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WHY WORRY WHEN YOU CAN PRAY?

By E. E. Wordsworth

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I will trust, and not be afraid (Isa. 12:2).

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01 -- PRAYER CHANGES THINGS

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified (Isa. 61:3).

"Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal."

* * * * *

02 -- THE FOLLY OF WORRY

A very large percentage of the things we constantly dread and fear never come to pass. They are dragons of our perverted imagination. We see them as ghosts on dark nights in the cemetery. In our fear of future ills we so easily forget the Psalmist's words, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps. 37:25). Too often we are like the dear old lady who said, "I always feel bad when I feel good because I am afraid I am going to feel worse."

When Lincoln was on his way to Washington, D.C., to be inaugurated as President of the United States, he stopped over in New York for a visit with Horace Greeley, founder of the New York Tribune. A pressing question was being asked by everyone in those tense days: "Are we going to have a civil war?" Lincoln told this story:

In his circuit-riding days, he and his companions, riding to the next session of court, had crossed many swollen rivers. However, the Fox River was yet to be crossed, and they said one to another, "If these streams give us so much trouble, how shall we ever get over Fox River?"

Evening came on and they tarried overnight at a log inn where transient guests were provided lodging and meals. A Methodist presiding elder of the district who rode through that country in all kinds of weather chanced to be there the same night. They gathered around him to inquire the present state of the river. He replied, "Oh, yes, I know all about the Fox River. I have crossed it many times and understand it well, but I have a fixed rule with regard to Fox River -- I never cross it till I reach it."

We are too prone to cross our rivers, bridges, and hazardous places before we face them. We borrow tomorrow's troubles today, brood over future ills, and anticipate difficulties that never arise. Life's burdens are in the distance though we bear them like a crushing load today. We pull down the night shades in the daytime. The stinging hairs of the nettle irritate us before the touch. Thorns prick us and we forget the lovely rosebud and the sweet-scented air. We wear away with the corroding rust of our own cares, burdens, trials, and sorrows instead of simply trusting God. Harassed and fearful because of the expected annoyance, disappointment, and unfavorable circumstances of tomorrow, we miss the golden sunshine of today. Worry and anxiety make us practical atheists, for worry fears the future more than it fears God. Trouble breathes its chokedamp on our spirits and antagonizes our spiritual exercises and growth. We are scourged and defeated when we should be happy, triumphant, blessed. Worry is spiritual sabotage. It stops and wrecks the machinery of life.

So far as is known, no bird ever tried to build more nests than its neighbor. No fox ever worried because he had only one hole in which to hide. No squirrel ever died of anxiety lest he should not lay enough in store for two winters instead of one. No dog ever lost a night's sleep over the fact that he had not enough bones laid aside for the declining years, and no sheep ever committed suicide fearing all the grass in the pastures would be eaten. The nightingale sings in the storm, the robin warbles in the springtime announcing winter is past, the eagle soars above the clouds to the mountain crag and basks in the sunshine, and the humble sparrow day by day depends upon its God.

We should not be distracted with care and undue solicitude for the future. It is not wise to be over anxious about material matters. The Master said, "Take no thought [over anxious thought and care] for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what we shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field ... shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:25, 26, 28, 30, 33).

Christ uses arguments drawn from the animal and vegetable world, showing that He cares for the inferior creation and, therefore, cannot fail to provide for His rational, immortal creatures, especially for those who serve and trust Him. Will a good farmer feed his stock and neglect to provide for his family? Will a loving mother tenderly care for the house pets and forget to cook nourishing meals for her children? Are not the dear children of more value than the chickens and pets? So the Master says, "Are ye not much better than they?"

A poem written by Elizabeth Cheney, entitled "Overheard in an Orchard," tells its own message:

Said the robin to the sparrow,
"I should really like to know
Why these anxious human beings

Rush about and worry so."

Said the sparrow to the robin,
"Friend, I think that it must be
That they have no Heavenly Father
Such as cares for you and me."

