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# Praying in the Holy Spirit

H.A. Ironside

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## What is Prayer in the Holy Spirit?

It is in Jude's brief letter—a fitting preface as it were to the book of Revelation—that we find the expression, "Praying in the Holy Spirit" (ver. 20). We have a pentagonal Christian portrayed in vers. 20 to 23. There are five sides to his character.

He must be studious—devoutly meditating on the word of God, if he would be building himself up on his most holy faith—that "faith once delivered to the saints," found alone in the Book which the Spirit has inspired.

But he must also be *prayerful*—"praying in the Holy Spirit." He must take time to speak to the One who speaks to him in the written Word.

He is to be *trustful*—abiding in the sunshine of the divine favor: "Keep yourselves in the love of God."

He is also *hopeful*. "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life," which is to be realized in all its fulness at His coming again.

And, withal, he will be *compassionate*; he cannot forget his responsibilities to those still in their sins. "Of some have compassion ... pulling them out of the fire." It is as there is conscientious concern to obey the first two exhortations that the last three will be fulfilled in the life of a believer.

The word of God is the foundation on which we build. Prayer keeps the soul in touch with the power by which alone we build aright. Mere Bible knowledge may make one heady and doctrinal. Prayer alone, if unguided by Scripture, tends to fanaticism; but the Word and prayer together give a good, firm base on which to rear a sturdy Christian character.

To treat of each side of the pentagon at this time is however not my object. We are to meditate a little on prayer, and try to learn a few things about it from the word of God.

Prayer is almost universal in mankind. "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." Unsaved men pray. All nations pray. It is the sense of need, of weakness, that leads men to cry out for help to a Higher Power; and it is wrong to say, as some have said, that the prayers of unconverted people are never heard. The man whom our Lord healed of his blindness said, "We know that God heareth not sinners." This is true, in the sense that he meant it. But the cases of Hagar, in the wilderness, the heathen mariners mentioned in Jonah, and other similar instances must not be overlooked. It is wrong and foolish to try to set bounds to the mercy of God. He who hears the prayer of the young ravens when they cry for food, hears the agonized heart-cries of troubled men who are of "more value than many sparrows" in His eyes. Both Scripture and history testify to prayers answered in wondrous grace, even when those who prayed were ignorant of the One to whom their entreaties were directed.

But it is not of prayer in this general sense that I desire to write. Our theme is "Praying in the Holy Spirit." In this, unsaved people can have no part whatever, for no one can pray in the Spirit who is not indwelt by the Spirit. In Old Testament times people prayed according to the Spirit as they were controlled by Him, though He did not then indwell believers as He does now. "He hath been *with* you. He shall be *in* you." This latter is the characteristic truth of the present dispensation. It is His abiding presence in the children of God that distinguishes this period from all that preceded it.

But though the Holy Spirit dwells in all believers now, all have not recognized this marvellous fact. To many it is only a theory, or a mere doctrinal statement. "I believe in the Holy Ghost," thoughtless formalists repeat time after time, and many real Christians utter the words without the least understanding of their wonderful meaning.

"Upon your believing ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." He, a divine person, dwells in you if a believer. Your body is His temple. He has come to reside, to make His permanent residence in you. Have you recognized Him? Have you welcomed Him? Do you seek to make Him at home there?

Observe: He is the *Holy* Spirit. He detests sin in all its forms—pride, lust, selfishness, worldliness, in every shape and of every degree. He is most sensitive to neglect, and is easily grieved. Yet how many of us have never seriously sought to "clean house" that we might be suited temples for His indwelling!

I was once received into a home the very memory of which still fills me with horror and disgust. I spent a week, with my family, in circumstances so filthy and unsanitary that I wonder now how we ever stood them. We remained for fear that, if we left, we might stumble two poor ignorant souls, groping after God. Coarseness, vulgarity and dirt grieved us constantly. We could not *enjoy* our visit, but we tried, by example and hard work, to clean up the place and to show the people living there a little of what refinement meant.

The Holy Spirit is more sensitive to moral filth, to spiritual defilement, than the most delicate and fastidious lady could be to vulgar and degrading living conditions; and the Word says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed until the day of redemption!" (Eph. 4:30).

The 31st verse suggests the kind of house-cleaning that is required if He would be made at home in our lives. "All bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking—with all malice," must be banished if He would be ungrieved. And, mark, only as He abides in us ungrieved can we really pray in the Holy Spirit.

This is the secret of so many unanswered prayers. This also explains why, so often, we try to pray and there is neither joy nor liberty. It is a wearisome form. The grieved Spirit of God is silent. He does not indite our petitions. Communion is broken. Our prayers are vain. The heavens seem as brass above, and the ground below is stayed from dew. Refreshing of soul there is none. For by our careless ways and lack of self-judgment we have so wounded our Holy Guest that He is, if I may so speak, in grieved retirement.

He has not left us; He never leaves; He abides forever; but He cannot be at home in a heart where so much is tolerated that is disgusting and a grief to Him.

If any resent the term “disgusting,” and shrink from applying so strong a word to any habits or ways tolerated by them, let me remind you that to God pride is of all things most vile. By this sin Lucifer was transformed into Diabolus. And this is a sin most of us are slowest to detect in ourselves, while keen enough to observe it in others. From this mother-sin spring all kinds of other evils. “Only by pride cometh contention.” “A proud look and a lying tongue” are each abominable in the sight of God.

How great the need then for a spiritual house-cleaning if we would pray aright; for only as the Divine Person living in the believer is ungrieved can we pray in the Holy Spirit.

In the second place, prayer in the Spirit must be in accordance with the word of God. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue.” “Which things we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth.” These are only a few quotations that distinctly affirm the Spirit’s authorship of the Holy Scriptures.

Manifestly then, the better I know my Bible, both theoretically and practically, the more intelligently I can pray. Mark, I have said, “practically,” not merely “theoretically.” I certainly need to learn all I can of the Book by careful, assiduous study. But I must not stop there. I must know my Bible *practically*. I am to “*know* the truth,” but I must also “*walk* in the truth.” In fact, I do not really *know* any truth unless I walk in it. If ignorant of the word of God I am likely to pray for many things that are not in harmony with the Lord’s mind—things that are not suited to the dispensation in which we live, or that would not be helpful to my spiritual progress or honoring to God. The better I know my Bible, and the more careful I am to obey its precepts, the better I shall be able to pray.

I have already said, but I stress it here, that he who prays much but does not read his Bible is liable to fanaticism. This is an important consideration. Only recently a lady who had been deceived into the most unscrupulous practices, said tearfully, “I do not understand it. I prayed for weeks that God would show me if this movement was right, and if so, that He would give me the experience I sought; and now I see it has all been a delusion. Why did God allow me to fall into such a snare? Why did He not preserve me from it by answering my prayer?” It was pointed out to her that though she prayed so earnestly she neglected the very means God had appointed by which to get the answer she sought. Her Bible lay unread while she prayed for light; she sought help by attending meetings where emotional experiences took the place of sober instruction from the Book.

God has never promised to guide any one into the truth who neglects the Word of truth. Therefore he who would *pray* in the Spirit must *walk* in the truth, for the Spirit and the Word agree.

It is only as we comply with these conditions, we can honestly sing;

"Oh, the pure delight of a single hour,  
That before Thy throne I spend;  
When I kneel in prayer and with Thee, my God,  
I commune as friend with friend."

May the cry of our hearts be, "Lord, *teach us to pray!*"

### **Pray, Always Pray**

*"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint"*  
(Luke 18:1.)

Pray, always pray; the Holy Spirit pleads  
Within thee all thy daily, hourly needs.

Pray, always pray; beneath sin's heaviest load  
Prayer sees the blood from Jesus' side that flowed.

Pray, always pray; though weary, faint, and lone,  
Prayer nestles by the Father's sheltering throne.

Pray, always pray; amid the world's turmoil  
Prayer keeps the heart at rest, and nerves for toil.

Pray, always pray; if joys thy pathway throng,  
Prayer strikes the harp, and sings the angels' song.

Pray, always pray; if loved ones pass the veil,  
Prayer drinks with them of springs that cannot fail.

All earthly things with earth shall fade away:  
Prayer grasps eternity: pray, always pray.

E. H. BICKERSTETH.



## Why should We Pray?

BEFORE attempting to go somewhat more fully into the Scriptural teaching as to what is involved in the phrase, "Praying in the Holy Spirit," I want to devote one paper to a question that keeps coming up again and again, namely, "Why pray at all?"

It is objected by some who pretend to great spiritual insight that, inasmuch as the believer is already "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," there is no need for prayer in this present dispensation of grace, save in the character of communing with God. Faith, we are told, simply appropriates the blessings that are already ours, and does not ask for what God may be pleased to withhold. And as to material things, we need not pray for them because it is written, "He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Therefore prayer is both unnecessary and even impertinent.

