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A SYMPOSIUM ON PRAYER

By Multiple Authors

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"Prayer A Symposium"

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1

THE MASTER IN PRAYER

By C. F. Wimberly

The life and character of Jesus is shrouded in mystery; neither men, angels, nor devils were able to solve the what and the how concerning Him. Because men could not understand Him when He walked upon the shores of Galilee, they rejected even the visible demonstrations of His marvelous doings. Because "great is the mystery of godliness"; and as the Incarnation remains as much a secret with the Godhead today as it was to the Sanhedrin, men are bold to declare the whole story of Jesus a pious fraud.

From one viewpoint His life was a paradox, and inconsistent with the claims He made. Jesus Christ, very God and very man; Son of God; eternal with the Father; before the world was; all power, etc. Then, behold the man: weak, hungry, apparently helpless, tempted, with like passions, and earnestly praying -- sometimes, all night. Think of it! How can these two propositions be reconciled?

This seeming paradox has but one explanation; this sealed mystery has but one key, and that one key is one word. This one word makes a rift in the clouds; it will explain all the things Jesus did, many of which were so unnecessary for a God to do. Jesus is the human name of our Lord; He was the Son of God and said so, but He always called Himself the Son of man. Thinking of Christ as the Son of God, we forget Jesus, the Son of man. We so naturally associate Him with the Godhead, and truly so; but how easy to forget Him as the perfect Man. Now the key word, unlocking the mystery of Jesus on earth -- what is it?

It is found in Phil. 2:7: *heauton ekenosen*, translated in the King James version, "made himself of no reputation"; but literally means, "He emptied himself." That is, when leaving heaven, and the glory of the Father, He divested Himself of the Godhead -- He gave up, temporarily, His vital relation to the adorable Trinity.

This writer has not the remotest semblance of Unitarianism in his theology; but he loves to think of Jesus as a man. As a man, we find in Him a pattern and example -- a fellow sufferer; as a God, all such meaning is lost. Jesus hungry, heart-sore, lonely, suffering, praying, can be understood only when we understand the word *ekenosen* -- emptied. When emptied, He stands side by side with us all, having no advantage over us, humanly speaking, except that He never sinned. The glory of His sinless life vanishes, has no significance, except as it stands the achievement of a man.

Then Jesus prayed, not as the only begotten of the Father, but as a man. He literally walked the dirt roads of earth with the same human limitations as any other man; differing, however, in that He was perfect and sinless. It might further be mentioned that He differed from us in the scope of His prayers; we pray, think, and feel within the compass of our little horizon; He acted upon the same stage, but His vision was as wide as the universe, as endless as eternity. When He talked to a lone woman in sin, He was speaking to all the women of all the centuries. All His prayers bore a message for the concrete and abstract of time and things.

Therefore, as He wended His way up the lonely path of a mountainside, seeking a place of prayer His praying was a human cry of need. Just as you, dear reader, fight the invisible powers of darkness, tempted and tried daily in the crucible, so He moved in a very similar sphere. Just what

you need, and your heart cries out for He needed. This sounds revolutionary and absurd, but it is true. Stones lay all about Him, which Satan knew He [Jesus] could turn bread; but if He had done that for Himself, it would have overstepped the boundary line of "very man." The real scheme of redemption, through the medium of His body and living as a man, is jarred out of harmony with the original plan, when He asserts a supernatural power to meet His own needs.

Again, the prayers of Jesus were more than human cries of need: they were the cries of necessity. Notwithstanding His perfect faith and perfect understanding with the Father, assuring every request asked for, nevertheless He prayed out of necessity. He held on to the great forces of the Invisible, calming the raging seas, healing the lepers, raising the dead, etc., but He did it by the same processes whereby we can and should hold on to them, by the prayer of faith. When He told His followers, "Whatsoever ye ask in faith believing," did He not virtually say to them, "What I have done, ye can do also"? Did He not throw down all the barriers to our Omnipotence? Jesus touched the great arm of God, not through His Sonship, but through the channel of faith; as a man He must possess no powers beyond any other good and holy man, except as He was more able to utilize these powers through a perfect faith and obedience. "He heareth me always," said He, "because I do always those things which please him." Jesus prayed, not only as an example for us, but as a necessity.

We will say further, that the prayers of Jesus were heart cries for communion. No man was ever so misunderstood and lonely; His was a pathway of sorrow and grief. All day long the multitudes thronged Him; but how little real fellowship He enjoyed in it all. He went often to the Bethany home, not because it furnished him communion, but because in that home He found no guile, no deceit, no pretense, no veneer. They loved Him; they yearned for the sound of His footfall. With unsophisticated simplicity they worshipped Him. He went there for the same reason that we go to some homes, and pass by others: for sincere welcome. With Lazarus and the sisters there was human love and sympathy. Day after day he must face from the sin-blinded world, cuffs, rebuffs, and insults; when He grew tired of these, He fled to the presence of His Father to find secret communion.

Still another feature in the prayers of Jesus might be mentioned: He was the world's great Teacher in all things. His followers in all the centuries must have the mind of Christ; all of life's bearings must be fashioned after Him. The necessity for prayer is universal; Jesus was the universal Man teaching a universal lesson. We must not omit in any particular the program outlined in the Master's daily life; He prayed daily, and prayed sometimes all night. We can not do less, if we measure up to our divine Teacher.

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2

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

By John N. Short

This is a subject of great importance. Because it is through prayer that we have access to God, to "make all our wants and wishes known." But nothing is more clearly revealed in the Word

of God than that all men have this privilege. Jesus says, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The implication is, that men would faint if they did not pray.

But this is not, I judge, what is meant by "praying in the Spirit." To thus pray implies a state and condition beyond what is generally understood by the ordinary offering of prayer. I should be very loath, however, to assert that people who do not live a life of prayer by reason of their intelligent faith in God, do not at any time, when especial trouble and trial come into their lives, get any help by their spasmodic praying.

I feel sure that any man who does not ordinarily pray in his daily life, though having a general, indefinite faith in God, when he comes into a place where he seems overwhelmed with trouble or impending danger, if he feels impelled to cry to God in his helplessness, he may get help. In doing this he experiences a sense of relief. And, as has been the case, some have had very signal answers to their cry.

Then again, many offer spasmodic prayers in trouble, and find some sense of relief. If they were sincere at the time, I would not take it upon me to say they did not get any help. But because such people do not follow up their prayers, they never advance to what true prayer, as the expression of faith, would mean, if they followed it out to its logical conclusion in their lives.

Then the ordinary saying of prayers, as is the case with many who are not known to be spiritual, who are not living devout lives of faith in the Son of God, and who never advance in spiritual things to come to a certain knowledge of God, that kind of praying can not be said to be "praying in the Spirit."

The apostle writing to the Ephesians, giving direction for their perfect triumph in the divine life, after directing them to put on the whole armor of God, and giving a description of it in its details, winds up with the injunction, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

I judge then, that "praying in the Spirit," according to the Word of God, belongs more to the people of God, who are living lives of faith in the Son of God. Though it may be well understood, that no man, even the repenting sinner, really prays independent of the Holy Spirit.

"Praying in the Spirit" then, can not be too earnestly pressed upon believers as they start out in the divine life. The apostle did this. There is danger in the general life of the believer, if his pure mind is not stirred up by way of remembrance, that he may settle down into a state of formalism, and his prayers partake of that spirit. I speak from experience; for I have not always been conscious of "praying in the Spirit."

To pray in the Spirit one's faith must be in lively exercise. And that this may be, one must do some special, earnest, intelligent thinking, while constantly feeding upon the Word of God. In the ordinary Christian life there is apt to be too much praying without such thought. If that should be the case it will come to "saying prayers."

To pray in the Spirit is to be a constant experience. There must be present conscious communion with God through faith in Christ by the Holy Spirit.

I blush with shame when I think of my earlier life, that in my praying I was not always thoughtful; that I did not take in what it meant to come into the presence of the King of kings and the Lord of lords. I confess I tremble now as I write, fearing lest I may not give it proper thought, and have the appropriate preparation of mind and heart, when I approach God in prayer. I would feel condemned to say to others what I do not practice myself.

While I say this, I think I have learned in some good measure to understand and practice the injunction of the apostle, "Pray without ceasing." But with all this I am conscious I need a "Days Man," and the Holy Spirit to help my infirmities.

To pray intelligently in the Spirit, means, I am sure, to be all in the will of God. But no man can pray, and keep up vital connection with God who does not obey. Then we may set it down, if we will not obey, we can offer no acceptable prayer, and be conscious of communion and fellowship with God.

It is easy to repeat words in a very thoughtless way, not taking in their import. But in his Christian life the believer should be in a constant state of submission and obedience to the will of God, where his heart can ever say, "The will of the Lord be done." Many may use this phrase, but it will mean nothing if we are not in the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit does not soon come to abide in us.

Jesus said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Some do not give these words their full import in their lives; and some stretch them beyond truth and reason, and verge on fanaticism.

But if we pray in the Spirit, asking anything according to His will, we know that He hears us. But we do not always grasp the mind of the Spirit, and do not always understand the mind of God fully in a given case.

Then while we may know that we have access to God, and that He hears us, sometimes He answers No, and sometimes Yes. And yet in either case we are helped and blessed; as blessed when He answers No, as when He answers Yes. We are praying in the will of God, and we say, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

Then praying in the Spirit means upon the part of the believer, to be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit, especially as far as revealed and understood. This implies being led by the Spirit, and launching out as the truth comes to us and the Spirit inspires and leads.

Hence to pray in the Spirit is to be living in touch with God, in a state of communion and fellowship with God through the Holy Spirit. It means a state of heart that constantly acquiesces in the divine will under the leading of the Spirit.

