

PRAYERS BY EDMUND BOHUN, L.S.C.
(Excerpts from his Autobiography:)

1678 COLLECT: O Lord God almighty, to whom belong the issues
May 1st of life and death; wee, thy sinful creatures,
fall downe before thee, acknowledging thy jus-
tice in the late sad affliction thou hast sent upon this family.
For our sins were gone over our heads, and our trespasses were
growen up to heaven; whereby we had deserved not only this but a
greater and heavier chastisement. It is of thy meere mercy, O
Lord, that wee were not destroyed, even because thy compassions
fayled not. How then shall wee enough prayse and glorify thy good-
ness who, in the midst of judgment thoughtest upon mercy, and
hast rescued us out of the jaws of death, not permitting the pitt
to shut her mouth upon us! For which and all other thy mercys to
us, thy unworthy servants, wee do most humbly and meekely beseech
thee, O Lord, to enable us, by thy grace, to spend those lives
thou hast so mercifully preserved, in thy sayth and feare, in
charity and justice, in temperance and sobriety, to the glory of
thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord: etc. Amen, amen.

(Written following an epidemic of small-pox which attacked his
cousin, his eldest son, his second son, his wife, himself and five
of his servants, one of whom died. His wife, being pregnant at the
time, overcome with anxiety and grief, miscarried.)

1682 "Question: What is required of them who come to the
December 23rd. Lord's Supper?

Answer: To examine themselves, whether they repent
them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new
life, (2) have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, (3) with
a thankful remembrance of his death, (4) and be in charity with all
men." Catechism.

Now that I am preparing myself for this most holy mystery, I
ought to examine myself on these four points. And first, I do indeed
think with grief of my past life, especially when I call to mind how
ill I have done in the things pertaining to my God. Nor have I acted
well towards my neighbour, much less towards myself. Have mercy upon
me, O God. But when I contemplate my purpose with respect to my fut-
ure life I tremble still more; for how can I, who have so often vowed
and not performed, promise better fruit either to God or myself? What
then? Shall I sink beneath the burden of my sins and yield the vic-
tory to my enemies? By no means. I have undertaken the warfare; I
neither can nor will be at peace with them. Strengthen my frailty and
weakness, O Jesus. Thou art the conqueror: I, miserable man! can
scarcely stand, and am unable to resist and repel, much less conquer.
Thou art my strength and the rock of my salvation. But even my faith
is very weak. It is driven hither and thither by temptations. It
lives ready to die, and will perish unless Thou, who art its author,
sustain it. By the mercy of God, therefore, through Thee, I hope to
have salvation and remission of sins. To thee, then, O Jesus, I give
the most hearty thanks that with so great love thou hast redeemed
miserable me by thy blood. Without that blood I know and believe that
I should have perished: redeemed by it I hope to possess eternal life,
and to be sanctified in this world.

With mankind, indeed, I desire to lead a peaceful life but am not
able to maintain it. Some oppress, other provoke, others injure,
others harass me. And I, impatient, inclined to anger, blunt, oppose
too stiffly, and unwillingly give way. So the hater of men cherishes

the seeds of discord, provokes the restless, that by them he may overcome the peaceable. Spare those, O Lord, who ignorantly yield themselves to him. Spare miserable me, and make me patiently to bear injury, and not to inflict it.

Especially I most humbly beseech thee to regard my oldest friend. I lost him, indeed, when I least looked for it. Thou, O Lord, knowest I was an unfeigned friend to him and his. But they attacked me when I expected no such thing and, wickedly punishing me with various injuries, will not be quiet. O Lord, open his heart that he may see what he has done: open mine that I may see for what fault I have deserved this. Pardon both him and me. Whatever he does amiss, who is properly called thy servant, gives a stumbling block to the weak and causes dishonour to thy church, O Jesus. Turn the man to thyself and to us for thy church's sake. Have pity, O Lord, upon that bird of prey who has oppressed me and my family while I have endeavoured to aid the oppressed. Give him repentance unto life, that he may restore to that poor family what he has extorted; and snatch me and mine from the hand of the spoiler. Spare those who hate me from envy or at the instigation of others, who persecute me for justice and truth's sake.

"In your patience possess ye your souls." Luke xxi, 19. So our Saviour admonished, so comforts his disciples, and guarded them against those dreadful calamities which he had foretold. He who has lost his soul has nothing: he who possesses this has lost nothing. But I, by my inability to bear injuries, have destroyed my peace of mind and exposed my soul to the greatest possible danger. And yet, I have not been tempted beyond the common lot of men. Pardon, O Lord, the infirmity of thy servant and strengthen me by thy spirit, that, for the future, mindful of this promise and precept, I may not give way or be irritated under trials, but, with christian patience and faith, may bear manfully what Thou, in thine unfathomable wisdom, hast permitted to befall me."

(The reference to "my oldest friend" is apparently to disputed claim of tithes, - so fruitful of animosity and litigations as long as they were collected "in kind" and the legal right to them qualified by various and special customs. It was admitted, in a suit in the Exchequer brought by a vicar of Westhall, that tithes in kind were due to him "for clover seed, turnips, parsnips, carrots, flax, hops, wool, pigs, geese, turkeys, chickens, eggs, honey, wax, apricots, and ducks". But it was insisted, and so adjudged, 15th July 1745, that moduses were payable for "wood, calves, lambs, hemp, milk, apples, pears, plums, nuts, agistment of unprofitable cattle, clover, and other hay".)

1683 "I will therefore conduct myself more meekly and bear February 21st. injuries more patiently, and, as far as I can, will Ash Wednesday transact the business entrusted to me; as well as my own, modestly and quietly; yet so that no injury shall thence befall others. For I would rather be esteemed passionate and hasty, than unfaithful, unjust, ungrateful to my friends and, in short, of no service to the poor and the oppress'd.

But do thou, O God, furnish thy servant with thine own gentleness. I am flesh, and burdened with the weakness of the flesh. While I follow what is good, I fall into unforeseen evils. Pity me, and pardon me and others, for the sake of that most gentle Lamb who, by his patience and obedience, took away the sins of the world. Amen."

"To suppose the trade of the world can be driven by any one nation, how great soever, is a very great piece of ignorance. All monopolies, restraints of trade to companies exclusive of all others, are narrow thoughts that spring up in narrow souls, and contradict the great designe of God almighty, which is to civilize the whole race of mankind, to spread trade, commerce, arts, manufactures, and by them Christianity from pole to pole round the whole globe of the earth. And therefore I am sure God will blast all those designes that are contrary to his, and ruine those nations and companys that would ingross his blessings and joine with the devil to prevent or at least retard the civilizing of the rest."

- Edmund Bohun, Esq.,
Chief Justice of South Carolina
1698 - 1699.