But to both these objections we may answer, that we are distinctly commanded not only to pray, but to "pray without ceasing" and to "pray in the Spirit." Moreover, we are definitely told, "Be careful (anxious) for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6, 7).

There can be no question, one would say, but that prayer is both a privilege and a duty, as well as a healthful spiritual exercise; although it certainly has no merit in itself, nor should we for a moment think of it as a means of propitiating God and covering offences, as some have held all down the ages.

But if God knows all our needs, and has already promised to supply them according to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus, why are we expected to pray, as we become conscious of those needs ourselves? And, moreover, if He gives according to His unchanging purpose, what place can prayer have in the divine economy?

The answer surely is that *prayer is part of God's purpose*. He it is who, by His Spirit, stirs the hearts of His people to cry mightily unto Him for those very blessings, spiritual or material, which He in sovereign grace has already provided for. And the great reason for this is, He would have us know beyond all doubt that we have to do with the Living God.

When George Müller, the great 19th Century apostle of prayer, founded the Ashley Down Orphan Houses, and decided not to solicit from man, but to bring every need in prayer to God, he declared that his particular reason for this method was to demonstrate to a materialistic age that God lives and hears prayer. And surely no greater proof of this has ever been given than that revealed in Müller's Journals.

If a certain matter is put on my heart by the Spirit of God, a matter that no other person on earth can possibly be cognizant of, and I entering into my closet, shut the door, and

tell it to my Father who is in heaven, and the answer comes from a source perhaps least expected, how can I doubt that a living God heard and answered?

And, moreover, what parent does not know the joy of having provided beforehand for some need of his child, only to have his heart thrill with gladness when the son or daughter comes, perhaps timidly, pleading for the very thing parental love and forethought had already procured or decided on? Surely, we need not have difficulty in understanding how our gracious God, whose Fatherly love transcends any mere human emotion as the sun outshines the candle, delights thus to anticipate our needs, according to the word, "Before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

May I be permitted, without being charged with spiritual egotism, to relate to His glory one such incident out of many in my personal experience?

On a given occasion a few years back, three very definite needs were pressing on my heart, all in connection with service for the Lord. I had in fact assumed sometime before certain responsibilities for missionary work—peculiar obligations which I felt must be met; and yet I could not see just how to meet them, nor did I feel free to mention them to any other person, save God Himself.

For days I had prayed and sought to quietly trust, but the burden increased in weight. Then one night, awakened from sleep, I began to ask why the answer was so long delayed. To my aroused heart and exercised conscience, God my Father, by His Spirit, brought to light certain things wherein I realized I had not only been slothful and slack, but had unquestionably grieved the divine indwelling Guest. After a season of confession and self-judgment I was able to pray with liberty for what had been burdening me before. The next morning every need was met, and singularly enough, the human instrument used lived on the other side of the continent and could know nothing of the circumstances. Yet his gift of love was exactly sufficient to meet the three particular needs that I had spread before the Lord; and, above and beyond that, he himself designated with careful precision the three avenues of disbursement and the amounts to go to each cause. Could I doubt that the living God had heard my cry?

But, someone objects, if the money was already four days upon its way, and the letter was to be delivered in the morning whether you prayed or not, how does that prove prayer was answered? It proves far more than that. It proves that God had foreseen the need, had provided for it ahead of time, but did not let the provision come to me until in self-judgment, I had been brought to cry to Him about it.

And this is what I would press on my reader. To have received the required amount apart from prayer would have filled the heart with a glad recognition of a Father's love, but to receive it in such a way, after prayer, literally thrilled one's being with the knowledge that, through prayer, one was in direct touch with the living God.

Modern unbelief seeks to account for every such occurrences on a purely human plane, and a misnamed psychology would teach that the only real value there is in prayer is in its reflex action upon the mind of him who prays.

But the word of God refutes all such atheistical reasoning, and proves through prayer and its answers that there is One on the other side—a Divine Intelligence, infinite in love as in wisdom, holiness and justice, who takes a personal interest in each one of His children—One who numbers the very hairs of our head, as the Son of God our Saviour has declared, and has ordained prayer as a means of definitely revealing Himself to them.

“Prayer opens heavy doors all hinged with unbelief;  
Prayer sheds a scented balm to assuage an aching grief:

Prayer knows no coward fear,  
Notes every falling tear,  
Counts every blessing here,  
Knows life is brief.

Prayer storms the hostile camps of sin and doubt and care,  
Wrestling the whole night through, alive to do and dare:

Prayer meets Thee face to face,  
Sensing Thy throne of grace,  
Makes trial a hallowed place,  
If Thou art there.

Prayer changes grief to joy as bud must change to flower;  
Prayer yearns to bring each soul in touch with Thy great power:

Prayer looks not for reward,  
Save but Thy smile, dear Lord;  
Sure of Thy matchless word,  
Prayer gilds each hour.”

—*Ruth Salwey.*

No one who has ever known what it is thus to come to God in earnest wrestling about some definite matter, and received the answer, can do other than recognize the blessedness of having to do with the *living* God.

## Hindrances to Prayer

It is a lamentable fact that, although all Christians pray (for prayer is indeed the believer's "vital breath"), yet there are many who seldom record in actual experience a definite answer to the cry of their hearts. And because of this there is a tendency, as previously mentioned, to think of prayer as of value only because of its reflex action upon the souls of those who thus wait on God, rather than because of any possible answer.

It is important to bear in mind that there may be, and often are, certain hindrances on our part that cause God to withhold the gift we ask. To Israel He said, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that He will not hear" (Isa. 59:1, 2). And the Psalmist plainly declares, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps. 66:18). Are not solemn words like these often forgotten? Do we not come carelessly into the Lord's presence beseeching Him to undertake for us, only to get no answer from heaven because of our careless ways or unjudged sin?

Let me give a typical incident out of many that have come to my notice. A young lady who had, when converted, turned from the world and its follies, was afterwards persuaded by carnal friends to break down that wall of separation which at first had been reared between her and the frivolous society out of which grace had called her. To the grief of those who watched for her soul, she absented herself from the appointed gatherings of the Lord's people, and instead was found in the world's halls of refined pleasures, which nevertheless are enmity against God. To any who pleaded with her as to these things she had but one answer: She detested narrowness, and could see no harm in the things that godly saints shrank from as dishonoring to Christ.

Some months went by, and her loved father was stricken with a severe illness necessitating a serious operation from which he never rallied. His death was to her a great shock, but instead of turning her back to God it seemed rather to harden her against Him. Meeting her some months afterwards I sought to help if possible, but when I inquired as to her spiritual state she replied, "I am filled with doubt and uncertainty. Ever since my father died it has been a fight to keep from going into the darkness of infidelity. I cannot pray. I cannot read my Bible. I am miserable. When my father was taken to the hospital I was in great distress, but turning to my Bible my eye fell on the words, 'Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.' It seemed like a direct message to me. I went into my room, and, claiming that promise, I prayed earnestly that my father might recover and be restored to us. I did not have a doubt that God would answer me. I trusted His word absolutely, and you know the result! When word came of his death it seemed as though the light went out of my life. My confidence in prayer was shattered. My faith

even in the Bible received a fearful blow. I have never been able to regain the confidence I once had, for it seems to me that God did not keep His word to me! I know that this is an awful confession to make, but that is how I feel."

As I looked into the tear-stained, anguished face, my heart ached for her, and I prayed for just the right word to help. "Tell me," I inquired, "what do you call a person who tries to cash a check that was made out to some one else, by endorsing it falsely?"

"Oh," she answered, "that would be forgery. If one tried to cash a check not in his name he would be a forger."

"Well, I fear that is your case," I replied. "You tried to cash a check on the Bank of Heaven that was never intended for you. Look at John 15:7. Read the whole check. See to whom it is made out. '*If ye abide in Me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*' Were you abiding in Christ as you floated over the ballroom floor? Were His words abiding in you as you sat in the theatre? Was it abiding in Him that kept you from the prayer meeting and took you to the opera instead? What right had you to try to cash that particular check?"

Startled, she saw the point and burst into almost hysterical weeping. "Oh," she cried, "I see what you mean! You would tell me that my worldliness murdered my father. It is I who killed him by my ungodly ways! If I had only been living for God I could have prayed so that he would have been healed. I can never forgive myself!"

"Now you are going to the other extreme," I replied. "If you had been abiding in Christ you would not have demanded of God what was clearly not His will. He saw that your dear father's work was done. It was time for him to go home. You did not take this into account because you were out of touch with the Lord. The Word says, '*If we ask anything according to his will, He heareth us*' (1 Jno. 5:14). The subject soul will say with his Lord, '*Not my will, but thine be done.*' You overlooked this, and so you have had a bitter lesson to learn."