Then, in the nature of the case, it means a life of intelligent progress upon the part of the believer in his relations with God. I judge then from the Word of God, from experience and from

observation, that the believer can not pray in the Spirit, and not be led to the discovery of the state of his own heart as God sees it. He will surely come to discover whether there is anything in his heart that hinders his full access to God and advancement to be conformed to all the will of God. The Spirit and the Word lead to this.

In this case he will certainly pray up against anything in his heart or life that does not say Amen to the divine will. The result is, when he prays in the Spirit, the Spirit has him in tow, leading him out into all the will of God.

Hence the time will come in the life of every believer under the gospel, when he must advance intelligently into the fully revealed will of God for him, or draw back. And that is to say, if he continues to believe, and thus receive the truth, he comes to where he receives the Holy Spirit, and as the apostle prayed, "Filled with all the fulness of God."

Then from this point, "praying in the Spirit" means a spirit and a life of conquest for God. It means especial growth in the divine life for the believer. It means then intelligent co-operation with God in the work of redemption of this world for Christ.

There is no way the believer can so intelligently and helpfully co-operate with God for the salvation of the world as through "praying in the Spirit." What he may do will never avail anything without this Spirit. In the general life, "praying in the Spirit" implies living in the Spirit.

Coming to where we can pray in the Spirit, and that be our constant, abiding life, is the purpose of God through Christ for the believer. Every true believer in the light of the gospel must come to this state.

The life of the believer through faith, and thus prayer as the expression of faith, must be one of constant, intelligent progress from sin to holiness. Then, from that point, it must be growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

To fail of this is to fail of the divine purpose through Christ by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. To be in this true relation is to be in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit. To be here, and to pray without ceasing, is to be an intelligent partner with God in the salvation of men.

This spirit and kind of praying then is not optional with the believer, if he goes on with God. This is the logical outcome of praying in the Spirit. This is what faith and praying mean. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

What then does such a faith imply in the believer's experience in his relations with God? Let each one answer to God, and to his own soul.

* * * * *

By J. W. Goodwin

Prayer in the Church of our Lord is fast becoming a "lost art." The real joy and love for prayer is passing away in many places. Hands which should be uplifted in prayer and devotion to God are "hanging down"; knees which should be firmly placed upon the Rock of Ages in humble supplication, have become "feeble"; many who should have a strong and firm uplook of faith now have a "fearful heart." Our call is to proclaim strength for the feeble hands and fearful hearted, which will give them a vision of possibilities and confirm their knees in faithful prayer drill.

Does God answer prayer? Can we get things by way of the throne? Is prayer a success? From the amount of prayer compared with how little comes to pass as a result, it would almost seem a failure with some. The heavens have been closed so long, and the voice of God so seldom ever heard, that many by their actions seem to say, "It is vain to call upon the Lord, and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances and walked mournfully before the Lord?" Yet God throws out a challenge to all such to prove the power of prayer by bringing in all the tithes and offerings, then they may look for the heavens to open with blessings which will convince every fearful heart that God answers with plentiful and overflowing supplies.

Sometimes we have heard it said, "Wasn't that a powerful prayer?" when in fact there was very little real power of prayer at all. Powerful praying is not so much in the eloquence after all, I have read about a man who was walking on the rolling waves of the wild sea of blue Galilee and as he began to sink, he cried out a most powerful prayer, "Lord save or I perish;" and had his prayer answered inside of one minute. Had it not been so, poor Peter would have gone to the bottom of the sea before he could have gotten his next breath.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." That word "fervent" means melting hot. Then effectual praying must be melting hot. If our prayers were more liquid with white-heated fervor, until the cheeks were burned with scalding tears flowing from a heart of confidence and faith, our praying would become more powerful in getting things from heaven.

Oh, the mighty power of prayer. Prayer has softened the hard hearts of wicked kings, changed their plans, and directed their pens, while they gave decrees contrary to their natural desire. Prayer has torn mighty kingdoms from their foundations, wrought mighty deeds of righteousness, obtained the benefits from divine promises, closed the mouths of hungry lions, and made them as tame as playful kittens, taken the sting and burn out of fire and given it the comfort of oil, so it could not even singe a hair; out of the cold winter of death has brought life, and delivered children alive again into the arms of sorrowing motherhood. Prayer has changed the destiny of peoples and nations, stayed the sun in its mighty course while God was marching forward in His plans. Prayer has turned the rivers of history out of their courses, and swung great empires on their hinges. Prayer has blotted out nations from the face of the earth, and the places which once knew them In the glory of their splendor now know them no more; while on the other hand, prayer has raised a nation from the dunghill and called a people from the prison house of bondage and death, leading them through a desert wilderness, and placed them on the hilltops among the nations amid such splendor, riches, and glory that the noble queen of the South exclaimed, "The half was never told."

This marvelous power of prayer Christ gave to His people when He went away. "Hitherto ye have asked nothing, ask and it shall be given you." "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find." "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, he shall give it you." "If ye abide in me and I in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." "Ye have not, because ye ask not." If the church could understand this art of prayer, and know the latent forces all around her, she would arise and do things.

Why should we doubt or question the power of prayer to touch God? Look one moment upon all nature, Where and how is life and power? Is it not in the combination of right conditions? Most surely. There are great laws which govern in all these combinations and conditions which give the result of life and power. Take electricity, for instance There must be the right conditions and the proper connections, and when all is ready the result is perfectly plain. But all was a great mystery at one time, simply because no one knew the right combinations and laws which govern its action. Prayer through faith is the connecting link in the law of God's dealings with His children. Answered prayer is a miracle only because it may be a cause of wonder and astonishment to the natural man. God does not necessarily change His plans and His mind; He has from the very beginning made great laws which govern in the spiritual world, just as He has in the natural. He has all arrangements made and plans laid to give from His infinite storehouse above, and placed this simple key of prayer through faith in the hands of His children with which they may turn on the current of blessing for every need. Amen! Brother, help yourself.

Not only is prayer a mighty lever Godward but it is a mighty power earthward. The very atmosphere of prayer sheds forth an aroma which has mighty forces to influence the lives of all within its reach. What memories cluster around the devoted prayers of godly fathers and mothers. What battles have been fought to a victorious finish by the united prayers of a kneeling, praying band of sanctified people around the altar at our campmeetings, when the powers of hell seemed let loose. This kind of praying may not seem intelligent to the natural ear, but the writer has seen the Devil defeated so many times through this method of mighty prayer as recorded in the fourth chapter of the Acts, until now it seems no longer a mystery.

How prayer deepens the sense of humility in our own hearts; how it increases our sense of dependence upon God, who giveth all things; how it inspires faith and confidence in the promises of God; how it helps us to see the true nature of God and His love for a lost world; how it gives a vision of the mission fields until we can hear the cries for help from needy lands. Did you say you can not feel? Pray until you can feel, You can not believe? Pray until you can believe. You can not see? Pray until you can see. Pray until you love to pray. Pray until prayer is the very habit of life and thinking. "Praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

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4

PREVAILING PRAYER

By A. K. Bryant

In the upbuilding and extension of the kingdom of God, prevailing prayer is the most important factor; and if our holiness churches expect to do what they should in this great work, our pastors, evangelists, deaconesses, and members must be able to offer earnest, importunate, believing prayer. The history of the Christian church clearly proves prayer to be the right arm of every great awakening. Before the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was experienced, the disciples and other believers -- men and women -- had been in constant prayer for many days. The great Wesleyan revival had its beginning in a little praying band. The great awakening at Schott's, in Scotland, when under the preaching of one open air sermon, on Monday, June 21, 1638, about 500 professed conversion, was brought about by most of the Christians in that place spending the previous night in prevailing prayer. A hundred years later, at Enfield, Mass., similar power was experienced under the sermon of President Edwards, on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." During the delivery of the sermon, strong men seized the pillars of the church, as if to prevent their feet sliding into hell.

Where lay the power of that memorable sermon? Many of the godly people of Enfield, distressed on account of the unsaved around them spent the entire preceding night in prevailing prayer.

The great revivals of 1857 and 1858 were the outcome of prevailing prayer. The birthplace of the great Irish revival was in a little country schoolhouse at Tannybrake, county of Antrim, where four young men met for prayer nightly, for months, until the blessing came, and extended far and wide. During 1859 about 10,000 members were added to the churches in Ireland; and the invariable testimony is that wherever a revival was experienced, it had been preceded by earnest, importunate prayer.

Similar testimony is given concerning the revival in Scotland and in Wales. In one of our pastorates where we saw nearly one hundred converted in a few weeks, and we organized a class of over sixty new converts, the pastor and several of his people were spending hours daily in prevailing prayer.

If the members of our Pentecostal Churches of the Nazarene will go down on their faces before God in earnest, importunate, believing prayer there would soon be a trail of blazing revival fires kindled from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The reason, and Perhaps the only reason, more is not being done is the sad lack of men and women who can prevail in prayer, who, like Elijah of old, will hold on until "there is a sound of abundance of rain."

Prevailing prayer is of such great importance that we can well afford to spend some time in considering some of the most important conditions that must be met in order to hear from heaven. Of these conditions I will mention five.

A Pure Heart -- For "if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps. 66:18). Known sin in the heart or practiced in the life, cuts off our connection with heaven, and until that sin is repented of and forgiven we can not hope to hear from the Lord. This is the reason so many prayers are never answered. Many come to God with real needs that He would gladly supply if their hearts were right in His sight. Once God hearkened to and answered the prayers of king Saul, but the time came when he let sin enter into his heart and life, and God would no longer

listen to his cry. There are many up and down the land today, who are compelled in this time of need, to cry as Saul did, "God is departed from me, and answereth me no more." God forbid that such a fate should be ours. If we are not getting daily conscious answers to our prayers, we ought to ask ourselves the question, "Is my heart right with God?"