Worry is very detrimental to the physical being. As vitamins are necessary to vitality, so escape from worry is essential for good health of body and soul. A person without vitamins will have a nervous breakdown, and a Christian without poise, faith, confidence, and soul rest presents a truly pathetic picture. According to a British medical authority, "There is not a tissue or organ in the body not influenced by the attitude of mind and spirit." We can pass on the mental and spiritual sickness to the body. It is now a well-established fact in medical science that certain diseases can be traced to the patient's mental condition, and until this is remedied the body will continue its unnecessary suffering. A nerve specialist says, "Seventy per cent of the medical cases need new mental and spiritual attitudes for health."

I have read of an elderly woman who had vomiting spells, and the cause was found to be worry. This was brought on by financial insecurity. There was functional disturbance in her digestive tract.

A man refused to give his sister her special share of the family estate though she had faithfully taken care of their parents in their declining years. The portion was about six hundred dollars. He grew selfish, resentful, unkind, and mean, and refused to give her what rightfully belonged to her. A stomach ulcer developed. A doctor spent five dollars to inform him by long-distance telephone that he had this stomach ulcer because of his resentments and selfishness, and that if he would give up these he would be healed. He did and was soon well again.

Man is a unit, and when one part suffers all suffer. He cannot be sick in one part without passing the ailment on to other parts. The entire man -- body, mind, spirit -- must be redeemed. Stomach ulcers are often caused by anxiety and worry. Increased worry is responsible for many cases of heart disease and other functional disturbances. An able doctor says: "Fears are the most disruptive thing we can have." Many live at a half-dying rate because of inner resentments, retaliations, and bitter hatreds.

Dr. Leslie D. Weatherhead, pastor of City Temple, London, cites the case of a woman afflicted with arthritis and all sorts of ills for over thirty years. The doctors said she could not be helped and healed. They told her she would probably get worse and ultimately lose both her legs. She could not walk without her cane. But when this woman became converted to Christ she was instantly healed. From that moment she had no more pains, her legs grew stronger, and she now walks for miles, and in August, 1952, climbed to the top of Mt. Snowdon.

Listen to her testimony, "Oh, surely God has been good to me! My heart is so full of thanksgiving and praise to God. I can't understand why He should have become so real to me, or why He should have been so good to me."

Then Dr. Weatherhead remarks: "No arthritic sufferer should deduce that, of necessity, his illness is spiritually caused, but the above story does provide a clue to an important branch of spiritual healing. No mere laying on of hands by an itinerant 'healer' would magically cure such a person." Indeed the healed patient wrote him: "I am not one of the people who believe in 'mass healing meetings.'" And the good doctor goes on to say: "Clearly, however, when the spiritual disharmony ceases, the physical illness has no longer any reason for existing, and it clears up with miraculous rapidity. If the mind -- soul ['I do not discriminate for the sake of argument,' said he] is asked to bear a disharmony over a protracted period, it will sometimes, as it were, hand over its disharmony to the body, as though to say, 'I cannot bear this any longer. You must bear it.' Thereupon the body develops what appears to be physical disease, which, without doubt, is physical in its symptoms, but is indubitably spiritual in its origin; that is to say, the physical illness is a translation into physical disharmony of what is fundamentally a spiritual disharmony. But repentance, forgiveness, and unity with God are powerful therapeutic factors."

It is folly to worry, because of the baneful effect upon the mind. "Fret not thyself." Avoid getting into a perilous heat about things. Keep cool! Fretting heats the bearings but does not generate steam. Worry puts sand in the machinery. It causes friction, grinding, noise, and possible havoc. Worry and anxiety disturb our peace, disrupt our calmness of soul, pit grinding thought against thought, desire against desire, will against will, purpose against purpose, and set in motion innumerable hostile foes. Fretfulness frequently leads to jealousy and creates the unclean fire of envy. "Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil." Men begin by fretting and worrying "because of evil doers," and then end up by doing the evil themselves. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth"! "Fret not thyself." Instead of carrying a load of care and being distressed in mind, let care be absent and anxiety be gone. Expel them from your mind as you would a marauder from your home.

