FAMILY PRAYERS

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PREFACE.

THE Author and Compiler of this volume is not insensible to the opposition existing in the minds of many good persons to printed forms of prayer, notwithstanding the Saviour has given us an example; and he would state that it is not his desire to have these forms take the place, entire, of extemporaneous prayers. He would rather give the preference to extemporaneous supplications on the part of the gifted and all who have cultivated the talent. These forms are for the aid of the timid, and all who feel incompetent, from any cause, to lead in family devotions. Seeing in his own charge, and the charges of others, the great neglect of family worship, the excuse in most cases being the incompetency of the heads of families to lead in the exercise, either from timidity or an imagined lack of gift in prayer, he has felt moved, for several years, to prepare a volume of printed forms for the use of all this class of religious persons. These forms will aid the young and inexperienced in the establishment of a family altar, and may be used, when the head of the family is absent, by the wife or any

other member of the family. They will aid in keeping the thoughts from wandering and suggest words expressive of the desires of the heart.

The Compiler has solicited forms of prayer from distinguished elergymen of various evangelical denominations, whose names appear in the list of contributors, yet not a word in any prayer peculiar to any sect, denomination or creed has been furnished or admitted.

Many of the forms are of the Author's own composition, and others have been taken from similar works and reduced and altered to suit the taste of the Compiler, while a few have been admitted with but very slight alterations. All those used have been shortened, so as to prevent the worship of the family from being irksome to the younger members.

The prayers for Special Occasions will be found very applicable and useful.

A passage of Scripture has been selected and put at the head of each prayer to be read, and at the close of each morning prayer, and some of those to be used on special occasions, the Lord's Prayer has been annexed, which should be repeated together by the whole family.

A few short Forms for Children of different ages have been given. Children should be learned to pray as soon as they can lisp the name of Jesus and understand the meaning of the simplest words. Forms of Grace before and after meals are given, together with different forms of the Benediction after worship.

This volume is given to the great Christian public, regardless of denomination or creed, after much thought and days and weeks of earnest mental labor, sanctified by fervent prayer, in secret, to the common Father of all, that His blessing may be upon the effort, and thus it may be the means of leading to the establishment of an altar of prayer in many Christian families, and exercise an influence for good upon the hearts of many when the work of the Author and Compiler on earth shall be over.

J. W. WELLONS.

FRANKLINTON, N. C., FEBRUARY 20, 1874.

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