A Right Motive -- For, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3). Finney says, "Our prayers should not be selfish, but dictated by a supreme regard for the glory of God. A great deal of prayer is offered from pure selfishness. Women sometimes pray for their husbands, that they may be converted, because, they say, "It would be so much more pleasant to have my husband to go to meeting with me. And they seem never to lift up their thoughts above self at all. They do not seem to think how their husbands are dishonoring God by their sins, and how God would be glorified in their conversion. So it is with parents very often, they can't bear to think that their children should be lost. They pray for them very earnestly indeed, but If you go to talk with them, they are very tender and tell you how good their children are, how they respect religion, and they think they are almost Christians now; and they talk as though they were afraid you would hurt their children if you tell them the truth. They do not think how such amiable and lovely children are dishonoring God by their sins; they are only thinking what a dreadful thing it will be for them to go to hell. Ah, unless their thoughts rise higher than this, their prayers will never prevail with a holy God. The temptation to selfish motives is so strong that there is reason to fear a great many parental prayers never rise above the yearnings of parental tenderness.

So, in regard to a revival, one, perhaps desires it in order to have the congregation built up and strengthened, so as to make it more easy for them to pay their expenses in supporting the gospel. Another desires a revival for the sake of having the church increased so as to be more numerous and more respectable. Others desire a revival because they have been opposed or evilly spoken of, and they wish to have their enemies know that whatever they may think or say, God blesses them. The true motive for a revival is for the glory of God and the salvation of sinners.

Faith -- "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). Faith is an indispensable condition of prevailing prayer. To prove this, it is only necessary to repeat what the apostle James expressly tells us, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed." What are we to believe when we pray? We are to believe in the existence of God -- "He that cometh to God must believe that he is and in His willingness to answer prayer -- "and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." It has been well said that faith is believing God; doubt is believing Satan.

Dr. S. A. Keen has said that he who offers the prayer of faith must have faith in prayer. It is possible for one to be righteous and yet lack a profound faith in prayer itself. There are good men who have no adequate apprehension of the vital relation prayer has to God's plans and purposes; who are not impressed with its immense worth; who think of it as a mere exercise, useful to the individual, rather than being a principle of the divine government; a law by which God has chosen to effect certain results. Hence they are skeptical of prayer as a real power, and appreciate it only as a gracious movement of the heart toward God. Now, God never bestows, even upon a righteous

man, the power of prevailing prayer, who, for any cause, is incredulous respecting the largest possibilities of prayer as being at present available. Faith in prayer is indispensable to praying in faith. The little child that is able to comprehend the simple precepts and promises of God's Word in respect to prayer, may have a faith in prayer which renders it eligible to offer, as many a child has done, the prayer of faith. Indeed, these things are hidden from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes. So the humble go on believing in prayer, and praying, believing, see wonderful things, while the opinionated, skeptical, wise, good people go on praying, knowing none of these things in respect to prayer. Finney says, "There is reason to believe millions are in hell because professors have not offered the prayer of faith, when they had promises under their eyes, and have not had faith enough to use them. Thus parents let their children, and even baptized children, go down to hell, when they might have prevailed with God and saved them. You say this leaves the church under a great load of guilt. True, it does so; and no doubt multitudes will stand up before God, covered all over with the blood of souls that have been lost through their want of faith. The promises of God accumulated in their Bible will stare them in the face and weigh them down to hell." This stirs me deeply, and should it not stir us all, and lead us to ask these serious questions: Do we know what it is to pray in faith? Do we ever pray this way? Have we ever prayed, till our minds are assured the blessing would come, till we felt that rest in God, that confidence, as perfect as if we saw God come down from heaven to give it to us? If not, we ought to examine our foundation.

Works -- "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). Knowledge without obedience ends in nothing. Son, go work, not shirk, today, in my vineyard. This is what God requires of all His followers; to fail here is to fail in prayer. James says, "What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what does it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

A man, a wealthy miller, had offered at family prayers an earnest petition for the poor in his neighborhood, when his little son came to him and said, "Father, I wish I had your corn." "Why, my boy, what would you do with it?" "I would help the Lord to answer your prayer," he said. We should pray for the unsaved, but we should also speak to them about their need of salvation, and invite them to the services of the church.

Persevering Importunity -- "And he spoke a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." (Luke 18:1). "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice" (Ps. 55:17). "Praying always, says the apostle, "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." Let us call to our mind a few examples of persevering importunity in prayer. Jacob, at Jabbok's ford, prayed until the breaking of the day; crying out in agony, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." And God said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel, for as a prince hast thou power with God, and men, and hast prevailed." A great army of a thousand thousand Ethiopians ran away like cowards before the prayer of Asa. Moses prayed, "Pardon I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people," and the Lord said, "I have pardoned according to thy word." Joshua prayed and the Lord hearkened and stayed the sun in its course, and fought for Israel. Hannah prayed, and she called her son, Samuel, "because I asked him of the Lord." Hezekiah prayed and the Lord went out, and smote

in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand. He prayed again and God added fifteen years to his life. Jeremiah prayed "out of the low dungeon," and God heard his voice, Daniel prayed through and got a gracious victory, but he had to hold on in persevering importunity for twenty-one days. Peter was in prison but prayer was made without ceasing by the church for him. So all down through the ages holy and useful men have been mighty in prayer, and spent much of their time looking to God for help. The late Dr. Edward Payson, of Portland, Me., spent so much time on his knees in prayer by his bedside that he wore two holes through the carpet, and wore the paint off of the floor beneath. If we preachers will pray like these holy men, we will not have to come up to the annual Assembly to report a decrease in the membership of our churches. A still greater than these has set us an example. Christ was mighty in prayer, and always prevailed. He spent much time in prayer, Mark tells us that in the morning, rising up a great while before day Jesus went out, and departed unto a solitary place and there prayed. Luke says that it came to pass in those days, that He went out unto the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

"Prayer moves the hand that moves the universe."

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5

PRAYING THROUGH

By Oscar Hudson

Prevailing prayer, or the prayer that goes clear through, is the touchstone to success in every phase of Christian work; the cable that ties a lost world and Omnipotence together; the lubrication, without which the wheels of ecclesiasticism lock and drag. To be able to pray through is more honorable than to be a Cicero or Demosthenes; more to be desired than wealth, knowledge, or eloquence. They in whom this quality is lacking are fruitless and fireless.

Three things are necessary to praying through:

First, a burden. He who has no burden for souls will never pray through. In fact, they who feel no burden are in danger: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." An awful calamity overshadows professors who are not exercised over the fearful conditions that exist about us. The spirit of John Knox when he cried, "Give me Scotland or I die," always precedes prevailing Prayer. Prayer without a burden is like a sail without a breeze. The Syrophoenician woman felt it when she cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, for my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

Second, persistence. They who prevail go in to win. They do not take "no" for an answer. They are the crowd who shout in the face of discouragement, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me, Lord." They are the descendants of Him who made His sacrifice, and while the somber hues of nightfall hung a curtain of dreariness about it, beat back the jackals of doubt with a club of confidence until the fire of God came upon it. Persistence led blind Bartimaeus forward through sightless night and ranting opposition until he broke into the noon day of unobstructed vision.

Third, the witness of faith, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This simple analysis of faith has been rendered by one scholar thus: "Faith is the ground of things hoped for, the assurance of things not seen." This is prevailing prayer in a nutshell. He who would pray through must first familiarize himself with the Word of God. He must have a foundation on which to stand. He must learn to plead the promises of God. If we study the Bible and store our minds with its many promises, we will have something to support our confidence in every hour of conflict.

But faith is not only a foundation, it is also assurance. It is the gift of God, wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and imparts an unmistakable conviction that the thing desired will come to pass. They who pray through would not thank Gabriel to come down and tell him the thing he has been praying for has been granted. They have the assurance already. They are few who have learned to wait in the secret closet until they obtain the assurance. There are battlings and burdens to struggle with, things which few court or covet, but in the absence of which no one prays through. Some one has said that all commercial enterprises are conducted on faith. This is not so. They are conducted through confidence, which is but one element of faith. When we pray through, we have the seal of the Spirit in our hearts.

In one of the greatest camps we ever conducted, the services began at 1 o'clock Wednesday morning with less than a half dozen campers on the ground. A steady downpour of rain began about 12 o'clock, which continued without intermission until Sunday morning. During this period no other campers appeared, and no one could come to the services except the few who were camped on the ground. The outlook was gloomy, and the battle might have been lost had it not been for an old lady who repeatedly testified that victory was coming. She said, "Numbers of times, during the last few months I have become burdened for this meeting, retired to the woods and prayed through into shouting victory, and I know it is coming."

As the clouds began to break away Sunday morning, the people began pouring in from every quarter. By 11 o'clock a mass of people thronged the shed. After a short, simple sermon, a long altar was quickly filled with earnest seekers, and more than a score were blessed. This was repeated at 3 o'clock. At 6 two grove services were visited with such divine manifestations that a number were prostrated, and we wound up at the tabernacle with a regular conflagration. In one week about 400 were saved or sanctified, and over one hundred were healed of various maladies. Was this the result of the preaching or singing? No! that was but a factor. One old lady dared to pray through. We may not all be great pulpit orators but, by the grace of God, we can pray through, and bring things to pass.

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6

THE RELATION OF PRAYER TO PRAISE

By C. W. Ruth

To find the relation of prayer to praise, we have consulted our inspired Book of directions, and find that we are to "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

According to this, thanksgiving is a part of prayer. Humanly speaking, a person who seems to be truly appreciative of, and grateful for, favors bestowed, is more likely to receive a renewal of favors than a person who does not manifest a proper spirit of appreciation. We doubt not but that this same principle obtains in the prayer life, and that if we would manifest more gratitude, and praise God more, for the innumerable mercies and blessings He is constantly bestowing upon us, that we would receive more frequent answers to prayer and be made the recipients of yet larger measures of His bounty than we have hitherto known.