Worriers wreck their world as well as their own lives. Faith is more important than food for the correction of our maladies of body and mind. Strain and fatigue, tenseness and emotional disturbances affect the proper working and functioning of the organs of the body and the processes of the mind. Jacob prepared for trouble that didn't happen. In his thoughts he brought down his gray hairs to the grave because he failed to see the providences of God. Martha, too, was troubled about many things. She failed to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of Him.

One dark night a man slipped and rolled down a steep incline. He stopped the descent by grasping a bush on the hillside, which left him dangling in the air. His attempts to climb up the hill were in vain. Below was black darkness. He strained every muscle as he kept a tight grip on the bush. Finally, his strength was utterly exhausted. In despair he let go and dropped -- just six inches! Many of us worry and strain and struggle with our nerves at high tension and our minds distraught when all the time we need only to let go and drop into the "everlasting arms" just beneath us. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

Worry wastes mental energy, hardens the arteries, poisons the blood stream, and drains the vitality. It is a robber that takes from us the power to think clearly and the ability to act wisely. It is a mental burden and a crushing load. It is a skeleton in the closet. Medical science has discovered that worry is actually causing thousands of Americans to contract joint diseases and arthritis. Worry is a grave digger, and worry blots out the sun. Actually, worry never helps solve a situation

nor improve conditions. It tends to hinder, frustrate, and defeat good ends. It despoils and curses and does much harm. It is better to take the wholesome attitude of the happy Negro of the Southland who said, "If it's gwine to happen, worryin' ain't gwine to stop it. If it ain't gwine to happen, there ain't nothin' to worry about." Worry makes a storm out of a friendly shower, but faith sees the silver lining in the cloud.

It is utter folly to worry, because worry affects the spiritual man. Worry is actually sinful. It reveals a basic lack of faith in God. It reflects upon the faithfulness, goodness, and love of God and brings a great reproach on His holy name. We are Commanded in the Word, "Commit thy way unto the Lord," and, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Are you worrying about your circumstances, your trials, your disappointments, your heartaches, your severe testing places? Are you worrying about your unforgiven sins? Are you worrying about your uncommitted life? Do you in moments of temptation and stress and strain yield to the tempter and forsake the loving, embracing arms of Jesus? Do you think God has forsaken you? "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." God does not promise to keep us from the flames, but to give grace for the fiery furnace, that we might behold the Fourth like unto the Son of Man. He does not promise to keep us from the den of lions but to send us a guardian angel to give the lions lockjaw. The wolf may come to the very door but the Shepherd's rod will smite him.

injure beyond repair certain cells of the brain, which, being the nutritive center of the body, causes other organs to be permanently injured; ailments will appear, diseases will spread through your system, and untimely death will ensue. As the dropping of water over a period of years will wear a groove in a hard stone, so worry, gradually, imperceptibly, but no less surely, will destroy the brain cells that are, so to speak, the commanding officers of mental power, health, and motion.

Remember then that worry is wrong. Remember to cast it from you as you would a filthy garment. It is folly to be unduly disturbed about finances, material things, present circumstances, or future ills. Worry is a burden no one is justified in carrying. It is a disease that can be cured. It is a troubler that came and should be taken to task. It is a curse that should be blotted out.

If you have been victimized by this terrible plague of worry, you may learn a better way. It is the way of trust and reliance upon God. As long as you worry you are like the man years ago who was carrying a heavy pack on his back as he trudged down the road. A man with horse and wagon approached and he asked for a ride, which was readily granted. He immediately climbed into the driver's seat but kept his pack on his back. The driver said, "Drop your pack into the wagon." "No, thank you," he replied. "I am so thankful for a ride that I wouldn't ask you for any other favor," and he kept holding his burden to the journey's end. "Foolish!" you say. But what about you and your silly worries while "God is still on the throne"? Let go and trust, and He who sees the sparrow's fall and counts the hairs of your head will not forget you. "His banner over us is love."

Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

* * * * *

03 -- WHY WORRY WHEN YOU CAN PRAY?

Stop worrying! Learn to pray! Exercise faith! Trust God! If worry is useless, harmful, and dishonoring to God you ought to quit it at once. If it is wrong and sinful, then by all means be no longer guilty before God. John Wesley said that ten thousand cares did not weigh upon him any more than ten thousand hairs upon his head. Why not? Because he had learned to cast all his cares upon a loving Father above.

There is a sure cure for worry. It is found in the assuring Word of God and by simply trusting in Jesus and the promises He gave us. "Be careful for nothing [do not let anything get you down and under]; 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). Someone has said, "You must bother the Lord about everything, or else everything will bother you." The great and the small matters of life should be prayed about. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (I Pet. 5: 7). "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Ps. 55:22). "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5, 6). God loves and cares for you. If you will do what these quotations suggest He will give you peace, power, and victory. You will be kept in a perfect state of composure and security in the wonderful love of God (Jude 21, 24; Isa. 26:3; Ps. 119: 165).

There are many reasons why you should pray instead of surrendering to anxious care and worry. God specifically and persistently commands us to pray. "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18: 1). The Psalmist said, "I had fainted, unless I had believed" (Ps. 27: 13). Fainting causes a loss of strength and vitality. It is a deadly foe to our well-being. It is induced sometimes by a bad atmosphere or the sight of blood. Some faint from weakness or weariness, others from chastisement or discouragement, or deliberate surrender to despair and melancholy moods. Low spirits, a depressed state of mind, a morbid attitude, and a dejected outlook on life are forerunners of depleted energies that cause fainting spells. Our troubles overwhelm us. It is far better to do as the sturdy old saint did when he said, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Ps. 27: 14). David sustained his faith by the power of God, by his love to the service of God, and by prayer and faith.

God is good, unchangeable, all-sufficient, and loving; so why not trust Him implicitly? It is just as reasonable to doubt that all the waters of the seven seas cannot fill a spoon as to doubt the wonderful love of God. Faith brings new strength and supplies of grace from heaven. One drop of divine sweetness is enough to make one in the very agony of despair, distress, and the most cruel death to cry out with exultant joy, "The bitterness of death is past." Now in God there are not only drops of mercy, but rivers of grace and power; not a scanty sprinkling, but an infinite fullness; not a mere drop, but oceans of fathomless, boundless love and sustaining strength.

There is a motto which reads: "You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed." Jesus said, "Without me you can do nothing."

When Lincoln was talking with a friend during the Civil War, he told him how often he was driven to his knees -- because there was nowhere else to go. The time comes when we have none but God to whom we can go for help, guidance, deliverance. But always He is there inviting us to cast all our cares upon Him. Moody's favorite verse was, "I will trust, and not be afraid" (Isa. 12:2). He used to say: "You can travel first class or second class to heaven. Second class is, 'What time I am afraid, I will trust.' First class is, 'I will trust, and not be afraid.'" This latter surely is the better way to travel. Why not buy a first-class ticket, board the heavenly train, commit yourself to the safekeeping of the competent Engineer and Conductor, and pull into the Union Depot of the skies in comfort and victory?

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!

Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our Refuge,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In His arms' He'll take and shield thee;
Thou wilt find a solace there.

Some years ago a Scotch missionary was laboring in the New Hebrides translating the Gospel of John into the native tongue. It was the world-famous Dr. John G. Paton. He could not find a proper word to translate the word believe. It is a key word, for it occurs more than ninety times in John's gospel. He laid his manuscript aside until one day a native worker came into his office, sat on one chair, and placed his feet on another. He used a native word which meant, "I am resting my whole weight on these two chairs." Dr. Paton exclaimed, "I have my word." Therefore, when he came to the needed word for "believe" he translated it, "I am resting my whole weight upon." Let us supply this translation and see the force of some passages.

