Keep me, O my God, from the great offence; quench in me all vain Imaginations, and sensual desires; sanctify and supple my heart with the dew of your divine Spirit, refresh it with the streams of your grace, that I may bring forth fruit in due season, and not cumber the ground,<sup>11</sup> nor be cut off in your anger. And to this end I do here resign my body and my soul, with all the faculties you have bestowed on both, into your Almighty hands; Guide them in the works of your Law, turn my eyes from all transitory objects, to the things that are eternal, and from the *Cares* and *Pride* of this world to the *fowls of the air* and the *Lilies of the field*; And now, O my God, seeing I am but Dust and Ashes, and my Righteousness a filthy Rag, having no deserts in myself but what should draw Everlasting vengeance, and the Vials of your bitter wrath on my body and soul; behold, I have brought with me your first-born and only begotten, the propitiation for my sins, the *Incense* I offer up with my prayers (*Revelation* 8:3); my Redeemer and Mediator in whom you are well pleased, hear you him. O look not on my Leprosy, but on his beauty and perfection! and for the righteousness of your *Son*, forgive the sins

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<sup>9</sup> **careful** – taking good care of

<sup>10</sup> **enlarged** – increased

<sup>11</sup> **cumber the ground** – uselessly occupy the ground

of your *Servant*. Grant this for his sake, to whom with you and the Holy Ghost, be all glory and majesty, Dominion and power, now and forever. Amen.

#### *Admonitions when we prepare for any far Journey*

When you are to go from home, remember that you are to come forth into the *World*, and to converse with an Enemy; And what else is the World but a Wilderness? A darksome, intricate wood full of *Ambushes* and dangers; A Forrest where spiritual hunters, principalities and powers spread their nets, and compass it about; would you then escape these ghostly snares; this *wickedness in high places*, and return home if not better and holier, yet not worse than at your setting out? Would you with *Jacob* pass over these *Waters* with your staff only, and in your return become two bands (*Genesis* 32:10)? Why then, do as he did, begin your journey with prayer, and say, *If God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace: then shall the Lord be my God* (*Genesis* 28:20-21). This was his Practice, and the Practice of his fathers; *The Lord God of heaven* (says *Abraham*) *who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred ... he shall send his Angel before you*. Nor must you pray only at your setting forth, but all the way, and at all times; Thus *Eliezer* prayed at the Well, *Isaac* in the field, and *Elijah* (in his journey to *Mount Horeb*) under a *Juniper* tree in the Wilderness. This also (if you will imitate these holy men) you may do, and for that pious purpose you have here these following Prayers.

#### *When we go from home*

Almighty and everlasting God, the *Way*, the *Life*, and the *Truth*; look down from heaven, and behold me now between the Assaults of the Devil, the allurements of the World, and my own inclinations; I cannot look abroad, but these flock about me; But O you who lead *Joseph* like a sheep, most faithful and Almighty

guide, lend me your hand, open my Eyes, direct my steps, and cause me to walk in your fear; You who did go out with *Jacob* from *Beersheba* to *Padan-aran*, guiding him in the *waste plains*, and watching over him on his *Pillow of stones*, be not now far from me; Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness, make my paths straight, and strengthen my goings, that having finished my Course here, I may sit down in your Kingdom, an Inheritance undefiled, purchased for me with the blood of my Savior, and your beloved Son *Jesus Christ*, Amen.

## II

O you, who are everywhere! *You that sit on the Circle of the Earth, and all the Inhabitants thereof are as Grasshoppers before you! Whose Eyes discover the deep things of the night, before whom Hell is naked, and all the Devices of my spiritual Enemies!* You who led *Abraham* your chosen from *Ur* of the *Chaldees* into a land flowing with milk and honey, favor I beseech you the present harmless Enterprise and innocent purpose of your servant, be to me in my journey a Comfort, in the heat a shadow, in storms a shelter, and in adversity my protection; That having finished my intended course, I may return in peace full of your praises, who are near to all those that call on you; Grant this for *Christ Jesus'* sake, Amen.

Meditate in the way on the sojournings and travels of the Patriarchs and Prophets, the many weary journeys of *Jesus Christ* in the flesh, the travels of his Apostles by sea and land, with the pilgrimage and peregrinations<sup>12</sup> of many other precious Saints that wandered in Deserts and Mountains, of whom the world was not worthy.

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<sup>12</sup> **peregrinations** – temporary wanderings through life, viewed as precursors to eternal life in heaven (a synonym of *pilgrimages*)

## ADMONITIONS

### HOW to carry yourself in the Church

*Holiness* (says the Royal Prophet) *becomes your house for ever.*<sup>13</sup> When you are going thither then, carry not the world with you.