Prayer and praise are somewhat related as cause and effect. To accept a favor should prompt a person to say they feel thankful in their hearts; but true thankfulness of heart will find expression -- and most generally so, in audible praises to God. In the matter of our gratitude as in other matters, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." David said, "His praise shall continually be in my mouth." And the writer to the Hebrews, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, declared that we should "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

According to these directions it is not enough that we should simply feel thankful in our hearts, but our lips should give expression to the gratitude we feel -- and that continually. A gratitude that does not find expression in some audible expressions of thanksgiving and praise is not up to the Bible standard.

In view of our utter helplessness and constant dependence upon God, and in view of the fact that we are constant pensioners on His bounty, and are daily loaded with His benefits, and remembering that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights," who, but an ingrate, would not feel constrained to give thanks and praises to our God. Surely, "Praise is comely for the upright."

Some have thought that praise was purely emotional, and that no one should praise God unless their emotions were so excited as to be unable to restrain one's self. But we need to remember that praise is volitional as well as emotional; hence David, "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth." A person may will to praise God, even though the emotions are not deeply stirred. It is always proper to be polite, and therefore it should be regarded as highly in order at all times to say "Thank you" to a benefactor, feeling or no feeling. And God has said, whoso offereth praise glorifieth me," thus indicating that He is pleased to receive the praise we offer.

In the twentieth chapter of 2 Chronicles, we read that when the children of Ammon and Moab encamped against Israel in so great numbers that Israel was compelled to say, "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do," that Jehosaphat "appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and to say, Praise the Lord for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments" and put to confusion their enemies, turning the victory on Israel's side. In like manner we read that after they had entered Canaan and had marched around the walls of Jericho seven days, "The people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and

they took the city." It is well to note that these "praises" and "shouts" were most important factors in achieving the victory; had they failed to praise the beauty of holiness and to shout with a great shout as divinely directed, they would doubtless have suffered defeat.

This writer has found, by experience, that frequently praise is as important a factor, and as effective a weapon in fighting the battles of the Lord, as is prayer. Instead of reasoning, and arguing, and debating the question with the Enemy, simply go to praising the beauty of holiness, and giving glory to God, and the would-be "argu-fier" could do nothing but call you some bad names, thus proving what spirit he was of, and walk away. What can you do to a fellow that simply will not argue with you? So in like manner, we have frequently witnessed in public services, when the meeting was pulling heavy, and the odds seemed against us, and someone would raise a shout of faith, that instantly the timid saints were encouraged, and faith revived, and the Enemy was routed, with glorious victory on the Lord's side. What can the Devil do with folks who simply will not be discouraged, nor give up?

We have thought, perhaps, this was one reason why the adversary objected so strenuously to religious demonstration, or a shouting religion. We have observed that people who seem to be greatly annoyed and disturbed by the praises and shouts of the redeemed -- objecting to the "emotionalism" and "excitement" as they call it -- do not seem to be disturbed or annoyed in the least by the "excitement" and "shouting" incident to a horse race, or a game of baseball, or a political gathering. So it is evident that it is not the demonstrations that annoy, so much as it is the kind of demonstrations to which they object.

They who pray much will most likely find occasion to praise much indeed; this in order to be consistent. While they who do not pray much may not feel inclined to offer much praise. The "golden censor" offering up the prayers and praises of the saints as a sweet smelling savor unto God, is found within the "second veil" in the holiest of all.

"Pray without ceasing," and "in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"; thus prayer and praise are inseparably connected in the divine command. They are as inseparable as is the light from the sun. Praying will inspire praises, and praises will inspire praying. To pray through, and have prayer answered in regard to anything, is sure to awaken the sense of gratitude and praise within the heart. To accept the favor bestowed in answer to prayer, and not thank and praise the Giver, would indicate a lack of appreciation, and base ingratitude.

Since God has promised to give us "the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness" so that "sorrow and sighing shall flee away" all of which is to be realized in individual experience in answer to prayer, we should "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him and bless his name." "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord" (Isa. 61:3; 35:10; Ps, 100:4; 150:6).

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By A. M. Hills

Forgiveness and sanctification are the complementary parts of full salvation. They constitute the first and the "second blessing properly so-called." The one is to be sought by the sinner; the other by the Christian. Both blessings are received in answer to prayer. It becomes a matter of supreme importance then to know how we should approach the throne of grace, and with the hand of the prayer of faith bring away these blessings.

Consider The Prayer For Forgiveness

How can a consciously guilty sinner, a rebel against God, approach the Infinite, who is of too pure eyes to behold iniquity, and hates sin with an infinite hatred, and obtain pardon? On his own merits, and for the sake of his own desert he could not. With such a plea only he could expect and receive nothing but the wrath and judgment of his outraged God.

Nevertheless, there are some considerations which encourage the vilest sinner to come to God and obtain pardon and salvation. It is something that nature does not teach. Socrates said to one of his pupils: "I do not see how God can forgive sin, for I do not see that He ought to." But what nature does not teach and man's reason could not discover, God has revealed in His holy Word.

God has revealed Himself as having a father's heart "not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. 3:9) but "willeth that all men should be saved" (1 Tim. 2:4). God revealed Himself to Moses in Horeb as "Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Ex. 34:6-7).

In the fulness of time, the Father sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world to more perfectly reveal the nature of God to men. It was this Son of God who kindly ate and drank with sinners, and told them He had come to "seek and save the lost." He forgave the deepest dyed sinners, and saved the murderous highwayman, when He himself was enduring the agonies of the cross. Thus Christ revealed what God is.

2. Notice what God has done. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). If God offers to save a race of sinners, He must do it with honor to Himself, and with safety to His government. So He suffered Himself to show His hatred of sin, and His care for His law and government, and at the same time show His love for sinners, and His infinite desire to save them. The suffering of Christ was a provisory substitute for the penalty of sin in the interest of moral government. Whoever by faith accepts this substitute escapes the penalty of his sin.

3. Notice what God promises. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). "Ask and it shall be given you" (Luke 11:9). "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9). That is, He is faithful and just to Himself and His promises to sinners, and just to his beloved Son who died for us, to forgive every sinner who comes in the proper spirit. (a) He must come with a repentant spirit, forsaking all sin (Isaiah 55:7). (b) He must have a forgiving spirit toward his fellows. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your

Father forgive your trespasses (Matt. 6:15). (c) He must pray in faith. "Have faith in God All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for; believe that ye have received them and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:23-25).

That is, every forgiving, repentant sinner, however wicked he has been, is encouraged to come to God in prayer and ask for pardon. He is perfectly warranted by what God is, by what God has done and Christ has suffered, and by what God's Word has promised, to pray for forgiveness, and to believe that then and there he has received what he asked for -- pardon and sonship in Christ. "Ye shall have them." The condition is not how you feel at that moment, but do you trust in the holy God, and rest on His immutable word of promise? That is the sinner's prayer of faith that never fails to procure pardon and sonship with God. The witness of the Spirit to the blessing will surely come after he has believed.

Consider The Prayer For Sanctification.

The sinner needs forgiveness for his own actual sins, and a new heart: the Christian needs deliverance from inbred sin (for which he is not primarily responsible) and a clean heart. The considerations which encourage the prayer of faith for sanctification of a Christian are very similar to those which encourage the sinner to pray in faith for pardon.

1. What God Is -- He is absolutely, infinitely, eternally holy. Sin of any kind, or form, or degree, is most painful and offensive to Him. He could not, therefore, require less than holiness own. So He commands: "Like as he which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, ye shall be holy, for I am holy."

2. What God Has Done -- He has provided an atonement through His Son, which covers all the spiritual needs of His children, God the Son "loved the church and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it. . . that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

3. What The Father and Son Have Said, Prayed For, and Promised -- "This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3). "For God called us unto sanctification (4:7). "Because God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit. . . whereunto he called you by our gospel." Jesus prayed "Sanctify them" (John 17:17). Paul prayed, "Now the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly."

Now that which is God's will, that which He commands Christians to have, and chose us for, and calls us to, and Jesus prayed for, and died for, must be a blessing for which Christians are warranted to pray.

The conditions preliminary to prevailing prayer for this blessing are plainly stated. (a) Absolute obedience. "he gives the Holy Spirit to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). (b) Full consecration of yourself and your all to God, for Him to own for ever, you being henceforth only His steward and servant. Put yourself and all your innocent and precious things upon the altar --

your very son Isaac, the thing dearest your heart. (c) Then make it a personal matter -- the sanctifying Spirit for me now.

Then pray in faith, as you have a right to do. "He gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Luke 11:13). "Believe that ye have received the sanctifying baptism with the Holy Spirit: He will respond to your faith, and "ye shall have" it (Mark 11:24 and 1 John 5:14-15).

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8

PRAYER OF ELIJAH ACCORDING TO JAMES

By W. E. Shepard

When the Holy Ghost, in the book of James, wanted to get light and truth on the Church regarding the will of God in divine healing, He used, as an example of faith, the experience of Elijah. Elijah was such a remarkable man of God, so above and beyond the ordinary, being translated into glory and not seeing death, that one might think him more than human; hence, not a proper example for us to follow. But in order to set us right in this respect, the Word tells us that he was a man of like passions as other mortals here below. Having disabused our minds in this respect, James proceeds to tell us that he prayed. He not only prayed, but he prayed earnestly. He not only prayed and prayed earnestly, but he prayed pointedly. He did not "go all around Robin Hood's barn," but he centered his heart on the one thing for which he felt prompted to pray, and that was, that it might not rain. He got his prayer through; the heavens were shut up for three and a half years. Again, he caught the inspiration of faith and prayed, and the copious showers fell, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

We understand that this example was given to illustrate the statement, in connection with healing: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." This kind of a prayer availeth much. Elijah made this kind of a prayer, and it availed much. How applicable it was in the divinely inspired author to use this mighty man and his fervent effectual prayer to show how it works!

First, let us examine the "effectual fervent prayer" of this prophet of God, and then examine the *modus operandi* in praying.

