

the habit of secret prayer be suspended, though for a short time^s; I ask your conscience, whether, during that interval, your moral fences have not been broken down; and whether the spoiler hath not entered in, and committed havoc among some of the best faculties of your inner nature?

Let, then, this ceremonial at which we meet, be an occasion of communion with the living God—let us pray for his protection over ourselves and our household; so that we may all be enabled to walk in the light of truth, and in imitation of the great patterns of Christian life he has vouchsafed to give us. So shall we do our duty to God and man—so shall we be bound together by holy bonds no worldly power can break asunder—and so may we hope that God, as he has done abundantly in times past, will continue, in times to come, to vouchsafe to this christian family the proofs of his protecting love. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*