I am glad to say that ere I left we knelt together and she contritely returned to the Lord, and was, I have every reason to believe, restored in soul.

But are there not many like her, who forget there are conditions that must be met if prayer is to be definitely answered. There are hindrances that must be recognized and dealt with, if we would come to God in the Spirit's liberty, and in the assurance of faith.

We have already seen that iniquity in the heart or life precludes the possibility of the prayer of faith. But I desire to notice some very definite New Testament Scriptures indicating the exact nature of some of these hindrances.

And, first, let me instance *a condemning heart*. In 1 Jno. 3:20–22 we are told, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence before God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." The entire passage, from verse 14 to the end of the chapter, is most illuminating, and shows us that he who would pray in confidence when his own need arises must ever

walk in love and consideration for others, and minister to their need as he has opportunity. Otherwise how can he go to God with an uncondemning heart when in distress himself? It is written, "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself but shall not be heard" (Prov. 21:13). If, therefore, I desire mercies of the Lord for myself, let me see to it that I show mercy to others; otherwise my own heart will condemn me, and I cannot pray in the Holy Spirit. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Harshness of spirit, indifference to the need of others—whether spiritual or temporal—will effectually hinder my prayer getting through to the ear of God.

The principle is of wide application. Whatever condemns me in my own conscience hinders prayer. Till it is judged pleading and wrestling are in vain. Let me first search and try my ways and see if I am allowing anything in my life that is grieving the Spirit. If so, I cannot pray as I should, for God has not promised to hear the cry of one whose own heart condemns him. But if all is judged, the line is clear, and I can pray with assurance. Then I shall know beyond a doubt that I have to do with the living God who heareth prayer.

### **Depths of God's Mercy and Love**

Could we command our very sinful past  
To move before our eyes in great review,  
Not yet we'd know God's mercy—all so vast;  
Nor ever thus find power to start anew.

Instead, we look upon our blesséd Lord,  
And see the agony which He passed through:  
Doomed to the cross, reviled by the horde  
Of enemies of God, and of Him too!

We measure thus the mercy of our God,  
Not by *our* thoughts of our iniquity,  
But by the depths of love thus told abroad,  
For which we'll praise Him through eternity.

G. S. ADOLFSON.

## Hindrances to Prayer—Continued

IN the second place let us note another decided hindrance to effectual prayer:

### *An Unforgiving Spirit*

Our Lord's instruction on this important subject must not be relegated to a past dispensation. In Mark 11:23–26 He sets forth in no uncertain language the folly of expecting God to hear and answer prayer if wrath and bitterness are cherished in the heart.

The disciples had expressed their wonder at the drying up of the barren fig-tree. He uses the occasion to enforce a lesson of faith. He who does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says shall come to pass, can remove mountains of difficulties, and He adds, "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (ver. 24). What a promise is this! What possibilities it suggests as to the life of faith and prayer!

But our Lord does not leave so great a pledge unqualified. Not everyone can so pray. There may be that which will hinder faith, and make prayer impotent. So He immediately tells them, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." Elsewhere also, He taught them to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive every one that is indebted to us." Here, He emphasizes this aspect of forgiveness—one that is often forgotten.

It is sometimes said that this is law, while in Eph. 4:32 we have grace: "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake (or, n Christ) hath forgiven you." But the two passages are in fullest agreement; they simply present two sides of the truth.

If born of God, I have been forgiven: therefore I should forgive. But, as a failing child, I daily need forgiveness myself, therefore it is incumbent on me to forgive my brother. If I cherish resentment and withhold forgiveness, I cannot pray with assurance. God has never promised to answer the prayer of one who has an unforgiving spirit.

This is undoubtedly the cause of many disappointments along this line. He who would receive from the God of all grace must keep his heart with all diligence—guarding it against malice and harshness when he has been offended or wronged in any way.

"For years," said a brother recently, "I prayed for the conversion of an erring son, but all the time he seemed to go from bad to worse. During those years I had a bitter feeling in my heart toward a brother who, I felt, had grievously wronged me. I insisted on reparation which he refused to make. Feeling my cause was just, I held this against him, and would not overlook it. At last I realized that this thing was hindering prayer. I judged

it before God, and freely forgave. Oh the liberty as I then turned to God about my son! Soon I heard with joy of his conversion. Though far from home, he was brought under the power of the gospel and led to Christ." This brother felt that God had been waiting on him, ere answering the pleading of his heart. How many times have saints made similar confessions. An unforgiving spirit explains why thousands of petitions go apparently unheeded.

A third hindrance is suggested in James 4:3:

*"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it on your lusts."*

*Selfishness* is in the way. God loves us too well to grant every request of our selfish hearts. Yet how often do we forget this. Perhaps we read in the previous verse, "Ye have not, because ye ask not," and immediately conclude that we may ask what we will, and that God is bound to give; but we have already seen that promises such as these are subject to conditions. If we delight ourselves in the Lord, He declares He will "give us the desires of our hearts" (Ps. 37:4). But it is plain that he who thus finds his delight in the Lord will not ask selfishly for the gratification of carnal desires. If God does answer such prayers it is in judgment, as we shall see later on. Here the important thing to realize is that no promise is attached to the prayer of selfishness.

Suppose, for instance, I desired great wealth. Why not come to God and ask for a million dollars? If I did, would I receive it? Certainly not. God loves me too much to entrust me with any such fabulous sum unless the circumstances be most exceptional. But if I ask for His glory, a million is nothing to Him. George Müller asked and received over five millions in fifty years to feed and shelter thousands of orphan children. God honored his faith, and gave the means as required.

And in a lesser way, many of His servants can tell to His praise and glory how they have come to Him about financial and other needs *in order to carry on the work committed to them*, and He has answered most graciously, and demonstrated in marvelous ways that He is indeed the living God. But what He thus gives is a sacred trust to be administered for Him, not to be consumed on our own lusts.

Therefore when we pray for temporal things it is well that we search ourselves, examining our motives in the light of His word, that we be not found asking selfishly, but for His glory. And, be it remembered, it is in accordance with His will that we trust Him for food and raiment, and pray to Him to supply the necessaries of life. *This* is not the prayer of selfishness, but of childlike confidence. It was Christ Himself who said "Pray ye ... Give us this day our daily bread." And we have the same privilege still, for, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving" we are encouraged to "let our requests be made known unto God."

Fourthly, *wrong family relationships* hinder prayer. Read 1 Peter 3:1–7. Note the concluding verse of this section in which wives and husbands are being instructed as to their duties toward each other. "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs



together of the grace of life *that your prayers be not hindered.*" When wife and husband are one in heart, one in purpose, each occupying the place divinely assigned in the home, loving and honoring one another, with what boldness, what holy confidence, can they kneel together before God in prayer, counting on His unfailing grace for their households and every interest of their hearts.

But where it is otherwise, how difficult it is to pray. And if strife and discord rule, prayer together is an impossibility. Formal prayers may yet be uttered by the lips while kneeling at the family altar, but definite answers there will not be.

Surrounded by a growing family, it is well that parents carefully consider whether their own behavior towards one another, publicly and privately, is such as to help or hinder prayer. For what can be more important than that those who, under God, are responsible for their little ones, should ever live in an atmosphere of trustful prayer, counting on God for the salvation of their households, and so living before them that the impressionable hearts of the boys and girls will recognize the practical power of godliness.

One last hindrance I would notice. It is mentioned in James 1:6, 7: "*Let him ask in faith nothing wavering.* For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed; for let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." Wavering is really unbelief, and unbelief is the very opposite to faith, and therefore a prime hindrance to prayer.

But wavering is generally a symptom of something deeper. He who wavers may well examine himself and see whether he has not a condemning heart, an unforgiving spirit, a selfish motive, or whether there is not some definite thing in his life whereby his prayer is hindered. It is absolutely impossible to offer the prayer of faith if any of these things are present. Faith and holiness are too intimately linked to be separated. God reveals His will to one who walks before Him, and thus he is enabled to "ask in faith, nothing wavering." Where there is no such assurance it is well to take the word of the prophet: "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hos. 6:3). And so we shall enter into His mind and understand His will, in order that we may pray in accordance with His word, and so without hindrance.

### **Heaven's Cure for Earth's Care**

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6, 7).

Many a burden, many a labor,  
Many a fretting care,  
Busy footsteps coming, going,

Little time for prayer.  
Duties waiting on my threshold  
Will not be denied,  
Others, coming round the corner,  
Crowding to their side.  
How shall I their number master?  
How shall I get through?  
How keep calm amid the tumult?  
Lord, what shall I do?  
Give Thy strength to meet my weakness;  
Give a heart at rest;  
Give a childlike, trustful spirit,  
Leaning on Thy breast.  
Thou canst still the wildest conflict,  
Bid the billows cease;  
Thou canst fill earth's busiest moment  
With Thy perfect peace.