Many years ago we remember reading another translation of this expression: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man" and it said it was "the inwrought prayer of the righteous man." In other words, it means the prayer that the Holy Ghost works in the heart; the prayer that the Holy Ghost inspires within; the Spirit interceding within; the Spirit inditing the petition. It means the Holy Spirit within, breathing out through us His own desires, prompting within us the very petition for which God has the answer. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered" (Rom. 8:26). This kind of praying from the heart, knowing that it is thus prompted by the Holy Spirit, gives one such a confidence, such an assurance, such a faith, that the answer is sure to follow. If the Holy Ghost has wrought the prayer within the heart; if He has put the longing desire within; if He has stirred up the petitioner to make the prayer, then it is *prima*

facie evidence that God has the answer for him. Otherwise, it would be God mocking His child. God never would prompt one of His children to pray for something that was not for him. He would never create a hunger and thirst for anything that was outside of His will to give. He never hung that big bunch of Eshcol grapes before the children of Israel at Kadesh Barnea, and got their mouths watering, and then said, Canaan is not for you. No, dear reader, rest assured if God has prompted you to pray for something, that something is as surely for you as that God prompted the prayer. It matters not what the prayer is for, if it can be settled truly that it is the inwrought petition of the Spirit, let it assure you that God is working at the other end of the line and will surely bring it to pass.

Are you praying for a clean heart? for the baptism with the Holy Ghost? Are you crying to God for the salvation of some loved one? Are you in great distress or sorrow and crying to God for deliverance? Are you sick and yearning in prayer for healing? If you can know that it is the inwrought prayer, the prayer prompted by the Holy Spirit, then rest assured that the answer is for you. Otherwise, God would be mocking you, and this He never does. And one way to determine if this inward heart craving and petition is from the Lord, is carefully to measure it further by the Word of God, and see if it is according to His will. "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 heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 John 5:14, 15).

Where there is doubt concerning the will of God in answering some special prayer, faith is always hindered. But "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much."

James not only used Elijah as an illustration of the "effectual fervent prayer" but calls attention to the specific prayers on given occasions. Let us notice particularly Elijah's praying for rain. See the old white-haired pilgrim-prophet on Mt. Carmel, with "his face between his knees." He had been doing some great praying just previous to this. He had prayed fire down from the skies, and now he is about to pray down water. Fire and water make a very good combination; it makes things move.

So Elijah prays, and his servant looks over the Mediterranean sea to catch some glimpse of coming rain. No rain in sight. Is it all off with Elijah? Does he get discouraged and quit? No, he is not made of that material. No man that could have the revival he had just experienced, and could pull fire out of the skies as he had done, gives up so easy as that.

He prays again. Again the servant looks and no sign of rain. Another prayer and another trip of the servant. No rain. Seven prayers and seven trips to scan the direction of rain, and the perfect number and the perfect prayer combine, and the cloud rolls up over the sea, and the prophet of God, the prevailer in prayer, sends word to the wicked king Ahab, "Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not."

What is the trouble with our praying? We stop too quick. "And golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." Bottled prayers! May the Lord help us to keep on praying till the bottle is full, then something is going to happen. But Elijah's prayer is used to illustrate the prayer for healing. How many stop too soon! They feel that it is the will of God to heal. They call for the elders of the church and are anointed, and prayed for, and while they have such a plain and

positive foundation on which to stand to inspire faith, yet it occurs sometimes that no evidence comes that the prayer is answered. Shall we conclude that because we have no evidence of healing that we should give up and think it is not for us? It would seem for these very people God has in mercy given this example of Elijah's praying. He prayed seven times. He simply kept at it till he got what he was praying for. Dear, sick praying one, don't get discouraged; pray again. Perhaps you were anointed with oil in the name of the Lord, and it may not be necessary to be repeating this, but pray again. Let others pray again with you. Expect the cloud to rise, and don't let up till it does appear.

I am thinking of my own experience in the sickness of my little boy years ago. The doctor said he would die. He had diphtheria. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon when this sad intelligence came to us. After telling the Lord to take him if it was His will, and not feeling that it was the will of the Lord for him to die, I made up my mind to pray till he was either actually healed or actually dead. That night friends gathered around the bedside and we put in the whole night in prayer. Even then we got no assurance of healing.

We prayed more or less throughout the next day, with no assurance. We gathered around the bedside for the second all night of prayer. About half past 9 o'clock a number of us at the same time caught the inspiration of faith and went to the child and laid our hands on him and prayed, and in a few minutes he awoke out of his stupor, looked around, and said he wanted something to eat. The next morning he was on the floor playing with his blocks. We hung on like Elijah till the answer came.

Dear reader, look to God in your affliction. Get the promise under your feet, the inwrought prayer in your soul, the determination to pray through in your mind, and keep at it till you hear from heaven. You have a right to hear from heaven. If the news from there indicates that God is going to send His chariot for you and sweep you into the skies, that is all right, and after you have been there one minute you will be glad it turned out that way, and you would not come back to earth for all there is in it. But if He does not assure you that you are going home just now, take Elijah's plan and pray till something comes to pass.

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9

INCENTIVES TO PRAYER

By C. B. Widmeyer

By the term "incentive" we understand, that there are some things that induce us to pray, for which prayer has an attraction. Truly there are some things that spur us to this holy practice.

Prayer is a solemn address to the Supreme Being. The motives that prompt prayer are varied and many. When the storm rages, troubles come thick and fast, or death enters the home, then people will pray. With many, prayer is response to a calamity. When prayer is the result of oppression, or coercion, the benefits will not be gratifying.

We will first notice the Word of God, as an incentive to prayer. As we read its pages from cover to cover, we find that the Bible abounds in precious promises. God's promises that are contingent upon prayer are manifold. Throughout the period of the antediluvian world, when God's method of communication was verbal, it stands beyond contradiction that God made promises to those who followed Him, and thus we behold some marvelous answers to prayer. We can not conceive of God making a promise, which when some follower of His has met the condition, He refused to grant the request. For a moment consider Abraham, Moses, Hannah, Elijah, and Hezekiah. All of these prayed because God made them promises. Not only does the Word abound with promises, but in its pages also are many commands to pray. We are told that we should "pray without ceasing," and that "men ought always to pray," "watch and pray," "fast and pray," etc. These commands act as a spur, and thus incite our minds and hearts to this noble practice. The Word of God presents unto us some forms of prayer, and thus we learn the method of prayer. Prayer might be desired because of the promises, it might be practiced because of the commands, but when we find a model or form, then we are encouraged to pray. The form of prayer was a problem that the minds of the disciples could not solve, hence they made Jesus the important request, "Lord, teach us to pray." There are many who would ask, "Lord, teach us how to pray," but these disciples desired a model. Jesus not only gave them one in words, but also in example. Consequently we would consider these models an incentive to prayer.

We would next consider the testimony of conscience as an incentive to prayer. Holy living is God's ideal for man, but how can a man retain such a state without communication with a holy Being? Prayer is the medium by which such an experience is attained and retained. When a person has been born of God, prayer is to the spiritual man what bread is to the physical. If a man neglects to feed the spiritual, the conscience will not rest easy. When the conscience rings clear, the effects will be realized upon the physical, mental, and spiritual life. Our consciences should be properly trained, and then allowed to mature in proper soil. When a man neglects his family prayer, his public or private devotions, then the conscience will become paralyzed, and cease to act, and no longer perform its functions. Soon a lack of communion and devotion will be noticeable, and the individual will feel condemned. We assert that a clear conscience is an incentive to prayer. Many have educated their conscience to the point that they can get along with a little prayer, but when this individual is brought into the presence of God, and of holy men and women, then the conscience will not give a clear testimony to the soul. A clear conscience is worth more than stocks, bonds, houses, lands, friends, and all things of earth, so let us pray until the conscience rings clear.

We would call attention to some of the examples about us as an incentive to prayer. Most people have some time during their pilgrimage upon earth seen an example of answered prayer.

One example that comes so vividly to our mind is that of father during the winter of 1900. Two good physicians had been in attendance for five days, coming two and three times a day. One day we were told that father could not get well. How well do we remember how grandfather prayed. The preacher and many people of the community engaged in earnest prayer, and as a result father got well, and is a strong man today. Whatever might befall us during the journey of life, we must ever admit that God answered prayer and restored father to life.

Many have been the occasions when we knelt by the bedside of a sick person, or at an altar of prayer, where some soul was seeking pardon or purity, and after an earnest prayer we saw the sick arise, and the seeker after pardon or purity shout the praises of God. Thus we were encouraged to pray. Think of the many who have triumphed in the faith and gone sweeping through the gates into the city. Is not this an inducement to pray?

Last, but not least, we would call attention to the rewards as an incentive to prayer. Abraham prayed for Abimelech, and God answered. Moses prayed for the healing of Miriam, and she was healed. Elijah prayed that it would not rain, and it rained not for the space of three years and six months. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave an abundance of rain. Hezekiah prayed, and God added fifteen years to his life. Peter prayed, and the dead were restored to life. Jesus said, "Ask and it shall be given. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you." "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." We believe that God will reward us for all the prayers that we pray. In the book of Revelation we read that the prayers are bottled up until the bottle is full, and then the reward is realized. When Finney went to preach, dear old Father Nash went to prayer. The rewards were seen in the conversion of thousands of souls. We can not limit the rewards to this earth. Heaven and eternity are laden with rewards for the soul that is faithful in prayer.