Let vain or busy thoughts have there no part,  
Bring not thy *Plough*, thy *Plots*, thy *Pleasures* thither,  
*Christ* purg'd his Temple; so must thou thy heart.  
All worldly thoughts are but Thieves met together  
To Couzin<sup>14</sup> thee. Look to thy actions well,  
For *Churches* are either our Heav'n or Hell.<sup>15</sup>

These reverend and sacred buildings (however now vilified and shut up<sup>16</sup>) have ever been, and among true Christians still are the solemn and public places of meeting for Divine Worship: There the *flocks feed at noon-day*, there the great *Shepherd* and *Bishop* of their souls is *in the midst of them*, and where he is, that *Ground is holy*; Put off your shoes then, your worldly and carnal affections, and when you begin to enter in, say with *Jacob*, *How dreadful is this place! Sure this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!* Such reverence and religious affection has in all ages been shown towards these places, that the holy men of God detained either by Captivity, or other necessary occasions, when they could not remedy the distance, yet to testify their *desire and longing for the Courts of the Lord* (Psalm 84), they would always worship towards them. Thus *Daniel* on the Idolatrous Decree signed by *Darius*, *goes into his house, and his windows being open in his Chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled on his knees, and prayed and gave thanks before his God as he did before*

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<sup>13</sup> See Psalm 93:5

<sup>14</sup> **cousin** – cozen, cheat

<sup>15</sup> George Herbert, *The Church-Porch*, stanza 71

<sup>16</sup> A (bitter) reference to the actions of the Puritan régime against Vaughn's Church of England—note his use of the phrase “true Christians” later in the sentence. It is hard for us to imagine what an ugly time this was for faithful English Christians, both Puritan and Anglican.

(Daniel 6:10), which fully proves it to have been his Constant manner of Devotion. And of *Judith* we read *that about the time that the Incense of that Evening was offered up in Jerusalem, she cried to the Lord* (Judith 9:1). But above all, most pathetic<sup>17</sup> and earnest is that cry of King *David* in the 84th *Psalms*:

*How amiable are your Tabernacles O Lord of Hosts!*

*My soul longs, yea even faints for the Lord, my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.*

*Yea, the Sparrow has found a house, and the Swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even your Altars, O Lord of Hosts, my God and my King!*

*Blessed are they that dwell in your house, they will be still praising you.*

*For one day in your Courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a door-keeper in the House of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.*

Let it be your Care then, when you are there present to carry yourself like a true worshipper; Give none offence, neither outwardly to your *Brethren*, nor the Angels (1 Corinthians 11:10), nor inwardly to your God, whose Eyes shine within you, and discern your reins<sup>18</sup> and your heart. Look seriously about you, and Consider with yourself how many beautiful, witty, and hopeful personages in their time lie now under your feet;<sup>19</sup> you cannot tell but your turn may be next. Humble yourself in this dust, and all vain Imaginations will fly from you. Consider that you are now in the *Cave of Machpelah*, in a sacred *Repository* where the Bodies of Saints are asleep, expecting that hour, *when those that are in the grave shall hear his voice*. Do not then stop your ears against the *Charmer*, but give diligent attention, and hear him while it is yet today, that in the day of your death you may rest there in the same hope. When your vessel is filled with this *Manna*, and your soul

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<sup>17</sup> **Pathetical** – moving to pity

<sup>18</sup> **reins** – literally *kidneys*; used in the Bible to refer to the seat of the emotions; as we would say, the *heart*

<sup>19</sup> A reference to those (probably the wealthy or noble) who would have been buried in the church, their bodies literally under the feet of the worshipers

satisfied, go not off without Thanksgiving; Be not like those nine *Lepers* who never returned to give glory to God; but come back with the thank ful *Samaritan*, and receive another blessing, *Go in peace*. Saint *Luke* in the *Acts* of the Apostles making mention of the *Ethiopian Eunuch*, who came up to *Jerusalem* for to worship, tells us, that in his return he was reading in *Isaiah* the Prophet; This blessed *Convert* I would have you to imitate: When you have filled your *Hin*<sup>20</sup> with this living water, leave it not behind you at the Fountain; spill not your *Milk* and your *Wine*, because you have it without *money and without price*,<sup>21</sup> but carry it home and use it. You may have need of it in six days, and perhaps shall not come to draw again, until you drink it anew with your Savior *in his Father's Kingdom*.