— ANON.

## Prayer and the Unseen Enemy

HE who seeks to enter into the privileges and responsibilities of prayer will soon be conscious of unseen hindrances which may greatly perplex him if uninstructed by Scripture. Satan and his hosts of evil spirits—unholy principalities and powers in heavenly places—constantly endeavor to hinder the prayer-life; and if the believer wills to be “instant in prayer,” the unseen enemy will use all his diabolic ingenuity to delay the answer.

This may astonish some who have never considered the teaching of the word of God on this subject. Let us meditate a little on Ephesians 6:10–20. Here we have the veil as it were pushed aside, and we discern the nature of the conflict in the heavenlies. Ephesians is the New Testament Book of Joshua. It gives us the Christian’s inheritance (secured for us by the death of Christ), as faith sees the waters of judgment turned back and a dry way opened up into the good land—the heavenly places where all our blessings lie.

This is not heaven itself, which will be our eternal home; but our *present* place of privilege, as blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. “All things are yours,” says the apostle elsewhere; but what is now needed is appropriating faith. All the land of Canaan was given to Israel by God Himself. But energy was needed to enter into and enjoy it—to appropriate it—to “possess their possessions.”

There will be no enemies to fight when we reach the Father’s house. But the seven nations of Canaan, greater and mightier than Israel, typify the unseen spiritual foes with which we have now to cope. Therefore the call is to “be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” We are as dependent on God in this conflict as Israel was in the wars of the land. But “the captain of the lord’s host” was sent to lead them on to victory, and the same blessed One is our present omnipotent Captain of salvation. In His strength and power we shall be overcomers if we are obedient to His Word.

We must be arrayed in the full panoply, the whole armor of God, if we would stand against the wiles of the devil. Off his guard, Joshua was easily deceived by the wiles of the Gibeonites. Their good words and fair speeches spread a net for his feet, and Satan to-day works by cunning craftiness (Eph. 4:14), or, as it might be rendered, “wily error,” to deceive those who do not know their Bibles and are not subject to the Word.

It is therefore of the utmost importance not to underestimate the power, nor misunderstand the nature, of the foes we have to meet. “We wrestle not against flesh and blood” (it is not with men, however wicked in life or however false their systems of teaching), “but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (ver. 12). These are evil principalities and powers—craven, defeated foes—yet still relentlessly pursuing the

people of God, and seeking to thwart them as they endeavor to appropriate their blood-bought blessings.

Dwell on the following Scriptures, and let the Holy Spirit open up to your soul the vision of the unseen heavenlies and the hosts of spirits, good and evil, engaged in constant warfare: Eph. 1:21; Rom. 8:38; Col. 1:16; 2:15; and 1 Cor. 15:24. The Cross, where Satan did his worst, was the scene of his utter defeat. See Heb. 2:14, 15. Note that “destroy” is really “annul” or “render powerless.”

The devil is a defeated prince, but a prince still; and myriads of fallen spirits are in allegiance to him. These are the “rulers” of the verse we are considering. The passage might be rendered: “The world-rulers of this darkness.” These unseen “world-rulers” hold sway over the minds of men who refuse to be subject to our Lord Jesus Christ. To them, Satan is the prince of this world—yea, and its god too. They are “led by the devil captive at his will.”

But as we have seen, he is not the only enemy. He is distinctly called in this epistle “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” “The air” is included in the heavenly regions, “the high places,” or “heavenlies,” of our present verse.

In view of organized opposition such as this, how helpless we would be if left to ourselves and relying on our own strength and wisdom. Hence the exhortation to “take unto you the whole armor of God.” That heavenly panoply is outlined for us in the verses that follow. Note its parts:

“Loins girt about with truth.” It is as we know and practise the faith that we are kept from error. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Christ is the Truth personally. Satan works by deception.

“The breastplate of righteousness.” This is practical righteousness—not that which is imputed to us through faith in Christ. The believer is made the righteousness of God in Christ, but if he does not practise righteousness he cannot stand in the great conflict in which we are engaged. To Israel God said, “When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing” (Deut. 23:9). He who tampers with evil is trafficking with the enemy, and is already defeated.

“Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” What shoes are these! We read of them again in Phil. 1:27, “Only let your conversation (or behavior) be as it becometh (or worthy of) the gospel of Christ.” It is the walk in accord with the gospel.

“The shield of faith”—implicit confidence in the living God, “whose I am and whom I serve.” It says, “If God be for us, who can be against us?”

“The helmet of salvation” is the knowledge of God’s delivering grace protecting our minds from the doubts Satan would inject.

“The sword of the Spirit” is not just the word of God as a whole, but the particular *saying* of God (illustrated for instance by our Lord Himself in His conflict with Satan in the wilderness), the special word or passage to meet each particular case.

Then, lastly, a peculiar undescribed weapon which John Bunyan calls "All prayer," without which we certainly shall be defeated: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." If the devil can rob you of this you will not be able to maintain your ground, "Watch and pray" go together—"praying always ... and watching with perseverance." This demands spiritual energy. I must not allow myself to be careless or neglectful. It is well to accustom oneself to stated seasons of prayer, and to refuse to allow even pressing business to turn one aside. Who has not heard of the white handkerchief in front of General "Chinese Gordon's" tent? The sentry pacing to and fro allowed no courier to enter, no matter how urgent, till that kerchief was removed. It indicated that Gordon was having an audience with God, and all other matters must wait. Is it not often otherwise with many of us? Oh, how God is put last! If there be time, after all else is attended to, a few moments are given to prayer.

Froude has told how the farm on which Thos. Carlyle was brought up was liable to be flooded at certain times of the year. A watchman was sent to warn the people when the waters were rising that they might get their hay and other perishable things out of the way of the onrushing flood.

On one occasion the Carlyle family were engaged in worship and prayer when the messenger rode up. Carlyle's father refused to hear a word till the season of prayer was ended, but bade the man to kneel with the family in prayer, after which they turned to and went to work with a will and saved their goods. "God first" is a motto that never should be forgotten.

I would ask my reader now to meditate with me on a remarkable passage in the book of Daniel, chapter 10. Here we see God's prophet on his face before the Lord for "three full weeks." He is so exercised about a certain matter that he cannot partake of his ordinary food and drink. Day after day and night after night he prays. The burden is not lifted, for no answer has come. But observe the consummation. An angel comes to him and says,

"Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand and to chasten thyself before God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people," etc. (vers. 12-14).

What mystery is here! A holy angel was sent from the throne of the Divine Majesty in immediate answer to the prophet's prayer, but for twenty-one days he could not reach Daniel! Who could believe this if it were not so plainly written in the word of God? For three weeks this angel-messenger had been in conflict with that particular "world-ruler of this darkness" who was evidently appointed by Satan to control, if possible, the king of Persia and prevent the carrying out of God's plan.

The mystery deepens as we learn that Michael the archangel had to come to assist the first messenger, ere the evil angel was defeated. May we not learn from this why answers to many of our prayers seem to be long delayed? May it not be that God answered at once, but there may be something *to be settled, to us unseen*, ere the answer could reach, us?

Let us not then be discouraged, nor accuse God of turning a deaf ear to our agonized cry. The answer may already be on the way, but Satan and his evil hosts are battling against it. But God is faithful, and in His due time He will see that the prayer we have made in accordance with His will is wonderfully answered to His praise and glory and to our eternal blessing.

“Unanswered yet? The prayer your lips have pleaded  
In agony of heart these many years?  
Does faith begin to fail? Is hope departing?  
And think you all in vain those falling tears?  
Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer:  
You shall have your desire, some time, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Nay, do not say ungranted;  
Perhaps your part is not yet wholly done;  
The work began when first the prayer was uttered,  
And God will finish what He has begun.  
If you will keep the incense burning there,  
His glory you shall see, some time, somewhere.”

It is thus that patience has her perfect work. Praying in spite of the enemy's effort to hinder, watching against anything that might delay the blessing, trusting even though “hope deferred maketh the heart sick,” assured that God is faithful and will not suffer you to be tempted, or tested, above what you are able to bear. Faith looks to Him and cries, “I will trust, and not be afraid.”

And even though called from this scene ere the answer comes, in a better world, with clearer vision, you may see how your heart-cry has been heard and answered in a way least expected. “I do not need to live,” said a dying saint, “to keep watch upon the faithfulness of God.” The enemy may seem to triumph for a moment, but his final defeat is certain and eternal. Therefore let us heed the admonition to “Pray without ceasing,” and “pray in faith, nothing wavering.”