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10

EFFECTIVE PRAYING

By H. M. Chambers

There is no ability which should be sought after with ardor and persistence so much as to be able to pray effectively. God ministers His best gifts with care, and must see that before He bestows the high power of effective praying upon any one that the value of so great a privilege is appreciated. Before one can receive the gift of effective intercession he must deeply feel the importance of it, and his appreciation must be shown by a careful obedience to every established condition. Despite the disconcerting influence of a large curiosity crowd, and the bitter hostility of the four hundred and fifty false prophets of Baal angered by their failure, the prophet Elijah could kneel by his altar and approach God with the utmost confidence, for his prayer was preceded by a careful and detailed obedience to all of God's commands. In the erection of the altar, the placing of the wood, the bestowment of the sacrifice, and in the reducing the likelihood of natural combustion to a minimum by the drenching the whole with water, his perfect obedience is plain. All this is in perfect accord with the subject matter of his strong petition which convinces us that his faith in God was implicit. Therefore nothing but humiliation and defeat awaited the large company of begowned and well-fed priests to a wicked queen, for God had been obeyed and was sure to answer -- thus in a spectacular way, making the plain-spoken and rough-garbed prophet more than a match for all of his opposers.

Those who can praise God for the hard tests and exacting details, and who never tire of God's disciplinary measures, can always approach Him with confidence, for a flawless obedience is always a credential for an audience with Him. It follows that if we are in the center of His will

we are assured of the answer, for the Word says, "If we ask anything according to his will he heareth us, and if we know that he hear us, we know that we have the petitions we desired of him."

It is sometimes asked if the Father knows the thing which we have need of before we ask Him, why pray at all? We answer. Because man is a dependent being and the realization of this fact is vital to the maintenance of a Christian experience. Self-dependence kills spirituality. The more conscious one is of his dependence upon God for every needed thing, the closer he is likely to live to God.

The Devil's shrewd scheme with Adam and Eve to lead them into sin was first to persuade them that they could get along without God. In the process of restoration of a sinful man to fellowship with God the Holy Spirit makes him conscious of his utter dependence upon God and insists that he acknowledge it before he can be accepted. God sent nine-tenths of the army raised by Gideon home, "Lest Israel vaunt herself against me and say mine own hand hath saved me." Almost an entire army discharged because they were not possessed of the spirit to honor God by a full reliance upon Him. The one obedient tenth being of more value in God's campaigns than the nine-tenths who knew not, how to depend upon Him. The record indicates that one great difficulty the Lord has had in accomplishing His purpose for the human race is to find men for His use who will rely fully upon Him for success.

No one gets so intimately acquainted with the Lord as he who through dependence upon the Lord alone for help in many a time of need has learned how rich He is in resources, as well as in mercy toward them that fear Him.

To bring the answer to prayer near, dependence upon God must come to the point of helplessness. The poor widow of whom Jesus tells us, bereft of the one upon whose counsel and protection she had relied, and with her natural source of help thus cut off, was helpless indeed. For up to this time her faithful husband had stood between her and her cruel adversary whom she now faces alone. Certainly she must have help or be crushed and defeated. Out of her helplessness came the persistence that caught the attention and won the aid of the indifferent and hard-hearted unjust judge.

Naaman the Syrian was helpless in the clutch of leprosy, and his wife's servant, the little Jewish maid, was helpless in captivity, but out of her weakness came the testimony which directed Naaman's prayers to the right source, and God healed him.

We might notice further that before the answer to prayer comes helplessness often reaches the point of desperation. It was not because he was a good wrestler merely that Jacob prevailed with the angel, but when he wrestled to the desperate point where his human strength broke, his undaunted spirit rose above the clogs and trammels of the flesh and gripped the angel with a hold that would not be shaken off. So in every real prevailing prayer wrestle the deathless and indomitable spirit rises triumphant over its agonized and perspiring body, and loosed from these natural shackles it insistently demands and surely receives the answer from God.

Paul speaks in one place of abstaining from the indulgence in fleshly gratification, holding the body well in hand, "Lest your prayers be hindered." This gives us the true idea of the relation

which fasting bears' to prayer. We are not to fast as a matter of doing penance, but in order to help free the spirit from the sluggish tendencies of the body. When Jesus, amid the agonizing intercession of Gethsemane came to His disciples and found them sleeping, He said, "The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak," indicating by these words how easily the physical being gets in the way of effective intercession. The Devil is well acquainted with this fact and when we are trying to pray makes it his especial business to so play upon our sensibilities as to lull us to sleep. We are subject altogether too much to our feelings. So it often becomes necessary to mightily enlist our will in praying until we swing clear from all human sluggishness, and prevail. Much thus lies in the attitude of the will toward effective prayer. Just as Jacob said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." It is not irreverent when the conditions are being met to tell God He must answer, He has said, "Concerning the work of my hands, command ye me." [But certainly the spirit of the one making such a command must not be the spirit of one that presumes to "dictate to God." -- DVM] As long as Abraham was interceding, God could not destroy Sodom. It is an interesting matter to speculate upon, what the result would have been in Sodom had Abraham continued to intercede.*

[The Scripture may indicate that there was no way Abraham could have continued interceding, for immediately after God agreed not to destroy Sodom for the sake of ten righteous souls, "the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place. -- Gen. 18:33 If the Lord "left communing" with Abraham on the matter after the number was down to 10, then there was no way Abraham could have interceded further. -- DVM]

It seems clear that Moses came to the point of desperation in interceding for Israel when he said, "Oh! Lord, spare thy people, but if not, blot my name I pray thee out of thy Book." He prevailed, and God waits today to be entreated by those who have the same indomitable spirit, and who will prevail or die in the attempt. Only a comparative few of our number make use of the privilege and carry the burden of real praying. This is evident in every service. Listlessness largely possesses us. During preaching we need to learn the art of prayerful attention. When the altar service is proceeding, the majority who have come to help pray settle themselves comfortably and listen approvingly while a few pray earnestly. Many others sit or stand back and look on indifferently or carry on a conversation. All this may be seen at times when desperate earnestness should be the order of the hour.

One more condition of effective praying might be here considered, that of unremitting pleading. "Shall not God avenge his own elect that cry unto him day and night?" "I tell you, he will avenge them speedily." Just what is meant by the expression praying through is hard to explain, but it can be demonstrated. The greatest need in the world today is for men and women who will turn aside from the usual activities of life and pray until they prevail. Respond to a call to service similar to the modest but effective heroism of the "Man behind the man behind the gun." Heroism is made easier when people are looking on and applauding, but the real sort is that which obeys the command of Jesus, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and pray unto thy Father in secret; and thy Father which seest in secret, shall reward thee openly." Some one has said, "In campaigning for God, battles are won, not on our feet before the people in the public place, but in the secret chamber of intercession." This sort of fighting is what is needed today. Certainly we are not praying to God just to be saying words which assert our love and loyalty. We pray that we may get

the answer. Otherwise it . would be largely a waste of time and energy. If we do not expect to receive and are not determined to prevail we had better not pray, for in such case would not our prayers be mockery? However, if we believe the promises of God, and that we may meet the conditions of their fulfillment then there is no investment of our time and energies so valuable as to pray.

Concerning prayer as an investment it may be said that a large business can not be done on a paltry capital. Therefore if we make it possible to receive some of the things we have been asking for, we shall have to pray more, for answers to some of our prayers come at a higher price than the moderate petitions we have been praying.

Prayer becomes an increasing delight to him who prays, who has learned the precious secret of praying in the Holy Ghost. This sort of praying will lengthen some prayers and shorten others. It will better the quality of all our praying as we learn this secret. Certainly God is well pleased with him who appreciates the great privilege of communion with Himself, and to him the special promise is given, "Delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

It is said that John Knox prayed in the lonely prison, where the hatred of his enemies had placed him until his knees wore hollows in the stone floor of his cell. Queen Mary said of him, "I fear the prayers of John Knox more than all the armies of England." Well might she say this, for he prayed her off her throne, and Scotland out of the blighting clutch of religious intolerance.

There is a splendid isolation which no one has experienced but he who has shut himself in the secret place alone with God, as Jesus suggested, when in teaching concerning secret prayer, He not only commanded us to enter into our closet but said, "And when thou hast shut thy door, pray." The most intimate contact is the secret touch with God. It is a wonderful privilege extended to us that God should thus grant us at any time so precious a private interview fraught with such mighty possibilities. The widespread neglect of this privilege must reveal the sad fact that not many have discovered the effectiveness, as well as the joy of its use.

Jesus gave us one of the very strongest incentives to effective praying when He so clearly indicated that much in the conquest of a lost world depends upon prayer. In view of the great need of laborers in the wide world harvest field of the Lord, He said, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he send forth labourers into his harvest." Many of those who shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father will be those who obeyed this command of Jesus. Thus in the secret chamber of intercession, out of sight and out of earshot of the crowd, doing their best work for God and humanity by praying until they prevailed.

Praise God! His promises hold good today to those who will prove them, and will pray until they obtain.

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By Delance Wallace

One has said that on the throne of God, Christ's highest fellowship with the Father, and His partnership in His rule of the world, down to us from above bears upon it the stamp of God, through Christ's intercession. . . is in intercession. Every blessing that comes Christ's intercession is the Father's glory, His own glory, our glory.

We have many books on prayer that are excellent, and hear much about prayer life, and intercession is usually interpreted to mean prayer. It means far more. To intercede literally means to "come between" -- to be a daysman -- by one who has favor or standing with a court of justice, to obtain favor for one accused. It is more likened to the final judgment rendered by earthly courts condemning the criminal to death, when some one intercedes with the one who alone can reprieve.

An intercessor is more than an advocate. Real intercession will, if necessary, be sealed with the very life blood of the intercessor. "He to rescue me from danger interposed His precious blood."

Christ the Intercessor is our life: His Spirit and life breathe in us. As in heaven, so in earth, intercession is God's chosen and only channel of blessing. There is a ministry of intercession for God's chosen known to comparatively few, but it is for all who will "Walk even as he walked." No other joy is akin to it. The author of Hebrews exhorts us to rid ourselves of every hindrance, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy ahead, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is now at the right hand of the throne of God where He ever liveth to make intercession for us. He has sent us forth into the world to represent Him, and we have the promise of greater joys than have yet been known if we press into the holy place, bearing the names of God's purchased people, as did the high priest, not only on his shoulders, but on his heart, symbols of carrying the burden of their souls night and day, and bringing them into the very presence of Jehovah. As it was the duty of the priest to tarry until God answered by fire, accepting the sacrifice, and manifesting His glory, Isaiah said, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof shine forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burneth."