#### *A Prayer before you go to Church*

Lord *Jesus Christ*, who out of your Father's bosom were sent into this world to reveal his will to sinners, and to instruct them in the way of salvation; behold, I am now going to hear your blessed word, and these many years have so done, expecting still your good pleasure and the Consummation of your sacred will in me. I have come to the bread of life, and yet am hungry; into the light, and yet am blind; to the great Physician, and yet my Issue<sup>22</sup> runs: The former and the later rain of your heavenly Doctrine falls still without intermission on my heart, but this bad ground yields nothing but Thorns and Briars. Many days, many months, and many years have you expected fruit, and found nothing but leaves. It is your Infinite mercy, O Lord, that you have left to us the seed of your word, and send into your harvest such upright and faithful laborers; but in vain, O Lord, shall they cry in our Ears, unless you open and renew our hearts. Open then, I beseech you (O blessed

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<sup>20</sup> **Hin** – a gallon jar

<sup>21</sup> See *Isaiah* 55

<sup>22</sup> **issue** – discharge of blood or other matter from the body; compare the woman with the “issue of blood” in *Matthew* 9:20, and the Levitical laws concerning women's “issue of blood” or “flow of blood” (*Leviticus* 12:7, 15:9, and 15:25)

Jesu!)<sup>23</sup> the ears of my heart, that not only the outward hearing, but the inward also may be stirred up in me, and what I hear with the ear, I may understand with the spirit. O you most mild and merciful *Lamb of God!* The only, and the Almighty sower! Grant, I beseech you, that the seed that falls this day on my heart, may never be choked with the Cares of this world, nor be devoured by the fowls of the air, nor wither away in these times of persecution and trial: but so Cherish it with the Dew of your divine spirit, that (as in a good and faithful ground) it may bring forth fruit to eternal life, to the glory of your great name, and the Comfort of my poor soul, which you have bought with your most precious and saving blood. *Amen.*

*Another when you are come home, or in the way if you are alone*

Lord *Jesus Christ*, my ever merciful and most loving Redeemer! I give to you most hearty thanks for this your heavenly, spiritual provision wherewith you have fed and refreshed my soul. Grant I beseech you that this Celestial<sup>24</sup> seed may take root in me, and be effectual to my salvation; Watch over my heart, O Lord, and hedge it in with your grace, that the fowls that descend in the shadows of the Evening may not pick it out; But so prepare and fit me for your love, that I may never forget your gracious words, your blessed and saving advice, but may know in *this my day what belongs to my peace.* It is your promise by your holy Prophet, *That as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returns not thither, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So your word that goes forth out of your mouth, shall not return to you void, but shall accomplish that which you please, and prosper in the thing whereto you send it* (Isaiah 55:10-11). Even so, Lord *Jesus*, let it be as you have promised. Let the words I have heard this day out of the mouth of your servant, the *Dispenser*, and *Steward* of your

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<sup>23</sup> **Jesu** – pronounced *JEEZ-you*; usually used to address Jesus with tenderness or intensity

<sup>24</sup> **celestial** - heavenly

Mysteries prosper in me, and make my life answerable<sup>25</sup> to his Doctrine; that I may not only know what your blessed will is, but perform also and fulfill it; so that at last by your mediation and mercies I may attain to your eternal and most glorious Kingdom. *Amen.*

## ADMONITIONS FOR *Evening-Prayer*

Remember that in the *Levitical* Law there is a frequent Commemoration and Charge given of the two daily Sacrifices, the one to be offered up in the morning and the other in the Evening (*Exodus* 30:7-8). These offerings by *Incense*, our holy, harmless and undefiled High-Priest has taken away, and instead of them every devout *Christian* is at the appointed times to offer up a Spiritual Sacrifice, namely that of *Prayer*; for *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth* (John 4:24). At these prescribed times (if you will have your Prayers to ascend up before God) you must withdraw from all outward occupations to prepare for the inward and divine. To which end you have here this following Meditation, that you may therewith season and invite your soul from your worldly employments to her proper vocation, and so come not altogether undressed into the presence of the *King of glory.*

*A Meditation at the setting of the Sun,  
or the Soul's Elevation to the true light*

The path of the Just (O my God) is as the shining light, that shines more and more to a perfect day of eternity (*Proverbs* 4:18). But the wicked neither know, nor understand, they walk in darkness, and from the inward darkness of their minds pass at last into the outward, eternal darkness. O most miserable and undone soul! to whom your *Sun* is set; that everlasting glorious *Sun!* which in your holy Elect never sets, but is always at the height, full of