Repent ye, and rest your whole weight upon the gospel (Mark 1:15). Rest your whole weight upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved (Acts 16:31). If thou canst rest thy whole weight upon Him, all things are possible to him that resteth his whole weight upon Him (Mark 9:23). Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in resting your whole weight upon Him, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost (Rom. 15:13). Finally, one from the Gospel of John: He that resteth his whole weight upon Me, as the scripture hath said,

out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that rest their whole weight upon Him should receive ...) (John 7:38, 39).

A man was being conducted by a competent guide over a dangerous Alpine trail. At length they came to a great rock jutting over a precipice, leaving only the fragment of a pathway. The guide laid hold on the rock with one hand and put his other hand down on what was left of the trail, the hand extending out over the abyss.

He told the other man to step on his hand and forearm and thus pass around the rock in safety. The man hesitated and was afraid, but the guide said, "Do not fear to stand on my hand. That hand has never yet lost a man!" He trusted his guide and practically rested his whole weight upon him and passed around the stone mass to safety and to continue his climb.

The pierced hand of Jesus has never lost a man that placed his trust in Him. The sinner may trust and be saved. The believer may rest his whole weight upon Him for cleansing and for power and to be filled with His Spirit. The saint day by day may trust His unfailing strength in the hazardous places of life. "He knoweth the way that I take."

One evening after a hard day of teaching Jesus said to the disciples, "Let us pass over unto the other side." When our Lord and His disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee a great storm arose. "And he [Christ] was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." Look at the troubled disciples. Instead of fully relying upon Jesus they miserably failed Him. The actual circumstances were so crushing that their common sense was lost in alarm, their panic carried them off their feet; they were terrified and troubled lest they drown in the sea; they were tossed up and down by the billows and the tempest, and they sensed the impending danger. Had not Jesus plainly said, "Let us pass over unto the other side"? Not halfway across Lake Galilee, or merely into the rolling seas; not into perilous waters to be drowned; not to an untimely death in the watery depths -- the other side. God expects His children to be so confident in Him that when the crisis comes they will still trust and obey. A place of victory is reached when we stop worrying over personal matters or over any matter, when we are so spiritually-minded that we trust Him where we cannot trace Him. God expects of us the one thing that glorifies Him -- and that is absolute trust.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

Years ago scientists undertook the task of extracting gold from the brine of the ocean. They did not succeed, but had they done so it would have revolutionized commerce and given fabulous wealth to the discoverers. But there is an infinitely more priceless secret for the praying saint to learn -- that of knowing the secrets of the prayer life. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. 91:1).

There are at least three ways of dealing with our troubles, heartaches, worries, and difficult situations in life. First, we can bear them alone. However, the weight of them will surely crush us at times. They are entirely too heavy. Thousands of mortals have leaped from high bridges, out of windows, have put pistols to their temples or drunk poison to escape their troubles. These are wrong ways. Another way is to tell everyone you meet about your troubles. Sometimes it

is well to tell an understanding pastor or close friend and unburden your heart in strict confidence to one who understands, sympathizes, and cares. The widow of Zarephath told Elijah her need. Spiritual counsel will help you. The third group have learned to take everything to God in prayer. They refuse to surrender to their sorrows, but make capital of their calamities and reverses of life. They seek the face of God and commit themselves and their all unto His love and care.

Let me, like the little sparrow,
Trust Him where I cannot see,
In the sunshine or the shadow,
Singing, "He will care for me."

* * *

There is an Eye that never sleeps
Beneath the wing of night;
There is an Ear that never shuts
When sink the beams of light;

There is an Arm that never tires
When human strength gives way;
There is a Love that never fails
When earthly loves decay.

Prayer is God's ordained way of escape from trouble and worry. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able [to bear]; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13). He will provide the way out. There is a necessary fire escape to be used when needed. The trials will come and temptations assail, but none will exceed your moral strength and powers of endurance. God is faithful and will keep you from being unduly tried, tested, and tempted if you rely upon Him.