Shake thyself from the dust! Put on thy beautiful garments. Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence, and give Him no rest until He establish; and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

The Jews still commemorate the death of Moses, and why should they not? God's anger had been kindled against them, and He bade Moses stand aside until He smite them from the earth, but Moses threw himself in the breach, and no pen has ever recorded all the prayer of his broken heart. God heard -- and the Word says, "We know that if He hear us, we have the petition." Real intercession today may mean praying until the heart breaks but there is promise of sure reward. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Again, when the people of Israel came to the prophet beseeching him to pray for them lest they be consumed, Samuel said, "God forbid that I sin against him in ceasing to pray for you."

The Lord said to Jeremiah, "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift a cry or prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee." And yet the prophet would not give them up, obtaining the promise from Jehovah that, "I will bring again Israel to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied."

Joel's exhortation was, "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach."

There is no doubt but that if the church of the living God will awake to all its privilege, much of the reproach that comes upon churches and individuals might be prevented, and suffering of every kind greatly alleviated. Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ. We may not have either of the gifts -- apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teaching, but we can and should all be intercessors.

There is always a fitness for God's priests: First, they must have offered the sacrifices of confession for every known transgression against God and man, and have had the witness of acceptance of the Lord.

Second, they must as definitely have offered the "meat offering" -- that of presenting their body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, with like witness that the altar sanctified the gift.

Third, they must come daily to the "laver of cleansing," which is the Word of God (Ephesians 5:26), that they may know they are clean from any spot upon flesh or garments and free from wrinkles (shrinkage of any and every nature).

Fourth, they must then receive that daily anointing with the fresh oil (unction) that was for each and every particular soul or family they were to bear before God, and for Whom they were to intercede at the throne of God. Without this preparation, our intercession will be fruitless. We may carry fire in our censor of our own kindling as did the apostatized priests, but there will be no heavenly fire and glory in response. We may be punctual and frequent in prayer without one bit of holy fire. We may spend days and nights in fasting and prayer, but without the anointing, the touch of God, we will be void of that power with God that prevails and finds favor with God and man, that makes even our enemies to be at peace.

That holy anointing was (and is) never upon a person who did not daily search the Word, that it might be a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. If, by this process, our heart or conscience condemns us, there must immediately be proper confession to God and removal of "spot and wrinkle," after which the Lord always will hear and manifest His glory. If under the law people who knew God could be strong and do exploits, what can not we under grace, if we follow on to know Him whose we are and whom we serve? As with Christ, we will count no time or trouble too great to receive from the Father that vision of God which grasps the great truth that in the Infinite there is a heart to throb for mankind, and whose will is quick and urgent to help and comfort.

S. D. Gordon, in his "Talks on Service," relates this incident:

A shepherd of the Scottish hills had brought his sheep back to the fold for the night, and as he was arranging matters for the night he was surprised to find that two of the sheep were missing. He went to the house for his collie. There she lay suckling her own little ones. He called her, saying, "Two are missing" -- holding up two fingers -- "away by, collie, and get them." Looking up pitifully, as if pleading for the care of her own, she seemed to say, "You wouldn't send me out again tonight?" But again, "Away by, and get the sheep," he said, and out she went.

About midnight a scratching at the door aroused him. He found one of the sheep back. After caring for it, he went again to where the dog lay with her little ones, and called her. She looked up. "Get the other sheep," he said. And out she went. About 2 or 3 o'clock again the scratching; and he found the last sheep back, badly torn, and the dog was plainly played out, but with wagging tail seemed to say, "There it is. I've done as you bade me. It's back."

He cared for the needs of the sheep, and then before lying down to his own rest, thought he would go and praise the dog for her faithful work. As he stooped over with a pat and a kindly word, he was startled to find her lifeless, with her little ones tugging at her body. She gave her life in obedience to the command of her master, and for the lost sheep. She had followed him all day with them, knew the rough and dangerous places where they were likely to have wandered and been lost sight of, and became bewildered and frightened until there was no strength left in them. Back over the path of the day, and off through all the ravines and byways until she found them, and brought them back to the feet of the shepherd.

In our prayer we go back over the places it has been ours to labor through the day, in the providence of God, no matter what the vocation; we find this one or another not at the house of God, not in the great sheep fold. We begin to intercede in their behalf; there will be darkness and storms to encounter, but with the eternal welfare of these in the balance, we get to the throne of God with the desperation of the woman of Canaan beseeching Jesus in behalf of her daughter. In the language of Dr. George Adam Smith, we will then go not to bring the enemy slain to the feet of the Lord, but to bring back God's own.

The intercessor puts himself where he can take every advantage to declare his own love not alone for the one in whose behalf he appears, but also for the Lord, whose favor is sought. He stakes all his reputation, fortune, and even life, to win favor for that soul. He will rejoice over the use of any instrumentality by God to compass the relief of the sufferer, or whatever be the object of his petition.

A mother in southern Illinois had prayed to God with strong crying and tears for years over her son, who had left home, the church, and God. God heard her cry; one night He dried her tears, and she arose, got his church letter she had held so long, and mailed it to him at Spokane, Wash., saying, "I am sending your church letter, for you will want it very soon." While she was writing the letter, he was at the altar in the old Pentecostal mission of the Pentecostal Nazarene church, calling on the Lord to save him from his miserable backslidings. He was gloriously saved, wrote his mother the next day, asking for the very letter she had already mailed him.

"And I sought for a man among them, that would make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none" (Ezek. 22:30).

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12

THE PRAYER OF COMMUNION, OR FELLOWSHIP

By B. F. Neely

The word fellowship, used in this connection, is not too strong. It means friendly intercourse, or communion. The apostle said, "And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." Again, "If we say we have fellowship with him [Jesus], and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth, but if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another." That is, we have fellowship with Him and He has fellowship with us. "As God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God and they shall be my people." Communion with God seems from the above texts to be fundamental in the relations existing between Himself and His children. The depravity of man's moral and spiritual nature resulting from the sin in Eden is that which robbed the race of the blessed fellowship with Jehovah which was originally planned for them; and which was enjoyed by Adam and Eve before their defilement. Therefore, it would only be logical to expect the restoration of this fellowship to be included in the scheme of redemption.

Communion with Him in prayer appears to be the highest form of our fellowship with Him while in this tabernacle. St. Paul enjoined the church at Philippi to make their requests known to God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. Prayer that does not have the element of praise and thanksgiving in it is not a very high form of prayer. It has degenerated to a spirit of begging. The beggar has no common interest with his benefactor, he is a parasite, always ready to take in, but never has anything to give out. Beggars are seldom, if ever, well fed. Depending on the pity of others for their living, their needs must be very apparent before even liberal people will feed and clothe them. Therefore they must be very irregular in their habits. The habitual, or professional beggar is never optimistic, from the very nature of things he looks on the dark side of life. He knows that he is a burden to society, and his very presence is repulsive to industrious people. Though they pity him and give him food, he knows that he is an unwelcome visitor. His developing into a pessimistic, chronic grumbler is but the logical result of his attitude toward his fellows and his course in life. It is deplorable for Christian worship to degenerate to the level of the beggar. Those engaging in this low form of worship may obtain occasional answers to prayer, but there will not be that holy intimacy with the living Christ which His great heart craves. The prayer of the beggar does not recognize that the heavenly Father has a boundless and fathomless interest in His children. But it rather tends to hold the petitioner aloof from his Lord. This is certainly not the will of our Savior, who represents our relation to Him as that of "friends" and "these my brethren," "joint heirs," and "the bride, the Lamb's wife." He said, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory." The prayer that brings our spirits into sacred communion and fellowship with Him is the kind that He seeks to induce His children to engage in.

It is no more true that evil communications corrupt good manners, than it is reasonable that good communications refine and purify bad manners. When Moses returned from his tarrying with God on Mt. Sinai, his face shone with radiant glory, not because Moses prayed so long, but because he had been long in the presence of his God. The great length of one's secret prayers counts only when it includes intimate relations and communion with Him whose "presence bright all space doth occupy, all nations guide." It has been long observed that when people associate with those whom they admire, and especially those whom they love, the mannerisms, tone of voice, and peculiarities of deportment of those who are the admired and loved, are finally plainly noticeable in the lives of the admiring ones; and the stronger character always has the most marked modifying effect on the weaker one. This is a psychological law, and is a great argument in favor of our ever increasing intimacy with our divine Lord in the closet of prayer. Again, intercessory prayer is perhaps the most important ministry possible to the Christian church. The Israelites were saved, by the intercession of Moses, from utter destruction at the hands of an angry God, Moses said, "Forgive them or blot me out of thy book." By his intercession Abraham stayed the wrath of Jehovah for a time, when it was about to be poured out in vindictive fury on the cities of the plains. When Jerusalem was under the siege of Nebuchadnezzar, the Lord himself looked for a man that would intercede for the city, and since He could not find one, He poured out the fires of His wrath and destroyed it. But the prayer of communion is fundamental in that of intercession. No one is able to engage successfully in the ministry of intercessory prayer without first knowing the inner secrets of the former. Without these personal inner circle manifestations of the divine presence, much prayer may be properly considered dangerous. One who spends much time on his knees without this holy communion is in danger of becoming Pharisaical in his attitude toward himself and others. Failing to receive the blessings that tend toward Godlikeness, among which are humility, love, meekness, and self-forgetfulness, all of which result from entering into the glorious presence of the Son of God, one may naturally decide that he is very devout, because he spends so much time in secret prayer. True enough, he may be devoted, but not holy. A few moments in the presence of God engaging in the prayer of supplication with thanksgiving, is worth more to the souls of men than much time spent in degraded religious begging, and may develop into a real intercessor. But the art of this important form of prayer will never be learned in the absence of the prayer of communion. In the illustration used by the Master when responding to the request of the disciples to teach them to pray, as John also taught his disciples, the man received the bread with which to feed his starving sojourner, "because of his importunity." Yet who would say that such importunity would be possible in the absence of a very intimate friendship, and a mutual communion between the Benefactor and the importunate pray-er.