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<sup>25</sup> **answerable** – suitable, fitting, proper

brightness and Consolation. A heavy night sits in the noon-day on those souls that have forsaken you; They look for light, and behold darkness; for brightness, and they walk in obscurity. They grope for the wall like the blind, as if they had no Eyes; They stumble at noon-day as in the night, they are in desolate places as dead men. But on those that walk with you an everlasting day shines; This *Sun* of the firmament has his Course; it rises, sets, comes up again, and again goes down: But you Lord, know no vicissitudes, you are the *Ancient of days*, you are the *Rock of ages from Everlasting to Everlasting*. *O you, the same today and yesterday, and for evermore! You bright and morning Star springing from on high*, illuminate me, who am now sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. *O light of light, the brightness of your Father's glory*, enlighten all inward obscurities in me, that after this life I may never be cast into the outward darkness. O most blessed, most merciful, and Almighty *Jesu!* Abide I beseech you with me, *for it is towards Evening, and the day is far spent* (Luke 24:29). As long as you are present with me, I am in the light, but when you are gone, I am in the shadows of death, and among the stones of emptiness. When you are present, all is brightness, all is sweetness, I am in my God's bosom, I discourse with him, watch with him, walk with him, live with him, and lie down with him. All these most dear and immeasurable blessings I have with you, and want<sup>26</sup> them without you. Abide then with me, O you whom my soul loves! You Sun of righteousness with healing under your wings arise in my heart; refine, quicken, and cherish it; make your light there to shine in darkness, and a perfect day in the dead of night.

#### *A Prayer for the Evening*

Most gracious, Almighty God! full of loving kindness, and long-suffering, whose mercy is above all your works, and your glory above the heavens; whose truth reaches to the Clouds, and whose words shall never pass away, forgive me, I beseech you, my transgressions this day, my vain thoughts, idle words, and loose conversation; my exceeding neglect and forgetfulness of you, my

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<sup>26</sup> **want** - lack

headlong inclinations and lusting after the world, preferring this land of *Cabul* before the snow of *Lebanon*, and a broken Cistern before the Well of life. Justly, O Lord, might you have shown me your back this day, and cut me off from among your people (*Jeremiah* 1:13-16 and 17:1-13). But you have had<sup>27</sup> mercy, and not sacrifice; you have shed on me the light of your Countenance, and removed my sins far out of your sight. I know, O my God, it is not in man to establish his own ways, it is your Almighty arm must do it; It is you alone that have led me through this day, and kept me both from doing and from suffering evil. And now, O you preserver of men! What shall I do to you? What shall I render to my Lord for all the mercies and loving-kindness shown to your servant this day, and all the days of my life till now? *I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and call on the name of the Lord*. I will ever love you, fear you, praise you, and trust in you; My song shall be of you in the night season, and in the daytime I will be speaking of your wondrous works, your most merciful and liberal<sup>28</sup> arm; I will make you my *Delight* in the house of my pilgrimage, and I shall always with all my strength, with all my heart, and with all my soul ascribe to you all glory, wisdom, majesty, dominion, and honor this day and for evermore. *Amen*.

#### *A Prayer when you are going to bed*

Most glorious and only wise God! to whom the light and the darkness are the same, whose dwellings are eternal, and in whose Kingdom there is no need of Candles, nor of the light of the Sun; look, I beseech you, on your servant, who tarries in this *place all night* (*Genesis* 28:11). And forasmuch<sup>29</sup> as you (out of your tender love and Compassion on your Creatures) have ordained this time for their repose and refreshing, that having past through the Cares and dangers of the day, they might under the shadow of your wings find rest and security; keep me, I most humbly beseech you, from the hours and the powers of darkness; watch over me this night in

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<sup>27</sup> **had** – desired, required

<sup>28</sup> **liberal** - generous

<sup>29</sup> **forasmuch** - since

your Almighty providence, and scatter all the rebellions and devices of my Adversaries. Enlighten my soul, sanctify my body, govern my affections, and guide my thoughts, that in the fastest closures of my eyelids<sup>30</sup> my spirit may see you, and in the depth of sleep be Conversant with you. Suffer me not, O my God, to forget you in the dark, or to say, *The Lord sees me not, The Lord has forsaken the earth* (Ezekiel 8:12), but so keep me in your fear, and sanctify me with your grace, that all the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart may be always of you. Make my soul to thirst for you, and my flesh also to long after you. And at whatever time you shall awaken me from this bodily sleep, awake also my soul in me, make your morning-star to arise in my heart, and let your spirit blow on my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Quicken me, O Lord, according to your wonted<sup>31</sup> kindness, so shall I seek you early, and make my prayer to you with joyful lips. And now O my most loving and faithful Creator, take me, I beseech you, into your Almighty protection, stretch over me the *Arm* of your mercy, let your Eye be towards the work of your own hands, and the purchased possession of your only begotten, and my most merciful Redeemer *Jesus Christ*, Amen.