Worry is a blighting sin and the very opposite of trust. When the Christian allows himself to worry he loses his joy, peace, sense of security, and rest, and is harried by burdens he ought never to carry and by fears he ought never to entertain. The secret of victory and of ending worry and anxious care is by taking everything day by day to God in prayer. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Every Christian ought to possess a calm, unworried frame of mind, a deep, settled peace of soul, a rest in Christ that the man of the world knows nothing about. David said, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps. 34:6). Are you delivered from your troubles, your anxieties, your cares, your distresses, your sorrows? You can have this glorious deliverance, this wonderful peace, this tranquil quietness, this blessed freedom from worry. Worry strangles and chokes the spiritual man. It harasses and vexes the spirit. It disturbs the mind and persecutes the soul. Why be downcast when God wants you to live above the clouds? Why dwell in a dungeon when you are made for the altitudes? Why

be content in the Slough of Despond when you can climb the pilgrim way to the Celestial City and live in the Delectable Mountains?

Real prayer will emancipate you from every sort of spiritual bondage and set you on high. Are you troubled about temporal matters? "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah" (I Kings 17: 16). The Christ that made water into wine at Cana of Galilee and fed the five thousand in the wilderness can supply your need. He can open a fish market and a bakery any time and anywhere. He who fed Elijah by the ravens will care for you. Then pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," and the promise will be yours, "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure" (Isa. 33:16).

George Muller of Bristol prayed in over \$7,000,000.00 for the support of the orphanages under his care. J. Hudson Taylor, under God, provided by prayer for the great needs of the China Inland Mission, and hundreds of missionaries together with him believed God and great things came to pass. Dr. Charles Cullis, of Boston, was known as "the man who believed God." Within five years a phenomenal work for Christ and the needy was accomplished and the work continued. He prayed in . multiplied thousands of dollars and believed God. Such cases could be multiplied.

I was a pastor in Seattle, Washington, in depression days. My clothes were threadbare. One morning at family worship I was led to pray for a suit of clothes. Then I went about my duties serving God and I seemed to forget my special prayer, but within ten days or two weeks the mailman brought me a suit from a friend who was then in New York. It was a good blue serge suit that I wore for several years. A letter followed which informed me how he was strangely blessed in the post office when he gave Uncle Sam that suit of clothes for me. Over three thousand miles away God answered prayer.

Is it some important decision in life that you must make and that troubles you? The late Dr. J. H. Jowett had such an experience. This eminent preacher had a decision to make and he was bothered, for he did not seem to know the will of God. In his distress he sought advice of a trusted ministerial friend, Dr. Berry. However, he did not get the help he sought, for Dr. Berry said he did not know the answer to his problem. This was on Monday. "When do you have to know?" asked Dr. Berry. "Friday morning," Dr. Jowett replied. "Then you will know on Friday," said Berry, and he did and all was clear.

When the brook Cherith was drying up for Elijah the prophet, because of lack of rain, it must have appeared that God was either mistaken or severely trying him. But God came on schedule time to Elijah, saying, "Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee" (I Kings 17:9). But even here it was a discouraging outlook from the human standpoint, for the widow and her son were penniless and ready to die. "And Elijah said unto her ... make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth" (I Kings 17:13-14).

"The steps [and the stops] of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way" (Ps. 37:23).

Is it ill health that causes you to worry and be sad? Just as I write (February, 1953), my daily newspaper informs me of the tragic death of former Senator Robert M. La Follette, Jr. He was found shot to death in his home, a pistol at his side. Mrs. La Follette found the ex-senator's body in the bathroom. He was probably despondent over a heart ailment, for he had suffered a heart attack two or three years before and was confined to a hospital bed for several months. Another man of high political position leaped from a sixteen-story hospital window to his death. And the number of such tragedies could be multiplied.

How different with the saintly woman Wesley tells about in his Journal! (Vol. 5, page 66.) "I visited one who was ill in bed, and, after having buried seven of her family in six months, had just heard that the eighth, her beloved husband, was cast away at sea. I asked, 'Do you not fret at any of these things?' She said with a loving smile on her pale cheek, 'Oh, no! How can I fret at anything which is the will of God? Let Him take all besides; He has given me Himself. I love, I praise Him every moment.'" This good woman had found solace and comfort in prayer and release from care.