## Prayer According to the Will of God

WE would now dwell upon the prayer that God delights to answer. We might, of course, simply refer again to the hindrances previously looked at, and learn from them what must be avoided in order to insure direct answers. But it will be more profitable to dwell upon positive statements, of which there are so many in the Word of God.

And first of all we have the clear, unequivocal declaration of 1 John 5:14, 15: "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

What words are these: "If we ask anything," and "Whatsoever we ask!" But let us not fail to observe the all-important condition, "According to His will."

Now God has been pleased, in wonderful grace, to make known His will in a book. We rightly call the Scriptures by the sublime title our Lord Himself used, "The Word of God" (John 10:35). If I would know His will, I must study this book. Ignorance of the revealed Word accounts for many unanswered prayers. In regard to prayer, as in other matters, we err through not knowing the Scriptures. He who would pray aright must be taught of the Spirit through the written Word. Learning thus the mind of God, prayer becomes, not the whimsical expression of our own poor minds, but it takes on a high and holy character: it is asking of God what He delights to give, yea, what He has declared is His desire and purpose.

Here again we have to meet the natural objection of our unbelieving hearts:—If it is God's will to do a certain thing, why need I pray about it? But Daniel may well teach us a lesson here. When (as told in his ninth chapter) he "understood by books" what God was about to do, he immediately set himself to pray in accordance with the prophetic message. And as he thus asked "according to His will," God answered in a way marvelously confirming the faith of His servant.

It is therefore all-important that we search the Scriptures in a self-judged and teachable spirit, in order that we enter into the current of the divine counsels. Then as we learn anything that is in accordance with the will of God, we can bear it up before Him in confidence.

"I prayed for years," said an almost distracted woman to the writer on one occasion, "that God would sanctify me wholly by rooting-out all inbred sin and making me absolutely pure within, and He has not heard my cry." I could only reply, "But you had no title to pray for anything of the kind. God has expressed His mind too clearly for any subject soul to be mistaken. His will is, not that inbred sin should be rooted-out of you, but that through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, sin shall not reign *in* your mortal body."

As with thousands of similar cases, the new view-point changed completely the character of her prayers. Israel desired a short-cut through the land of Edom—and Edom is typical of the flesh. But God's will was that they should compass the land of Edom, even though the way was long and trying. In the desert they proved how well able He was to care for them.

Go through your Bible and learn, particularly from the Epistles of the New Testament, what the will of God really is; and as His counsels are opened up to your soul, pray accordingly, and He will do for you exceeding abundantly above all you ask or think.

It is most blessed when one is exercised about unsaved friends, relatives, or casual acquaintances, to know that prayer for their conviction and conversion is indeed in accordance with His will. "He is not willing that any should perish." "He will have (that is, desires to have) all men to be saved." To those who refused His grace our Saviour said sorrowfully, "I would, but *ye* would not."

"From heaven His eye is downward bent,  
Still glancing to and fro,  
Where'er in this wide wilderness  
There roams a child of woe.

And as the rebel *chooses* wrath,  
God wails his hapless lot,  
Deep-breathing from His heart of love  
'I would, but ye would not.' "

With what assurance can one pray for needy ones, when he knows it is the will of God to save! Someone has well said, "Prayer does not change the will of God. It allows God to work upon man's will, and change it." The last sentence is perhaps capable of serious misunderstanding. But the meaning surely is that God is waiting on our prayers, in order to work in such a way that we may know He is revealing Himself in wondrous grace. Whenever He is about to work, He first stirs hearts to pray.

Abraham prayed, and God delivered Lot.

Jacob prayed, and God caused Esau to meet him in peace.

Moses prayed, and Amalek was defeated, and Israel were victorious.

Hannah prayed definitely for a son, and God heard, and she called her little one *Samuel* (Asked of God).

Daniel prayed, and the whole prophetic panorama was opened up to him.

Nehemiah prayed, and the king's heart was turned toward the remnant of Israel and the holy city.

But why multiply cases? These all prayed according to *the will of God*, and He heard and answered. And since the canon of Scripture was closed, the history of the Church abounds in similar instances, which furnish one of the most irrefragable evidences of the supernatural character of Christianity, and should ever be an encouragement to each



believer to seek to learn the will of God, and to ask largely in accordance with it, knowing that “He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”

If we would pray more, we might worry less, for we would understand better what it means to rest in His love, who has said, “Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart.”

Well has one of our Christian poets sung:

“Lord, what a change within us one short hour  
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make,  
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,  
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!  
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;  
We rise, and all—the distant and the near—  
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear:  
We kneel, how weak; we rise, how full of power.  
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong  
Or others—that we are not always strong?  
That we are ever overborne with care,  
That we should ever weak or Heartless be,  
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,  
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?”

Well may we cry with earnest hearts, “Teach me Thy will;” and then, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

And, observe, the last petition is not merely, “Teach us *how* to pray,” but “Teach us *to* pray,” for it is not enough to know the proper way in which to approach God, but we need to learn to pray without ceasing.

### **Onward to the Heavenly Land**

“For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land—a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills”—Deut. 8:7.

O blessed Lord, Thy love to us so great  
Has reached my heart;  
Now teach me ev’ry form of sin to hate,  
Thy strength impart.  
Shine forth, O Lord, in all Thy glorious light  
Within my soul, and lead me through the night.

I would be like Thee, O my blessed Lord,  
Through all the way,  
And joy in Thee, and trust Thy faithful Word

From day to day.  
Strengthen Thou me that I may love Thee more,  
And live for Thee, and praise Thee and adore.

Thy goodness, Lord, will lead us by the hand  
Through this dark night,  
Until I reach that blessed, heav'nly land  
Where all is bright—  
Where Thee I'll see as Thou art there above,  
And praise Thee for the fulness of Thy love.

W. E. ROWDEN.

Tune, "*Lead, Kindly Light*".

## “In My Name”

JOHN’S GOSPEL was written to unfold the glories of Christ as Son of God, and because of its wondrous theme is of the four divine biographies, the deepest and most precious, in a volume where all is deep and all is precious! And it is perhaps not saying too much if we add that the very holy of holies of this tabernacle of truth is the chapter-series from thirteen to seventeen. In this section we see our blessed Lord, shut in with “His own,” instructing them as to their path, revealing secrets hitherto unknown, and praying for them in the most sacred intimacy.

And it is here that we get much valuable instruction about prayer, which is to be the resource of His tried and needy people during His absence.

He first speaks of prayer in connection with service. In chap. 14:12–14 He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it.”

Perhaps few of His sayings have been more perverted or misunderstood than these. Let us weigh them carefully as He evidently desired that we should. His solemn “verily, verily,” is always a challenge to our hearts, and bids us pause and thoughtfully consider what follows.

His works have testified to the Father’s delight in Him, and attested His Messiahship. Now He is going away, and He empowers His disciples to continue the hallowed service which He had begun. Undoubtedly this involved, for a time at least, the power to work miracles, though it would be a great mistake to confine it to that. What were “the works” He did? Luke 7:22 gives the answer. “Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard: how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.” These were His works, and of these the last is by no means least. As for the other works we have only to read the Acts to see how truly they did follow His believing apostles, thus corroborating the message they carried to a godless world. They did not heal everybody, nor were there many occasions when the dead were raised, but they *did* “go everywhere preaching the Word.” This was their great ministry, and miracles were but signs to attest their divine commission.

But what are the “greater works” which He promised they should do? Surely not miracles, as commonly understood. If we think of these, who has ever performed greater works of power than He? Have any of His disciples called from the tomb a man four days dead, and whose body was already corrupting? Have any stilled the waves, and quieted the winds by a word? Have any multiplied food so as to feed greater multitudes than He?

The centuries answer, "No." The "greater works" cannot therefore refer to such wonders as these.

But, surely, the opening chapters of Acts, and in fact all the pages that follow, indicate what He meant. The conversion of thousands, the eventual overturning of the paganism of the Roman Empire by the advancing light of Christianity, the miraculous changes wrought, not only in a few individuals, but in whole communities, and even nations, by the power of the gospel, the widespread dissemination of the Holy Scriptures carrying light and salvation to myriads—these are the greater things which have been accomplished through the power of the promised Paraclete. And linked with this promise is His assurance regarding prayer. It is only as His servants pray that they see the glory of the Lord and behold His power working. And so He says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask *in My name*, that will I do ... If ye ask anything *in My name*, I will do it."

And again in chapter 15:16, He links the Father with Himself in thus answering, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you." Here is complete furnishing for the servant's path. All that is needed, all that faith can ask in His name, the Father and the Son engage to supply.

But let there be no mistake here. To present a petition and then to add, "In the name of the Lord Jesus," is not necessarily to pray in His name. If it were so, the promise would have failed more often than it has been fulfilled! For millions of such prayers have gone unheeded, as every thoughtful person knows. Yea, have not *you* often so prayed only to be denied?