¶ As often as you awake in the night, be sure to lift up your heart to God in this or the like short *Ejaculation*.<sup>32</sup> *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabbath! heaven and earth are full of the majesty of your glory.* By resorting thus to God, you shall find a great furtherance and cheerfulness in your spiritual exercises, and besides it will keep always about you the savor of life. And because you shall not be unfurnished on any incident occasions, I have strewed<sup>33</sup> here this handful of savory herbs, which you may take up as you find them in your way.

<sup>30</sup> **in the fastest closures of my eyelids** – “when my eyes are most tightly closed”

<sup>31</sup> **wonted** – usual, habitual

<sup>32</sup> **ejaculation**<sup>32</sup> - a short prayer made in haste; an arrow shot from the heart under stress straight at the heart of God

<sup>33</sup> **strewed** - scattered

## EJACULATIONS

When the Clock strikes.

*Blessed be the hour in which my Lord Jesus was borne, and the hour in which he died! O Lord Remember me in the hour of death!*

When you intend any business, or journey.

*O do well to your servant! that I may live and keep your Word.*

When you are persecuted.

*Haste you, O God, to deliver me, make haste to help me, O Lord!*

On some sudden fear.

*O set me on the Rock that is higher then I, for you are my hope, and a strong tower for me against my enemy.*

On any disorderly thoughts.

*Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*

On any occasions of sadness.

*Your rebuke has broken my heart, I am full of heaviness, but you, O Lord, shall lift me up again.*

On any Diffidence.<sup>34</sup>

*You are my hope, O Lord, even from my youth, through you have I been held up<sup>35</sup> ever since I was borne; though you should kill me, yet will I trust in you.*

When you do any good work.

*Not to me, O Lord, not to me, but to your name give the praise.*

When you are provoked to anger.

*Give your peace to your servant, O God, let no man take away my Crown; In patience, O Lord, let me possess my soul.*

For your Enemies.

*Lord, lay not this sin to their Charge; they know not what they do.*

On any gracious deliverance, or other mercies conferred on you.

*The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; he leads me besides the still waters. He has prevented<sup>36</sup> me with the blessings of goodness, he has granted me my heart's desire, and not withheld the request of my lips. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: And I will dwell in the house of my God forever.*

On any losses, or other adversities.

*Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.*

When you hear that anyone has died.

*Teach me, O Lord, to number my days, that I may apply my heart to wisdom.*

On thought of your sins.

*Turn away your face from my sins, O Lord, and blot out all my offences.*

*Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your sins, and heals all your Infirmities.*

When you are weary of the cares and vanities of this world.

*Like as the Hart<sup>37</sup> brays<sup>38</sup> for the water-brooks, so thirsts my soul after you O God.*

*O who will give me the wings of a Dove that I may fly, and be at rest.*

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<sup>34</sup> **diffidence** - doubt

<sup>35</sup> **held up** – sustained, supported, not allowed to fall

<sup>36</sup> **prevented** – went before

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<sup>37</sup> **hart** - deer

<sup>38</sup> **brays** – cries out

# ADMONITIONS

## WITH *Meditations and Prayers to be used before we come to the Lord's Supper*

*A Prayer for the grace of repentance,  
together with a Confession of sins*

O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity! Three persons, and one eternal God, have mercy on me a miserable sinner.

O who will give my head waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears! that I may weep night and day for my infinite transgressions, ingratitude, and rebellion against my most mild and merciful Creator! O God my God be not far from me! Hide not your face from the work of your hands, reject not my sighing and mournful spirit, nor the earnest endeavors and desires of my undone and miserable soul! O you that break not the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax, quench not in me these weak sparks, this dawn and beginnings of the promised earnest.<sup>39</sup> Take away, O my God! this heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, renew a right spirit within me; clothe me with white raiment, and anoint my Eyes with Eye-salve,<sup>40</sup> that I may know and see how wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked I am, and may be zealous therefore and repent! O you that did cause the waters to flow out of the stony rock, and gave to *Magdalene* such store of tears that she washed your feet with them, give to me true remorse, and such a measure of repentance as may become a most miserable sinner! I confess dear God, that I am not worthy of the least of your mercies, much less to appear at this great and solemn Feast, this Feast of mercy and miracles, where none but with holy hands, pure intentions, crucified affections, and renewed spirits should presume to enter. But as for me I am all uncleanness, a polluted, vile creature, and nothing belongs to me at this great day, but

