

# PREVAILING PRAYER



## **PREVAILING PRAYER AND ITS RESULTS**

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### **PREFACE**

The first and second editions of this valuable book have been exhausted some fifteen years, and this calls for a third edition, making some 25,000. The publisher has thought it best to enlarge and make some changes. In accordance therewith we have collected, under Part III, some practical "Results" of prevailing prayer.

The book will be of great value, not only as a sound treatise on prayer, but an incentive to prevail and expect mighty answers even in this day.



We are indebted to "Touching Incidents and Remarkable Answers to Prayer," by S. B. Shaw. "Remarkable Narratives," by Albert Sims, and other Sources for some of the matter used. Our only object in sending out this little book on a great theme at a small price is the glory of God and the salvation of many souls.

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### PART I

#### 01 -- THE BASIS OF PRAYER

"Let us pray." Prayer is the language of want. In simplest meaning, it is asking something of somebody. One life asks of another life. Prayer to God, the greatest of all, is asking something of God. As such, it belongs to the regular order of the universe, and to the eternal fitness of things. It is a vital employment of the Saintly Life. It is worship, always so; and it is usually measured with praise and thanksgiving, and the Divine Glory is stamped upon it.

Prayer never changes the nature of God, for this never changes. "The Who never changes," but "The What is never uniform." God is not a blind machine, but a being, instinct with intellect,



sensibility and emotion, and with an adaptation which makes these qualities grandly accessible to man. Some say that prayer never changes anything except its maker's and perhaps the listener's thoughts and feelings that it is ethic, moral, but never vital and spiritual. What a huge mistake! But infidelity is a huge mistake at the best. There are these changes made in God: He changes in His sensibility and intensity, and in His action. And on this account, very many things are done or undone, as His children pray or omit to pray.

Prayer is solidly fixed in the social qualities of God, and also of mankind. Especially, God and His saved ones of earth are of kindred life, interest and aim. They are one family. Even sinners pray when they think that God is their only help. But believers pray because they are of the household of God, and are interested in its affairs. Children pray, and parents answer prayer; it is a child-instinct to ask and a parent-instinct to give. Andrew Murray, in "With Christ in the School of Prayer," says, "'Ask, and it shall be given you,' lies in the loving relationship between the Father in Heaven and us His children;" and "when we walk in that relationship, the prayer of faith and its answer will be the natural result. Live as a child of God, then as a child you will most assuredly be heard." Another point: Christ is the Bridegroom, and the Church is His Bride. Prayer and answer belong to the refined communion of Christ and His Bride; and no less, of His communion with each member of the Bridehood. Prayer is a pleasure to God and to us. The "living creatures" and the "elders" have "golden vials" or bowls, "full of odors" or incenses, "which are the prayers of the saints." These represent the peculiar acceptability and pleasure of prayer to God. Again: Prayer is the common language of dependence and of want. We pray to God because we depend upon Him, and feel our dependence.

Prayer is a portion of the great partnership-life of the universe. It is a joint-occupation of the Communicable God with the communicable man, the current of a mutual opportunity. God requires that something shall be done, and so do we; and so we get together about it. He calls, and so do we; He helps, and so do we. We are His special assistants. God prays through man, and we pray in God. This company-union is a mighty engine of the Divine and human progress. The deeper the union and the wider the circuit, the better the Lord is pleased. The fact of "praying in the Holy Ghost," is the great experimental proof of the partnership of prayer.

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## 02 -- PRAYER TO GOD -- THROUGH THE ATONEMENT

Prayer is made directly to God as such. We deal with Him as the Divine and Almighty Being. We address the Father as a living and present personality, but many times the Son, and many times the Holy Spirit. Yet, specifically, or always at least substantially, we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ; for prayer is nothing without the Atonement. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name -- if ye shall ask anything in My Name." John 14:13,14. This scripture has special reference to the Atonement. However, to pray in the Name of Jesus is to pray in the Name of Jehovah-Help, Jehovah-Intercessor.

"Name signifies individual life;" and, in Bible lands, it usually indicated individual quality or character, or sometimes an incident in individual life. Exod. 20:24; Matt. 1:21. Andrew Jukes, in "The New Man," says: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name -- that is, in my nature; for things

with God are called according to their nature." The Expositor's Bible says: "When I hear a name, it calls up before me the whole man;" and to pray in the name of another; "is to come with the authority and power of that other, as his representative and substitute." Our petitions, made agreeably to the word of God, are indorsed with the "Name" of Jesus, and also indorsed and sealed with His Holy Spirit. The identical Life and Being of our Lord are stamped upon them by the Holy Spirit. The veritableness of His infinite resources is involved in the pledge of this "My Name."