But does this invalidate the promise? Surely not. It should lead one to inquire, "What is it to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus?" And the answer is clearly this: To pray in His name is to ask by His authority; and to ask by His authority is to ask in accordance with His will as revealed in His Word, thus bringing us back to what we were considering in our last paper.

Let me illustrate what I mean by citing three prayers that recently came to my attention. At a political convention sometime since, a chaplain offered the invocation. He prayed "that it may please Thee to give wisdom to select a man for this high office who will lead the party to victory," and he closed with the words, "This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ Thy Son."

At a rival convention a very similar prayer was offered and closed in almost the same language.

Now were either or both of these petitions "in the name" of Him whom the world rejects to-day as it rejected Him of old? Certainly God could not answer both of them. Nor if He seemed to answer one, by permitting the choice of one party to become President would that in itself be proof that the prayer of the chaplain had been in the name of Jesus.

About the time that my attention was called to these rival “prayers,” I attended a little gathering where a few simple-minded Christians had met together to wait on God. There I heard one and another fervently pray for the country, for those in high office and for those aspiring thereto, that all might be so ordered that blessing might come to man and God be glorified, and that His people might lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness. This was prayer in accordance with the Word (1 Tim. 2:1–4), and therefore in the name—that is, by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

The conclusion is this: To pray in the name of Jesus I must be intelligent as to the mind of Christ, and be in fellowship with Him as to God’s present and future plans.

If we go through the Acts and Epistles and notice how the expressions, “In the name of the Lord,” “For His name’s sake,” and similar phrases are employed, we shall see this very clearly.

Baptism is in the name of Jesus Christ, or in the name of the Lord Jesus—that is, by His authority—therefore as owning subjection to Him. To the lame man Peter said, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.” The apostles disavowed any personal holiness or power, but what they did was by His authority—as representing Him (Acts 3:12–16).

They prayed, “when let go,” that “signs and wonders may be done by (or in) the name of thy Holy Child Jesus.” This was in exact accord with the promise we have been considering. Preaching was in His name. Forgiveness was offered only through His name. Demons were cast out in His name; but when unregenerate men attempted to use that Holy Name as a part of a magical formula, they retreated in confusion, overcome by the power of Satan (Acts 19:13–16).

In the Epistles we learn that valid discipline was “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 5:4), and forgiveness was to be extended to the repentant offender “in the person of Christ,” that is, by the apostle acting in the name, or by the authority of the Lord (2 Cor. 2:10). Evangelists went forth “for His name’s sake, taking nothing of the Gentiles” (3 John 7), but cast entirely upon Himself, and therefore to be cared for by His people.

To these instances might be added many more, all proving clearly that “In my name” implies “By my authority.”

As the soul enters into this, what a solemn thing does prayer become! It is no light matter to come before God bringing the petitions that the Holy Spirit lays upon the heart, in accordance with the revealed will of the Lord. To pray aright we must walk in the Spirit. To pray aright we must study to show ourselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth. To pray aright we must be in communion with Him who has said, “Whatsoever ye ask *in my name*, I will do it.” Lord, teach us to pray! As we become intelligent as to what it is to pray in His name we shall be saved from many a disappointment.

Take, for instance, the question of bodily healing, which occupies so large a place in the thoughts of many to-day, when an ever-increasing emphasis seems to be laid upon

what is purely physical. If the Lord had promised continued health of body to all obedient believers in this dispensation, or if His atonement was for sickness as well as for sin, then we would be authorized, not only to pray for, but claim healing on all occasions, providing there be self-judgment and confession of all known sin on our part. But facts are stubborn things, and facts prove conclusively that many of the godliest saints are familiar with affliction, with pain and sickness.

Moreover, those who advocate prayer as the divine and only remedy for illness, invariably succumb at last to some disease from which they pray to be healed, only to be denied. What then is the conclusion? Either that they are not praying in faith, or that it is *not the will of God* always to heal the bodies of His people in the present age. The latter is clearly the testimony of Scripture. We are "blessed with all *spiritual* blessings in heavenly places in Christ," but we are not promised all temporal or physical blessings. We still await the redemption of the body. Therefore the prayer for health would be supplemented by subjection to the Father's will. We dare not demand healing "in the name" of the Lord because He has not authorized us thus to pray.

As one becomes better acquainted with the Word of God, and walks in the power of the Spirit, he will understand better what it means really to ask in the name that cannot be denied.

### **My Prayer**

If I can bear His cross  
What matters scorn of men, my grief and loss,  
Ambitions, failure, all that I have sought,  
Except what I in love for Christ have wrought?

If I can see His face,  
By faith a vision of His beauty trace,  
What matter if my path be thorny now?  
I see the radiant light upon His brow.

If I can hear His voice,  
My throbbing heart, though wounded, shall rejoice;  
What though I wander through bewildering ways?  
My soul shall evermore my Saviour praise.

If I can feel His hand,  
That guides me onward to the better land,  
What though my tears must fall? I see a light  
Through mists of sorrow, ever shining bright.

Dear Lord, I turn to Thee—  
My hope in life, through death, eternity!

My cross is radiant now with flowers fair,  
Oh, make my life through love a living prayer.

—*Author Unknown.*

## Prayer and Communion

“If ye abide in Me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you” (Jno. 15:7).

“Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart” (Ps. 37:4).

We are now to consider prayer as the expression of the soul's communion with God. It is as the heart is finding its perfect satisfaction in the Lord Himself and delighting in His Word, that the Holy Spirit dwelling within the believer indites those petitions which, because they are in accordance with the mind of God, cannot fail of an answer. And if we stop to consider what is involved in this statement, it will perhaps begin to dawn upon us that true prayer is a great deal more than some of us have thought. It is certainly far more than going lightly into the presence of God with some request upon the lips that is possibly dictated by the selfishness of one's own heart rather than for the desire of the glory of God Himself. It is to those who consciously abide in Him that He promises to grant their every request. If, therefore, I pray and there seems to be no answer, it would be well for me to remember the Word of the Lord, “When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door pray to thy Father in secret.” Thus removed from all human interruption or worldly distraction, let there be a period of honest self-examination in the quiet presence of God. Ask yourself, for instance, such questions as the following, and do not fear to answer each one faithfully and honestly:

1. Am I truly desirous that God's will should be done in me at whatever cost?
2. In presenting this particular request which I have been bringing to God, am I seeking His glory or my own pleasure?
3. Is there anything in my life with which God has a controversy?
4. Have I been guilty of any known sin which lies unconfessed and unjudged upon my conscience?
5. Am I consciously yielded to God and endeavoring to walk in obedience to His Word?
6. Have I availed myself of the instruction which I might have had in this Word of God, by meditating upon it carefully day by day that thus I may learn His will?
7. If my own heart condemns me along any of these lines, do I now honestly judge in myself everything that He by the Spirit through the Word shows me to be contrary to His mind?

I do not, of course, mean that such an introspective catechism must be gone over question by question literally and in just such an order as I have here indicated. I have rather sought to put before the reader an outline of the method which I myself have employed for many years, though not always using the same terms, but what I do



earnestly desire to press is the importance of some such definite facing of conditions in order that one may take stock, so to speak, of his own actual state of soul. It may be that conscience does not condemn on any point, but even then it is well to remember that God, who "is greater than our heart and knoweth all things," may detect something in us which we ourselves fail to recognize. The Apostle Paul said on one occasion, "I know nothing by, or against, myself, but He that judgeth me is the Lord." Therefore the importance of a lowly mind even when not conscious of failure.

After such a season of self-examination as I have indicated, weigh carefully the petition which you feel God has not answered. Look at it squarely, and see if you can honestly present it again in the light of all that has transpired between your soul and God. Perhaps you will realize that you cannot consistently press your claim lest, in doing so, you try to take yourself out of the hand of God. Perhaps it may be the very opposite. You will have your faith strengthened, and you will realize more clearly than before that your request was such an one as you were entitled to present with confidence, and you will see that the temporary delay in answering was not a denial, but rather a test of faith. You will then spread the matter before the Lord, but leave it to Him as to the time and the manner in which He is to answer your cry and give you your heart's desire.

Undoubtedly, many times the Lord purposely waits, when His loving heart would gladly give us at once that for which we yearn, but He would make us more dependent upon Himself, and more appreciative of His mercies when we receive them. The waiting season may become to our souls a time of rich spiritual blessing and of real growth in grace, as we learn to say, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." Others have pointed out that the Hebrew word here translated "expectation" is exactly the same as the word translated "cord" in Joshua 2:15. Think of the spies suspended by a cord from the window of the house of Rahab, and think of your own soul linked by expectation with the very throne of God! What a cord is this to draw your heart out to Himself as you wait upon Him to fulfil His Word in His own way and time!

