upon that God who formed it ; and this conviction will compel him to wiſh for the divine protection of himſelf and his friends from all dangers and misfortunes. Such a wiſh is in effect a prayer, and will always be accompanied with adoration, confeſſion, and thankſgiving (ſee Prayer). But adoration, confeſſions, application, and thankſgiving, conſtitute what is called wo*rſhip,* and therefore the worſhip of God is a natural duty. It is the addressing of ourſelves as his dependants to him as the ſupreme cauſe and governor of the world, with acknowledgments of what we enjoy, and petitions for what we really want, or he knows to be con­venient for us. As if, *ex. gr.* I ſhould in ſome humble and compoſed manner (says Mr Wallaſton) pray to that “ Al­mighty Being, upon whom depends the exiſtence of the world, and by whoſe providence I have been preſerved to this moment, and enjoyed many undeſerved advantages, that he would graciouſly accept my grateful ſenſe and acknowledgments of all his beneficence towards me; that he would deliver me from the evil conſequences of all my tranſgreſſions and follies ; that he would endue me with ſuch diſpoſitions and powers as may carry me innocently and ſafely through all future trials, and may enable me on all occasions to behave myſelf conformably to the laws of rea­ſon piouſly and wisely ; that He would ſuffer no being to injure me, no misfortunes to befal me, nor me to hurt my­ſelf by any error or miſconduct of my own ; that he would vouchſafe me clear and diſtinct perceptions of things ; with ſo much health and proſperity as may be good ſor me ; that I may at leaſt paſs my time in peace, with content­ment and tranquillity of mind ; and that having faithfully discharged my duty to my family and friends, and endea­voured to improve myſelf in virtuous habits and uſeful knowledge, I may at laſt make a decent and happy exit, and find myſelf in ſome better ſtate.”

That an untaught ſavage would be prompted by i*nstinct* **to** addreſs the Supreme Being in ſuch terms as this, we are ſo far from thinking, that to us it appears not probable that ſuch a ſavage, in a ſtate of ſolitude, would be led by inſtinct **to** ſuppoſe the exiſtence of that Being. But as ſoon as the being and attributes of God were, by whatever means, made known unto man, every ſentiment expressed in this prayer muſt neceſſarily have been generated in his mind ; for not to be ſenſible that we derive our exiſtence and all our en­joyments from God, is in effect to deny his being or his providence ; and not to feel a wiſh that he would give us what we want, is to deny either his goodneſs or his power.

The worſhip of God therefore is a natural duty reſulting from the contemplation of his attributes and a ſenſe of our own dependence. But the reaſoning which has led us to this concluſion reſpects only *private* devotion ; for it is a queſtion of much greater difficulty, and far enough from being yet determined, whether *public* worſhip be a duty of that religion which can with any propriety be termed *na­tural* Mr Wollaſton indeed poſitively affirms that it is, and endeavours to prove his poſition by the following argu­ments.

“A man (says he) may be conſidered as a member of ſome ſociety : and as *ſuch* he ought to worſhip God if he has the opportunity of doing it, if there be proper prayers uſed publicly which he may reſort to, and if his health, &c. permit. **Or** the ſociety may be conſidered as *one body,* that has com­mon interests and concerns, and *as ſuch* is obliged to worſhip the Deity, and offer one prayer. Beſides, there arc many who know not of themſelves how to pray ; perhaps cannot ſo much as read. Theſe muſt be taken *as they are;* and consequently ſome time and place *appointed* where they may have ſuitable prayers read to them, and be guided in their devotions. And further, towards the keeping mankind in order, it is *neceſſary* there ſhould be ſome religion proſeſſed, and even eſtabliſhed, which cannot be without public worſhip. And were it not for that ſenſe of virtue which is *principally* preſerved (ſo far as it is preſerved) by national *forms* and *habits* of religion, men would ſoon lose it *all,* run wild, prey upon one another, and do what elſe the worſt of ſavages do.”

Theſe are in themſelves just obſervations, and would come with great force and propriety from the tongue or pen of a Chriſtian preacher, who is taught by revelation that the Maſter whom he serves has commanded his followers “ not to forſake the aſſembling of themſelves together,” and has promiſed, “ that if two of them ſhall agree on earth as touch­ing any thing that they ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done for them of his Father who is in heaven.” As urged by ſuch a man and on ſuch grounds, they would ſerve to ſhow the fitneſs of the divine command, and to point out the benefits which a religious obedience to it might give us reaſon to expect. But the author is here profeſſing to treat of *natural* religion, and to ſtate the duties which reſult from the mere relation which ſubſiſts between man as a creature and God as his creator and constant preſerver. Now, though we readily admit the benefits of public worſhip as experienced under the Chriſtian diſpenſation, we do not perceive any thing in this reasoning which could lead a pious theiſt to expect the ſame benefit previous to all experience. When the author thought of *national forms* and *establishments of religion,* he cer­tainly loſt sight of his proper ſubject, and, as ſuch writers are too apt to do, comprehended under the religion of na­ture what belongs only to that which is revealed. Natural religion, in the proper ſenſe of the words, admits of no parti­cular f*orms,* and of no *legal establishment.* Private devotion is obviouſly one of its duties, becauſe ſentiments of adora­tion, confeſſion, ſupplication, and thankſgiving, neceſſarily ſpring up in the breaſt of every man who has juſt notions of God and of himſelf : but it is not ſo obvious that ſuch no­tions would induce any body of men to meet at *ſtated times* for the purpoſe of expreſſing their devotional ſentiments in public. Mankind are indeed ſocial beings, and naturally communicate their ſentiments to each other; but we cannot conceive what ſhould at firſt have led them to think that public worſhip at ſtated times would be acceptable to the ſelf-exiſtent Author of the univerſe. In caſe of a famine, or any other calamity in which the whole tribe was equally in­volved, they might ſpeak of it to each other, inquire into its cauſe, and in the extremity of their diſtreſs join perhaps in one fervent petition, that God would remove it. In the ſame manner they might be prompted to pour forth occaſional ejaculations of public gratitude for public mercies ; but it does not follow from theſe incidental occurrences that they would be led to inſtitute times and places and forms of national worſhip, as if they believed the omniſcient Deity more ready to hear them in public than in private. That the appointment of ſuch times and forms and places is be­neficial to ſociety, experience teaches us ; and therefore it is the duty, and has been the practice, of the ſupreme magistrate in every age and in every civilized country to provide for the maintenance of the national worſhip. But this practice has taken its riſe, not from the deductions of reaſon, but either from direct revelation, as among the Jews and Chriſtians ; or from tradition, which had its origin in ſome early revelation, as among the more enlightened Pagans of ancient and modern times.

We hope that none of our readers will be ſo unjuſt as to ſuppoſe that by this diſquiſition we mean, in any degree, to