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<sup>39</sup> **earnest** – foretaste or pledge of what is to come

<sup>40</sup> **salve** – healing ointment

confusion of face, and an utter separation from this glorious and saving Communion. I have wasted your stock,<sup>41</sup> consumed your talents, and destroyed your goods. I was restless and unquiet till I had found out ways to offend you. I have broken your Commandments, laid open your Enclosures,<sup>42</sup> and most grievously trespassed against your truth, and against the light of my own Conscience. I have preferred rottenness and dust to the treasure of your word, and my own voluptuousness<sup>43</sup> to your revealed will. And now *O you preserver of men! What shall I do to you? Against you only have I sinned, and my transgressions are ever in your sight.* Lord God! I lay me down at your footstool, *and if you will be extreme*<sup>44</sup> *to mark what is amiss,* I shall from my very heart acknowledge and adore your justice. But O my dear Creator, for Christ Jesus his sake have mercy on me! Look not on my deserts, but on your glory; O Lord do not refuse me, but reform and restore me! O Lord hearken, and do, and defer not, but speak peace to my troubled soul, and send your loving spirit to strengthen and confirm me in the way of holiness, bring me home, O Lord, and lead me now to these living waters, incorporate me into the saving vine, and purge me, that I may bear more fruit. O cast me not away like an abominable and withered branch, but make me to flourish in the Courts of your house, where your Children are like Olive-branches round about your table! O Lord, hear and have mercy, and forgive me, and be reconciled to me for *Christ Jesus* his sake! To whom with you and the Holy Ghost be glory in the Church through all ages world without end, *Amen.*

*A Meditation before the receiving of the holy Communion*

*Holy, holy, holy,* is the Lord God of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory! Behold to the Moon, and it shines not, and the Stars are darkness in his sight. The Pillars of heaven do tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. O who then am I, that I should appear

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<sup>41</sup> **stock** – an endowment for a son; assets

<sup>42</sup> **laid open your enclosures** – “broken down your barriers”

<sup>43</sup> **voluptuousness** – addiction to sensual pleasure

<sup>44</sup> **extreme** – strict, severe (compare the sense of Psalm 130:3)

before you, or *what is man that you should regard him?* O light of light, the all-seeing light that shines in darkness, and the darkness comprehends it not, what will become of me, when I shall appear before your glorious and searching Eye! What a habitation of darkness and death will you find within me? What abominable desolations and emptiness? What barrenness and disorders will you see there? Many a time have you knocked, and I have shut the doors against you, you have often called, and I would not answer. Sleeping and waking, early and late, day and night have I refused instruction, and would not be healed. And now, O my God, after all this rebellion and uncleanness, will you come and lodge with me? O Lord, where shall I prepare, and make ready for you? *What communion can there be between light and darkness, purity and pollution, perfection and deformity?* O Rose of *Sharon!* you undefiled and everlasting flower, the glory of the fields, and the first fruits of the dead, shall the wild Ass and the beasts of the wilderness feed now on you? Will you give the bread of life to dogs, and cast your pearls before swine? *O Jesus Christ*, the lover and the redeemer of all humble and penitent souls! You that feed among the Lilies until the day breaks and the shadows flee, what is there in my heart where only tares and thistles grow, that you can feed on? Your blessed body was wrapped in fine and white linen (which is the righteousness of the Saints). It was laid in a new and undefiled grave, hewn out of a rock, wherein never man was laid before. But all my righteousness is a filthy rag, my heart neither new nor undefiled, but a nest of unclean birds, where they have not only lain, but hatched and brought forth their viperous young ones.