As the soul enters more deeply into communion, the form of the petition may itself become changed, and that almost unconsciously, so that instead of definiteness there may be seeming indefiniteness, but this does not necessarily indicate lack of faith, but rather fuller confidence in the unchanging love and wisdom of Him who delights to have us address Him as "Our Father." We read in Philippians 4:6, 7: "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." How blessed is this! The soul in communion with God knows no anxiety, but is enabled to bring everything that might otherwise fret or distress the heart to God Himself by prayer and supplication, not forgetting thanksgivings for past mercies as well as for present blessings; and the heart rests in quietness garrisoned by the very peace of God, a peace which passes understanding, because the human mind knows nothing of it. It is something of a purely spiritual

character, not to be in any way confounded with stoical resignation or a mere human determination to make the best of circumstances. It is the very calm that dwells in the heart of the Eternal as He sits in peace upon His throne far above all the storms of earth, keeping the hearts and minds of those who believe in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and commit everything to Him in prayer, at rest amid all earth's changing scenes.

A few years ago I was a guest in a Christian home in a Western city. I sat one day at my desk with an open window before me. A beautiful child of perhaps eight years old was disporting herself upon the lawn, and made a lovely picture in that garden of roses. Shortly my attention was attracted by the voice of another child who had come up to the gate and called to my little friend in the garden. "Annie," she said, "we are going to have a picnic on Saturday, and a lot of us will be there, and we want you to come along. Will you?" "I will ask my mother," replied the other, and immediately ran around the house to make inquiry. In a little while she returned and reported: "Mother says she will think about it." "Oh," exclaimed the other in an annoyed voice, "don't leave it like that. Go and tease her until she says yes." "It isn't necessary to tease my mother," said little Annie; "if she thinks it is best for me I know she will let me go, and if she doesn't let me go, she probably has something nicer in her mind any way." Darling, trustful child, I thought in my heart, what a lesson you may teach to many of your elders in regard to trusting implicitly the loving heart of our Father above!

Prevailing prayer is not to be confounded with the fretful teasing of a restless heart, unhappy and dissatisfied, crying out rebelliously for changed circumstances that its own comfort may be increased. It is rather the trusting petition of a soul at perfect peace, resting in the very centre of the will of God, asking in happy confidence for what the blessed Holy Spirit knows will bring added glory to God. It is thus as we learn to delight in the Lord for what He is in Himself, not merely because of what He gives to us, that we have the assurance that when we pray in faith, we shall receive the desires of our heart. That it would, in fact, be positively hurtful to our own souls to give us such desires, if not finding our delight in Christ and not abiding in Him, our next paper will attempt to make clear.

### **The Way to be Calm**

When we have knelt at Jesus' feet in prayer,  
When we have quaffed the water of the Word (Eph. 5:26),  
When we have looked to Heav'n and seen Him there (Acts 7:56),  
And when His well-known voice our hearts have heard (John 19:27),  
Then we are calm.

The Word has power to lift our minds above (1 Pet. 1:13).  
Distracting scenes of earth and earth's distress.

Its beauties captivate, it wins our love,  
Its wisdom and its grace our spirits bless,  
Then we are calm.

And when we pray, we speak to One Who knows  
And loves us still; Whose feet this earth have trod;  
Who, when He puts us forth, before us goes (John 19:4),  
And will, till He has led us home to God.  
So we are calm.

To walk with Him gives courage, rest and joy;  
A hidden Source refreshes all our ways (Ps. 87:7),  
No circumstances can our peace destroy,  
Although with trials are beset our days,  
But we are calm.

When silent satisfaction fills the heart,  
When full our little cups are to the brim,  
THEN they will overflow; a blessed part (Ps. 23:5)  
Will be for others; and will be for HIM.

—*Eleanor Van Winkle.*

## Prayer Answered in Judgment

THERE are not wanting in Scripture striking illustrations of what sometimes happens when there is persistence in demanding of God what He is loath to give, because in His infinite wisdom He has something far better for us than we in our folly realize. We have already seen that it is only as abiding in Christ and with His words abiding in us that we can pray in His name, knowing that whatsoever we ask the Father, we shall receive of Him because we do His will and are pleasing in His sight. An insubject, restless will may lead us to pray to our own hurt, and if there be not a timely recognition of this, accompanied by self-judgment and submission to the word of God, we may find our prayers answered only to our deepest distress and sorrow afterwards.

The fretful demands of the people of Israel in the wilderness when they insistently cried for flesh meat is a case in point. When the Psalmist recapitulates their desert experiences, he tells us how "they soon forgot His works; they waited not for His counsel: but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul" (Ps. 106:13–15). Faith would have reckoned on the unfailing care of God, and a subject people would have left it to Him to provide the kind of food which He saw would be best for them, but their lustful hearts were set upon one particular thing. Without it they were sure they could not be happy. At the moment, nothing seemed so important as the gratification of their desires. Not content with "angels' food," the manna from heaven, which He gave them so abundantly, they cried, "Our soul loatheth this light bread; who will give us flesh to eat?" We are told in another psalm that "He caused the east wind to blow in the heaven, and by His power He brought in the south wind. He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea: and He let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations. So they did eat, and were well filled: for He gave them their own desire" (Ps. 78:26–29). Doubtless many would have looked upon this as a most remarkable answer to prayer, and would have taken it for granted that the answer in itself proved that the prayer was right and proper. Such a conclusion, however, would have been far from correct; for in the verses that follow we read: "They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel" (vers. 30, 31). The fact that we receive what we pray for does not, therefore, in every instance, indicate either a right state of soul on our part or, on the other hand, God's pleasure in our petition. It may be just as true now as then that God will in His indignation grant our request and send leanness into our souls.

The mistake has often been made of taking it for granted that if God seems to prosper a certain undertaking, for instance, in which the heart is engaged, therefore it must have

His approval. Later circumstances may show clearly that He was simply allowing us to have our own way in order that we might learn a lesson through eating of the fruit of our own devices, a proof of our own folly in persisting in a course for which we did not have a "Thus saith the Lord."

Another striking example of what we are considering is that of Israel when they desired a king. Earnestly they pleaded that they might become like the nations around them with a king ruling over them and leading them out to battle. God took them at their word; a king was provided, and when they saw him, they were filled with delight. A heroic noble figure, he towered head and shoulders above the people. Just the ideal ruler and warrior, as men might think. But He who looks not on outward appearances, but on the heart, knew well the character of the man who was so readily acclaimed as king when presented to them by Samuel the prophet. Years afterwards He says through Hosea: "Oh, Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help. I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath" (Hosea 13:9-11). In their demand for a king, they were really rejecting God who had ruled them hitherto, yet He allowed their plea, provided a king Himself, and used that king to chasten and afflict them. It was another case of prayer answered in judgment.

It is never safe to trust to what some people call Providence while neglecting obedience to the Word. Let me cite a case in point that came recently under my notice. A Christian young woman became deeply infatuated with a brilliant but Christless young man. An engagement was entered into, but Christian friends were earnestly praying that God would deliver her from an unequal yoke, which they felt would only bring sorrow into her life. It was a delicate matter to discuss with her. In fact, she resented what she called any interference with her private affairs. However, in a short time an estrangement ensued, and the young man himself broke the engagement. Instead of recognizing that this was God's method of deliverance for her, the young woman was greatly distressed, and prayed day and night that the offended one might return to her and the engagement again be entered into. All that Christian friends could do to occupy her mind and heart with other interests, or to show her that God had acted in mercy toward her, availed nothing. Constantly she grieved, and persistently she prayed that the desire of her heart might be granted. Strikingly enough, he returned to her most unexpectedly, took all the blame of the past upon himself, and asked for a renewal of the engagement. Gladly she entered into this, and shortly afterwards they were married. If I thought that there was any possibility that her eye would fall upon this page, I probably would not pen these words. Years of sorrow and misery have resulted from her disobedience to the Word of God; yet she insisted at the time that it was God who had answered her prayer, and brought back her loved one to her. His deep hatred of Christ and the things of God, camouflaged for a time by a gentlemanly exterior, soon manifested itself, and before long a separation ensued, and she was left in wretchedness and misery with two little children

dependent upon her. Deeply has she realized as the years have gone on that what she thought was a token of God's approval was but His chastening hand upon her because of her wilfulness.