Just think of one under such circumstance -- the loss of eight loved ones in a brief six months, and herself ill and confined to her bed, but praising and thanking God and rejoicing evermore. Doubtless she had learned to do as Peter suggests, "Casting all your care upon him." Many a professed Christian would have weakened under the heavy load. It is not wrong to weep and be saddened by grief at times, for we are told to "weep with them that weep," and "Jesus wept" at the grave of His friend Lazarus. But when grief, weeping, and continual sadness overwhelm us so that we do not rise above them by His assisting grace we live below our privileges. Prayer and faith will lift us up.

Are you facing problems, perplexities, difficulties, tomorrows, with scarcely a hopeful gleam of light for your pathway? Then trust in God. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy path." "Lean not unto thine own understanding." "One step enough for me." Pray with the hymnist, "Lead, Kindly Light ... lead Thou me on." I have read of a man who finally became a big businessman. It was his practice to be excused from his office at exactly five minutes before each hour. He went immediately to his private prayer room and talked face to face with God about the business. He attributed his success to his prayer life. It would be well for more businessmen to emulate his Christian example. Another businessman in Dallas, Texas, has this motto on his office wall: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" When asked why he has this motto constantly before him, he replies that he wants to be constantly reminded that he must save his soul at any cost and it warns him not to get wrapped up in business matters to the neglect of his soul.

Is it a spiritual problem that confounds and distresses you? First of all let us ask: Are you genuinely converted to Christ? Is He your personal Saviour? Have you been born again? Unless you can answer in the affirmative you will make no headway until the fact of your regeneration is settled. Search your heart before God. Be downright honest with yourself. If you are a born-again

believer you have peace with God, you keep the commandments of the Word, and you really love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

Furthermore, are you filled with the Holy Spirit? You can be. "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4). Until you are filled with the Spirit the Carnal mind will give you trouble. The Corinthians were babes in Christ, still had the carnal nature within them that caused envy, strife, divisions, and made them walk more like men than sons of God. Never stop seeking God until you know you are Spirit-filled. Moody, Wesley, Booth, Fox, and other church leaders and evangelists sought and obtained this infilling and you may have it too.

Is there an unsolved problem in your day-by-day Christian experience? Seek refuge in prayer. Open the door of every closet in your heart to God. Perhaps there are some hindrances to your success in prayer. Wrong relations of husbands to wives and wives to husbands will hinder your prayers (I Pet. 1:7). An idol in your heart may defeat you. Wrongs unrighted, debts unpaid, offended brothers unreconciled, an unforgiving spirit, covetousness, self-will, rebellion, disobedience, prayerlessness, quenching the Spirit, unconfessed sin, and suchlike may be hindering you in approaching God and finding the peace you seek.

A husband lay on his sickbed for several weeks and sought to be healed. He was prayed for, anointed, and asked help of God to no avail. One day while praying the Spirit reminded him of the sharp words he had spoken to his Christian wife sometime previously. He called her to his bedside and humbly asked forgiveness. Then, without a minister, she anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord, prayed, and he was instantly healed and arose from his bed.

Prayer can do anything that God can do. It is omnipotent. Paul Rader used to say, "Let go and trust God." This is the secret of victory anywhere and everywhere. "All things are possible to him that believeth." Hezekiah prayed. God was in his thoughts and he went into the house of God. The king of Assyria sent a commission to defy and blaspheme the God of Judah. King Hezekiah put on sackcloth. Humanly speaking, defeat and Captivity seemed imminent, for he was sorely pressed by the overwhelming hordes of the Assyrians. Then the prophet Isaiah told good King Hezekiah his prayers were heard and God would give deliverance. That night an angel with swift wing came down from heaven and smote 185,000 Assyrians. The king was vindicated, God was honored, the people of God were saved, and Sennacherib, the king of the Assyrians, suffered ignominious defeat. Hezekiah could have worried himself to death, but instead he prayed and God was his Friend, Helper, and Saviour.