I confess, dear God, I confess with all my heart my own extreme unworthiness, my most shameful and deplorable condition. But with you, O Lord, there is mercy and plenteous redemption. You do not use to reject and cast off those that unfeignedly repent and return to you; the great design and end of your Incarnation was to save sinners: You had never come into this world, but for your love to your lost sheep, and those you did then love, you love still to the end. You did not come to the whole, but to the sick. The first (had there been any such) had no need of a *Physician*, and the last (had not you come to restore them) had perished forever. It was your gracious pleasure (while you were here in the world) to receive Publicans and sinners, and though you

are now ascended to your Father, yet you have not changed your nature. You are the same yesterday, today, and for evermore. Your life here was nothing else but a pilgrimage and laborious search after sinners, that you might find them out and make them whole. And how willingly (O blessed Jesus!) did you lay down your robes of glory, and clothe yourself with flesh, that you might afterwards lay down your life a propitiation for our sins! How many scorching and wearisome journeys did you undergo for our sakes! How many cold and tedious nights did you watch and spend abroad in prayer, when the birds of the air lay warm in their nests, and you had not a place to put your head in! In the daytime I find you preaching in the Temple, and all night praying in the Mount of *Olives*; a little after on your own Sabbath traveling for me in the cornfield; Another time (wearied with your journey) sitting on the Well of *Jacob*, and begging a draught<sup>45</sup> of that cold water from the woman of *Samaria*; Now again I meet you on the Ass, made infinitely happy by so glorious a rider, by *the God of Jeshurun who rides on the heavens, and in his excellencies on the skies*. Sure, it was his simplicity and ordinary contempt with man that made him so acceptable in your sight. But (Oh!) with what language shall I attempt<sup>46</sup> your passion? your bloody sweat, your deep and bitter agony, your lingering piecemealed<sup>47</sup> death, with all the lively anguish, and afflictions of your martyred Spirit? O my most loving and merciful Savior! It is only your own Spirit that can fully character<sup>48</sup> your own sufferings.

These miracles of love and most comfortable<sup>49</sup> circumstances encourage me (O my God) to draw near to you: for it is not probable that you would have subjected yourself to such bitter reproaches, blasphemies, and torments, had not your love to man (for whose redemption you did suffer them) been as infinite as yourself; *And greater love than this has no man, that a man lay down his life for his friends*. And lay it down you did, for *no man could take it from you*. You could have commanded twelve legions

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<sup>45</sup> **draught** - drink

<sup>46</sup> **attempt** - "try to adequately describe"

<sup>47</sup> **piecemealed** - drawn out; here in the sense of an excruciating death by torture

<sup>48</sup> **character** - portray, describe

<sup>49</sup> **comfortable** - strengthening, sustaining, encouraging, reassuring

of Angels from your Father, and when you went forth to meet your murderers, they went backwards and fell to the ground, and without your permission (in whose hand their breath was) they could have done nothing. These merciful passages, together with your own voice and frequent invitation much encourage me to draw near to you.

*Come to me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matthew 11:28).

*If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink* (John 7:37).

These, with many more, are your loving Invitations: This is the voice of the great Shepherd, and your sheep hear your voice. Thus you did cry, and these were the words you did speak while you were here on earth, and shall I then turn away from you, *that speak now from heaven? You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*, and your preaching and Intercession shall last until the heavens be no more, and woe to them that refuse to hear you.

Wherefore, most holy *Jesus*, seeing you invite sinners to you, and did die to redeem them, and *are able to save them to the uttermost, that come to God by you, and live forever to make intercession for them* (Hebrews 7:25-26). I the most wretched and the worst of sinners in full assurance of your mercies, and that *you are touched with the feeling of my infirmities* (Hebrews 4:15) and will have compassion on my penitent soul, draw near to your throne of grace, that I may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

O Lord be merciful to me, forgive all my sins, and heal all my infirmities. Cleanse my heart, sanctify my affections, renew my spirit, and strengthen my faith, that I may at this great Feast discern your blessed body, and eat and drink salvation to myself, to the glory of your great name, and the comfort of my poor and sorrowful soul, *Amen*.

Now to him that has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us Kings and Priests to God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever, and ever. *Amen*.

### *A Prayer when you are on going to the Lord's Table*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, *Amen!*

*Jesus Christ*, the Lamb, the Branch, the bright and morning Star, the bread of life that came down from heaven, have mercy on me! It is your promise, that whoever eats your flesh, and drinks your blood, he shall have eternal life in him, and you will raise him up at the last day. Behold, O God, I am now coming to you; O you fountain of purgation!<sup>50</sup> O Well of living waters wash me clean! be to me the bread of life to strengthen me in my pilgrimage towards heaven! grant that I may suck<sup>51</sup> salvation from your heart, that spring of the blood of God, which flows into all believers. Your flesh is meat indeed, and your blood is drink Indeed. O give me grace to receive both worthily, that I may never incur your anger, and eternal condemnation! Lord *Jesus Christ!* I believe all that you have said, and all that you have promised, help my unbelief; you are the Author, be the finisher of my faith; And for your glory's sake, for your own name's sake, lead me in the right way to this great mercy and mystery, *Amen!*