O thoughts ineffable; O visions blest!
Though worthless our conceptions all of Thee,
Yet shall Thy shadowed image fill our breast,
And waft its homage to Thy deity.
God, thus alone my lowly thought can soar.
Thus seek Thy presence -- being wise and good;
'Midst Thy vast works admire, obey, adore;
And when the tongue is eloquent no more,
Thou shalt speak in tears of gratitude.

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PRAYER IN THE HOME

By James Wiley Short

There are two words in the caption of this article that are two of the dearest words to us in the English language -- Home" and "Prayer." What a sad life without a home! and what a cheerless home without prayer! Where these two words are linked together by love, the home is beautiful, Eden restored, heaven begun on earth. Home! How the word charms us! It is the quiet retreat from the strife and cares of earth. It is the rainbow of promise upon the storm-clouds, that tells us of a place where we are welcomed; where we are understood; where there is love and song; where we forget the cares of the day; where laughing children romp and play; where in the evening as the sunset splendors fade, we wend our way. How quiet the hour as the lost song of the bird is heard nearby! The hills and woods are wrapped in the glory of the fading day, as the sun hurries behind the western hills. The Lord paints the sky with glory and gold as the moon glides out of the east. We turn down the old path toward home, and hear the rippling brook as it hurries on, and feel the evening breeze, as it floats up from the valley, and murmurs through the trees, and is wafted against the cheek. We hear merry voices, and little feet tripping toward us. Mother at the gate, with a smiling babe in her arms, stands out to welcome us. Taking the child in our arms, together we walk homeward. Let us draw the curtain, and shut in the happy scene, first around the supper table, then by the fireside. Soon father says, "It is time for evening prayer; sit down and be quiet, children."

The fire burns low and red, as father takes the old Bible and reads from its sacred pages. Mother gazes into the fire, and is thinking of the home over there. She breathes a prayer to heaven that they may all meet in that beautiful home, "where the sun never goes down," and where sin never knocks at the door to try to drag our loved ones away from Jesus. Presently all kneel, while father or mother leads in prayer, and hearts are filled with good thoughts and blessings from above. Prayer is over, and soon little arms are around father's and mother's neck, and a musical voice is saying, "Good night, daddy, you'll not be gone in the morning, will you?"

How sad a prayerless home must be, where they don't ask God to bless and keep them; where the children are not taught to pray and lisp the name of Jesus! I don't know what it is like, for as long ago as I can remember there was family prayer in our old southern home, and since we have had a home of our own, there has been prayer in it. Thank God for it all! If it had not been for a family altar I might be in hell today; but prayer was answered. On memory's walls are written uneffacable pictures of family prayer. We children never thought of slipping off to bed until prayer was over. When we were older, and sins came to knock at our door, pictures of the old home and father praying would come trooping up, and we said No!

The influence of prayer in the home is far-reaching. Every home should be one where father and mother gather their children together both morning and evening. This should never be neglected. Out from homes of prayer have gone millions to bless the world, I have been in homes -- even sometimes homes of holiness people -- where by the actions of the children, I could tell they were not accustomed to have family prayer. In others prayer was put off until the family were scattered, or some had retired. No wonder that many children of holiness parents go out from their old home and turn away from Christ and holiness. What we need is fathers and mothers who are

old. fashioned enough to let their children know that as long as they stay at home they must respect their parents, and be at family prayer.

Oh, the glorious victories that have been won around the family altar! A friend or neighbor has dropped in as they were getting ready for prayer; conviction seized them, and they were soon saved. Many a boy has been saved because mother prayed, and daughter's life changed because there was prayer at home. Many a discouraged heart has caught a glimpse of Jesus as prayer was offered, and a call to the Master's service has often been settled around the family altar. The mailman or grocery boy listened to the prayer, and was saved.

So let us pray on. God answers the cry of His children. A child is sick; another slips off and prays, or around the family altar fervent prayer is offered. Next day the doctor says, "She is much better." What caused the change? The prayer of faith. There is power in prayer, to say to the death angel, "Stand back"; power in prayer to avert accidents and disasters. Oh, that we would pray more, and believe God for greater things! Around the family altar many a revival has been prayed through, as God was called on to roll back the tide of sin, and save souls. Here is an illustration of the power of prayer as prayed around the family altar:

A vessel out on the high seas was overtaken by a fearful storm; the wind blew harder and harder; the waves dashed higher and higher; the vessel leaped and plunged like a frightened steed, When the storm was at its height, the captain said to the sailors, "Boys, we are lost; there is no hope for us." Just then a youth stepped up to the captain and said, "Captain, we will be saved; it is time for evening prayer at home." To the surprise of the crew, soon the storm abated, the waves crept back to their accustomed places, and the storm-shattered vessel finally limped into the destined harbor. One evening a few weeks later a boy who had been away from home for years found his way back to the old home. As he told his story of the storm, father said, "Our boy, we were praying for you at that very hour." It so affected him that he gave up his wild life. What caused the vessel to ride the storm? Prayer was heard, and the Christ who walked the waves of blue Galilee answered a mother's prayer.

How many times when out in the ministry I have received a letter from wife or mother, or some one at home, saying, "We are praying for you," which has cheered my heart and put the iron in my soul to fight on, because somebody at home cared and prayed! Sometimes when away from home, I can almost bear a little girl's sweet voice pray, as I hear when at home, "Bless papa; keep the train on the track; give him good meetings wherever he goes; and send him home soon to us." I believe God hears their prayers.

Family prayer should not be just a habit, a ceremony to be hurried through, but where time enough is taken to hear from heaven. If we don't take time to pray the glory down in our homes, we will fail in public, It would be an excellent way for a father to get off alone with the Lord before conducting family devotions.

In the home there should not only be family prayer, but secret devotions. I firmly believe that every Christian, in order to be at his best for God and souls, must spend some time daily alone with God and his Bible; where the soul is poured out before the God who has promised to hear in secret and reward openly, If the secret closet is neglected, we will fail to be at our best in public.

There is a great letting up in secret prayer among people, including the preachers, today. Many who formerly prayed by the hour in secret, are seldom seen coming from their closets any more. We must keep prayed clear through, holding on until our hearts are melted and blessed and we feel God has heard us. Remember how you prayed when first sanctified, and what glorious seasons of secret prayer you enjoyed. If your pathway would shine more and more you must keep it up. Our enemy will make the hardest fight against our secret prayer life. If he gets in there we will soon be defeated. If secret prayer is neglected we will soon be cold, lifeless, and joyless, having form without the power.

What a contrast there is between a home of prayer and a prayerless one -- one where the fire has gone out around the family altar! How I enjoy being in a home where prayer is heard! Where oft through the day or evening different ones are heard in their rooms calling upon God! Many of the happiest hours of my life have been spent alone with God, and I am persuaded if we love God with all our hearts we will find time to get off alone and tell Him what is in our hearts. God grant that all our homes may always be homes of prayer and love where Jesus meets us from day to day.

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14

PRAYER FOR THE HEATHEN

By E. G. Anderson

The mightiest force at our disposal for winning the world to Christ is prayer. The blessed promise, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," should ring in the hearts of every believer until they are drawn to a life of intercessory prayer for the hundred million who are yet unevangelized. Through the mighty power of prayer marvelous achievements have been wrought. Neglect of it has retarded the progress of God's work.

With many the remoteness of the mission field seems to be a barrier to faith. It seems with some incredible that a prayer offered in America will be answered in India, yet, to our God distance is no hindrance. Some one has well said that we can spend a certain part of time on some foreign field every day of the year by setting aside a certain portion of the day for intercessory prayer. To the lack of prayer we can undoubtedly trace many failures on the part of God's people. St. James said, "Ye have not because ye ask not." This, together with the previous Scripture quoted, "Ask of me," proves conclusively that we as professed Christians have within ourselves the power to prevail with God until the heathen shall hear and know the Christ who is able to save to the uttermost. Although this mighty power is at the disposal of every true believer, yet to a great extent it is unused power. With many, prayer is the most important and again the least important factor of their lives. Most important because they believe they can not please God without intercession and prayer. With them it is a sense of duty and if neglected would bring the disfavor and displeasure of the Almighty. Again it is the least important in that scant time and little thought is given to it. Praying for the heathen requires a faith in God that will not be denied, and prayer that is merely offered for the sake of praying can not prevail with God, and will scarcely leave a memory in the heart of man. Praying for the heathen is not a duty required merely of a few

individuals who are sometimes considered missionary enthusiasts; but it is as much the duty of the man who claims to be an enthusiast along other lines. The cross that Jesus bore was a burden for the lost world. His statement, "Lift up your eyes and look upon the field," indicated the breadth of His vision, and if we are to be true followers and take up our cross, it will be a burden for lost souls the world over, and a burden for lost souls will result in a life of devotion and prayer. The closest test that we can put to our Christian experience is to turn back the wheels of memory and remember when we had a real burden resulting in time spent in definite prevailing prayer.

We have heard it said by opposers to foreign missionary work that they believe the heathen will be saved if they walk in all the light they have, and yet they do not seem to realize that if this is all that is required of a heathen, at least as much should be required of those who have had greater light; and if the heathen are expected to walk in the light, so should we be expected to walk in the light, and walking in the light in this twentieth century would mean that we should be willing to offer to others that which we believe is absolutely essential to eternal salvation.

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THE END