A missionary and his wife and five children were in India serving the Lord faithfully. It became necessary for the husband and father to leave rather unexpectedly. They were out in the wilds where beasts of prey prowl around at night, and their lives were endangered. After consultation and prayer it seemed clear that the husband must leave at once, so he committed his loved ones to the care of the Heavenly Father.

As the night began to approach the good missionary wife and mother decided to build a large fire to keep them warm and as a protection from the wild beasts of the forest. After so doing, prayers were in order and she committed her children to the safekeeping of God while she kept

vigil during the night keeping the fire going. In the depth of the night lions and other beasts of the jungle came near. She heard their growls and roars but her simple, childlike faith rested securely in God. The promise was fulfilled, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Ps. 34:7).

"If I should neglect prayer but a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith," said Martin Luther, the great German reformer and father of Protestantism.

If you would link on to Deity and know the power of God, you must pay attention to your prayer life. "God does nothing but in answer to prayer," exclaimed the mighty Wesley. Do you actually desire above all else complete deliverance from your worries, anxieties, and oppressing burdens? Then "take your burden to the Lord and leave it there." Do it day by day, moment by moment, always. "Commit thy way unto the Lord" (Ps. 37:5). Literally it means: "Roll thy burden upon the Lord." Have you learned this blessed secret? Try it and find peace and rest.

A salesman called at our home. The door was answered by my good wife. Instead of the customary smile and pleasant meeting which is the usual order by trained salesmen, though he did his best, his countenance betrayed a heavy heart. His crippled daughter, an only child, had recently committed suicide and, naturally, he keenly felt the severe blow and was depressed. On the wall of our home was a motto, "WHY WORRY WHEN YOU CAN PRAY?" "What a wonderful motto!" he said. "It has helped me," and he told my Christian wife his sad story.

After a few words of Christian counsel she reached for the motto and placed the gift in his hand. He was very thankful, comforted, and strengthened and went on his way with renewed courage to fight the battles of life.

The Master said to sorrowing, heartbroken disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). And again, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). It is the peace of believing and an untroubled heart. It is peace in a world of tribulation, the peace that Jesus gives.

God can do anything, any time, anywhere;
God can do anything but fail.
He can save, He can cleanse,
He can keep, and He will;
God can do anything but fail.

He's the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End;
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.
God can do anything, any time, anywhere;
God can do anything but fail.

With such a God to help you why allow cares, sorrows, and heartaches to eat like a cancer and destroy your peace? It is far better to

Whisper a prayer in the morning,
Whisper a prayer at noon,
Whisper a prayer in the evening,
And keep your heart in tune.

And remember:

God answers prayer in the morning,
God answers prayer at noon,
God answers prayer in the evening,
So keep your heart in tune.

* * *

Are you distressed on life's weary road?
Are you encumbered with care?
Jesus can lift ev'ry heavy load;
Go to your Saviour in prayer.

Are you perplexed when the way seems dim,
Knowing not where it may lead?
Go to the Lord; you will find in Him
Guidance and all you may need.

If you are tempted to turn aside,
Tempted to almost despair,
Go to the arms that stand open wide;
Go to the Saviour in prayer.

To all the problems perplexing you,
Find the solution in prayer;
All of the ills that are vexing you
Soon will depart from you there.

Blessings will fall like the morning dew,
Jesus your burdens will share;
Life wears a radiant adorning new
Within the portals of prayer.

Pray your way through, pray your way through,
If you want victory, pray your way through.

Dear broken heart and troubled soul, if you will follow the procedure suggested in these pages your whole inner self will be changed, your life transformed, your perspective clarified, your peace deepened, and you will be at rest. Then with the poet you will sing:

Singing I go along life's road,
Praising the Lord, praising the Lord;
Singing I go along life's road,
For Jesus has lifted my load.

Amen.

* * * * *

THE END