*Immediately before the receiving, say,*

O Lord I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth that you have shown to your servant, all my life long to this very day; much less am I worthy you should come now under my roof but seeing it is your institution and free mercy that will have it so, be jealous, O God, of the place of your honor, cause me to remember whose Temple I am, and suffer not my last state to be worse then the first. Even so, Lord *Jesus*, come quickly, *Amen!*

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<sup>50</sup> **purgation** – spiritual purification

<sup>51</sup> **suck** – as a babe nursing at its mother's breast

# ADMONITIONS

## AFTER receiving the Holy Communion

### *A Prayer after you have received*

Lord Jesus Christ, very God, and very man, made in all things like to us, sin only excepted; I bless and praise your holy name, and with all my heart, with all my strength, and with all my soul give you all possible thanks for your infinite love and pity towards lost man. Blessed be the hour in which you were born, and the hour in which you did die! Blessed and for ever hallowed be your most comfortable and glorious name, the name JESUS CHRIST, *at which every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; for your name is above every name, and there is no other name by which we can be saved.* O most holy, most humble and harmless Lamb! how did you make yourself of no reputation, and became obedient to the death of the Cross for my sake! And when you were to drink the cup of your Father's anger due to my sins, did instead of it ordain and bequeath to me the cup of life and everlasting salvation! O Lord give me a heart to understand, and eyes to see what you have done for me; O never suffer me to crucify you again by returning to my former iniquities and pollutions, but write your sufferings and the price of my redemption in the tables of my heart, set them for a signet on my hand, and for a bracelet on my arm, that by a continual and careful remembrance of them, I may in the strength of this bread received today at your table travel to your holy mountain, and that this drink which I drank out of the spiritual rock may become a Well of living waters, springing up in me to eternal life. Grant this, O God, for your glory's sake, and for that love and mercy's sake that brought you hither out of your Father's bosom to suffer so many things for his Elects' sake, *Amen!*

*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing; for he has redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and has made us to our God Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth.*

*Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead my Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make me perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in me that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen!*

## For reflection and discussion

1. Vaughn says, “Ray yourself into my soul that I may see what an Exceeding weight of glory my Enemy would bereave me of for the mere shadows and painting of this world.” What is the “weight of glory” that he fears the Enemy wants to rob him of? What strategy does he assume the Enemy will use? (Refer to 2 Corinthians 4:17.)

2. What does Vaughn mean under the heading *When you arise* when he prays, “grant also that my body may this day be a helper and servant to my soul in all good works”?

3. Under the heading *Admonitions when we prepare for any far Journey*, how does Vaughn describe the world? Do you think of it that way?

4. Under the heading *When we go from home, II*, he says, “Meditate in the way on the sojournings and travels of the Patriarchs and Prophets, the many weary journeys of *Jesus Christ* in the flesh, the travels of his Apostles by sea and land, with the pilgrimage and peregrinations of many other precious Saints that wandered in Deserts and Mountains, of whom the world was not worthy.” What does such meditation do for us?

5. Vaughn quotes George Herbert’s *Church-Porch*, where Herbert warns that churches can be “either our Heav’n or Hell.” What do you think this means? How can church become our hell?

6. Vaughn admonishes us, when we come to church, to think about the dead buried at the church, and to remember that we might die any time. How could such morbid thoughts help us prepare to worship?

7. Explain this meditation for our time in church: “When you have filled your *Hin* with this living water, leave it not behind you at the Fountain; spill not your *Milk* and your *Wine*, because you have it without *money and without price*, but carry it home and use it. You may have need of it in six days, and perhaps shall not come to draw again, until you drink it anew with your Savior *in his Father’s Kingdom*.”

8. Vaughn includes a section on meditations *when you are come home*—that is, meditations for after church. Do you ever pray after the service about what happened in worship? How might post-service prayers aid our sanctification?

9. After reading (and, as appropriate, praying) Vaughn’s ejaculations (arrow prayers), write at least five of your own. Start by making a list of troubling situations that you face, such as “When scoring poorly on an important test at school,” “When the boss is unfair at work,” or “When friends are not to be found.” For each situation compose a one- or two-sentence prayer. You probably noticed that Vaughn often used verses of scripture—feel free to do the same. If you think it would be valuable, memorize them, and try to use them when you can.

10. What do you think of the lengths to which Vaughn goes to confess his sins?

11. Note how Vaughn rehearses back to the Lord his own works, in a kind of “narrative praise.” How do Christ’s works (“miracles of love”) “encourage [him] to draw near”?