Instances such as the above might be multiplied almost without number in the lives of God's children. I was in a home some years ago where a poor mother was laboring under the grief of caring for an imbecile son who did not so much as seem to recognize her in the slightest way. She told me that years before, when he was a little baby in his cradle, he was taken ill with scarlet fever. The physicians gave him up, declaring there was no hope, but her heart was rebellious. She felt she could not let him go. Going into another room, she fell upon her knees, and told God she could never love Him again, if He took her child from her. Within an hour, there was decided evidence of improvement. The little one recovered, but he never recognized his mother again. Her own heart had become tender and subdued through the years. The rebellion was all gone, but she said to me: "How much wiser it would have been, if I could have said, 'Thy will be done.' "

When a seeming crisis is reached in the life, and the soul is filled with perplexity as to what would be for the best, it is always the part of wisdom to remember that the Holy Spirit Himself indwells the believer, and when we know not what to pray for as we ought, He can be trusted to make intercession for us according to the will of God with groanings that cannot be uttered. The subject heart, instead of insisting that God do according to its natural desires, will pray with Jeremiah: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing" (Jer. 10:23, 24). None need be afraid to trust everything in His hands who is deeply concerned about the welfare of each of His own, and who has declared in His Word that "All things work together for good to those who love God; who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

We often have to learn, indeed, that His ways are not our ways, but infinitely above them, and we shall praise Him at last for every seeming disappointment when we see "the end of the Lord."

"I asked the Lord that I might grow  
In truth and love and every grace,  
Might more of His salvation know,  
And seek more earnestly His face.

"'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,  
And He I trust has answered prayer;  
But it has been in such a way  
As almost drove me to despair."

He is the Husbandman. We are the trees of His planting. He can be depended upon to do what is best for His own. We have cost Him too much for Him to be indifferent to our welfare now. And so we may well say,

“O Lord, whate’er my path may be,  
If only I may walk with Thee  
And talk with Thee along the way,  
I’ll praise Thee for it ALL some day.”

It is part of the chastening of the Lord to put the soul through experiences where it learns the utter unprofitableness of the flesh and is cast entirely upon God. No such experience is without real value, and recognizing this, we shall tread softly and pray submissively, remembering with whom we have to do. Nor should we think of chastisement as though it were synonymous with punishment. It is the educative process of the soul, and is all in love, and never in anger. Its object is ever our blessing, and it invariably yields “the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby.”

The weary ones had rest, the sad had joy  
That day, and wondered “*how?*”  
A ploughman, singing at his work, had prayed —  
“*Lord, help them now!*”

Away in foreign lands they wondered “*how*”  
Their simple word had power.  
At home, the Christians two or three had met  
To pray an hour!

Yes, we are always wondering, wondering, “*how,*”  
Because we do not see  
Some one, unknown perhaps, and far away,  
On bended knee!

— ANON

## Prayer and the Work of Evangelization

THE ministry of intercession has a very large place in connection with carrying the gospel to a lost world. Far more is accomplished in secret than Christians generally realize. The preachers who have been most widely used have been men of prayer. Not only have they prayed themselves, but it will generally be found that others were linked with them in this precious service, and many of these prayer-evangelists have never been brought to public notice. Theirs are not the gifts that attract the attention of the throngs, but there are mighty men and women of prayer prevailing against the unseen enemy in the heavenlies, and by their intercession bringing down power from heaven and blessing upon the public ministry of the Word through others. An Epaphras always laboring fervently in prayer is as important in the work of evangelization as a Paul carrying the glad tidings to the regions beyond.

Paul himself was a mighty man of prayer. It is impossible to read his epistles without being struck by the prominent place that prayer had in his life. He prayed for himself and his work. He prayed for his fellow-servants, in whose victories he rejoiced as much as in his own, and in this he was in marked contrast to many today. He prayed for the people of God, for his converts, and those who had been converted through the labors of others, "that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." He prayed with earnest passionate longing for Israel, his brethren after the flesh, that they might be saved and know the joys that he experienced as a believer in Christ. He prayed for the Gentiles, for kings and rulers, and for the people generally, knowing that it was God's "desire to have all men saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Though he was a man of wondrous faith and spiritual energy, he felt the need of the prayers of his weaker brethren. He solicits these most earnestly. He asked the saints at Rome to strive together with him in their prayers to God on his behalf that he might be delivered from the unbelieving Jews; that his service for the poor saints at Jerusalem might be accepted in the spirit in which it was given; and that he might eventually come to them at Rome with joy by the will of God, and with them be refreshed (Rom. 15:30–33). He expressed his deep gratitude to the Corinthians because in a time of deep distress, they helped together by prayer for him, his fellow-laborers, and the work in which they were engaged (2 Cor. 1:11). He tells the Ephesians how he bows his knees before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ on their behalf, but he requests them on their part to pray for him "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" that utterance may be given unto him that he may open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel (Eph. 6:18, 19). From his prison cell he writes to the Philippians of the confidence he has that all his trials will turn to his salvation through their prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19). He exhorts the Colossians to "continue in prayer, and watch



in the same with thanksgiving," praying withal for him and his companions in service that God would open a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which he was in bonds, that he might make it manifest as he ought to speak (Col. 4:2-4). The Thessalonian believers had been saved but a few months at the most, yet he realizes there is efficacy in their childlike pleadings with God, and he writes, "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thess. 5:25). He would have Philemon prepare him a lodging, for he trusts that through his prayers he will be delivered from prison and given unto them again (Philemon 22). To the Hebrew believers he writes, "Pray for us; for I trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly," and he adds, "But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner" (Heb. 13:18). Who can read these many touching requests on the part of this the greatest of all preachers without realizing how dependent servants of God are on the intercession of the saints?

Our Lord Himself implied this when He taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." It is as we recognize that our God is set at naught by His own creatures, and that blessing can only come to earth as men submit to Him, that the heart takes up this petition with deepest fervor, and cries out for blessing on every instrumentality being used to usher in the coming kingdom.

"Let all that look for, hasten  
That coming joyful day,  
By earnest consecration  
To walk the narrow way;  
By gathering in the lost ones  
For whom our Lord did die;  
For the crowning day is coming  
By and by."

If we would be soul-winners, we must know how to pray. If we would prevail with men in public, we must prevail with God in secret.

Were this truth more realized, there would not be so many dry and dying prayer meetings. If it be true (and who shall question it?) that the prayer meeting is the pulse of an assembly, then it may as well be frankly confessed that most of our assemblies are in a sad condition indeed. Numbers will come to hear a gifted man, but few indeed are they who gather for prayer, and when so gathered, how often is the time frittered away praying about generalities with no real spirit of intercession, no manifestation whatever of the power of the Holy Spirit.

If we had more Holy Ghost prayer meetings, we would have more Holy Ghost preaching. If saints would start to win victories by prayer, both in secret and in fellowship with other brethren in the public gatherings, there would be a great awakening in regard to gospel testimony.

It is well to be methodical in this ministry of intercession. Many have found great help and profit in keeping regular prayer lists, to which are added from time to time the names of servants of God at home and in foreign lands in whom they become interested. By bringing such constantly before the Lord a real service is performed, and added power given to the laborers for whom they pray. Again and again this has been demonstrated in a marvelous way. Only recently a few of us felt deeply burdened about a missionary in China. He was known to several who felt impressed to come together to pray specially for him. As we prayed the burden seemed to be lifted, and we felt assured that God was working for, and through him. A few weeks later a letter came across the Pacific from this particular brother. It was written a day or two after that little prayer gathering in America. He said, "I have had recently some heavy trials to bear and felt greatly discouraged, but in the last few days, there has come to me such a spiritual uplift and such a sense of the Lord's help as I have not known for a long time. I feel certain some one is praying for me." Instances like this could be multiplied without number.

We do wrong to our brethren and sisters who have devoted their lives to the spread of the gospel when we neglect to pray for them. Samuel said to Israel: "Moreover, as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam. 12:23). We definitely sin against the Lord when we neglect to pray for those whom He has put in the forefront of the battle. Alas, how often instead of helping them by our prayers, we hinder by our cynicism and our cold carnal criticism. Oh, brethren, let us awake to the privileges and responsibilities of this great ministry in fellowship with Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us!

If in the past you have not availed yourself of this gracious opportunity to further the work of the Lord in the quiet of your own room, bow in the presence of God and confess to Him the great sin of thus having neglected a duty which might have resulted in such blessing to others; and in the coming days with purpose of heart, enter into this service as a very definite and important part of the work of the Lord; and when at last the books of record are opened at the judgment seat of Christ, you will learn with delight and glad surprise how many a soul you have had a part in winning for Christ through "laboring fervently in prayer."

There is blessing as we pray for ourselves; there is rest of heart as we pour out the story of all our needs and longings into the sympathetic ear of our gracious God and Father; but he whose prayers centre about himself and his blessings has never done more than to cross the threshold of the temple of prayer. It is as our hearts reach out for others, as we plead for the interests of our Lord in this poor world, as we bear up His servants engaged in making known the exceeding riches of His grace to men and women dying in their poverty, that we really enter into communion with Him who taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

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