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### 03 -- THE WIDTH AND RANGE OF PRAYER

The range of the Praying Life is exceedingly wide. Some, indeed, do not think so; but it is so. It belongs to God and to men at large. It takes in earth, heaven, and hell; time and eternity; life and death; want and supply; labor and rest; enjoyment and suffering; reward and punishment; home and neighborhood; the big and the little; the high and the low; the natural and the spiritual. It takes in everything. We are solemnly called upon to pray "with all prayer and supplication." Eph. 6:18. Note especially that he who professes Christ and never mentions his temporal want to Him, his place and surrounding, his family and business, has not yet learned the depth and circumference of the care of God, and our relation to it.

Yet no one is fully equipped in God whose prayer forever circles around himself and his own. A general prayer is often full of the Divine energy; and back of this lies the exhortation to "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks . . . for all men." 1 Tim. 2:1.

Prayer especially employs the natural man. It takes in the human intellect and sensibility, and goes to the depth of the human life and power. But it amounts to nothing without the Divine. Well says Benjamin M. Adams: "Unless there is a Supernatural Power, the whole business of prayer is a waste and a mockery." Prayer is a spiritual function, intensely so. It is an employment of the Spiritual Life. It is true that human want, and especially human need, often calls for prayer; and this is well, for this is all God-provided, and God-ordained. "In everything, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known to God." Phil. 4:6. But so spiritual is prayer, and so useless is prayer without the Spirit, that, with a human need most real, and a Divine promise staring it right in the face, there is no realization of living faith until, all human selfishness turned aside, God sees that the opportune moment for it is come.

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### 04 -- THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS OF PRAYER

The spiritual basis of prayer is readily determined from the Scriptures.

1. Take Paul: "Likewise the Spirit itself (Himself) maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit; because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Rom. 8:26, 27. Note this especially: all must be done "according to the will of God." Thus He prepares the way



for our asking. Then the Spirit helps the feebleness, the nothingness, of the saint, by groanings "for" him, and within him. (Explanatory translations; "Silent groanings;" "unspoken groans;" "sighings unutterable;" "groanings inexpressible.") But also note carefully that Matt. 7:8, "Every one that asketh receiveth," etc., and like passages, which seem in themselves so complete, are, after all, incomplete without Rom. 8:26, and similar Scriptures. Christ's saying is emphatic; that where "My words" -- that is, His immediate and personal designs -- "abide in you," there, "what ye will," "shall be done unto you." John 15:7. See 1 Cor. 2:11, 12. This shows a Divine prompting, before or at least in the asking, as of the strongest possible necessity in successful prayer. It reveals the Spirit-necessity as far above the Letter-promise, though formally it is founded upon the latter.

2. Take Jude: "Praying in the Holy Ghost." Such praying always carries along with it the sensibility of the Spirit's help.

3. Take John: "The same Anointing teacheth you of all things." 1 John 2:27. The Revised says: "Concerning all things." A general saintly provision; for prayer as much as for other things.

4. Take James: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16. This curious tautology of the Authorized Version is destroyed, if the word *energoune*, rendered "effectual fervent," be rendered (as by various scholars), "inspired." It is also rendered "inwrought." The "inspired prayer" is the inbreathed one; it comes into us by the Breath or Spirit of God. Just so! for the "fervor" of God is necessarily in the "inspired prayer." The hymnist, Montgomery, has it: "The motion of a hidden fire -- that trembles in the breast." But, this is not all. There is a human fervor also. The Comprehensive Commentary shows us that the original word may be rendered in either the passive or active voice; hence, apparently, the fervor may be either human or Divine. But this explanation is not fully satisfactory. Evidently, the sacred writer did not blunder, but was clearly impelled to give to the original word the exact form which it bears; yet in no wise making room for an alternative reading -- the human or the Divine -- but in order to show to us the wonderful fact that the prayer which "availeth much" is always a double prayer. Not the glow or fervor of the praying person alone, nor that of the Holy Spirit alone, is intended, or is sufficient, but there must be the combined fervor of the two. The "effectual fervent" is of both God and man. The human spirit has a heat of its own; but only as it catches the Divine heat is its prayer answered. Then, most certainly, it "availeth much." And when the pure human spirit has no special heat, the Holy Spirit throws into it His own heat, and arouses it, and the two work together. Persistency in prayer unto victory is always born of this double fervor. Thus, while we pray, we are brought into the Divine plan and activity; we have the communion of prayer, with its precious Divine and human results.

5. Take Jesus; especially in Luke 11:1-13. Here the man who went to borrow bread received it, because of his "importunity;" more literally, "shamelessness," or "impudence." This seeming recklessness is not born of impiety, but is of that humble, reverential, yet tremendous vehemence, which a superior sometimes allows to a pressing want. But notice this: it not only comes of the want of man, but is actually born of the Holy Spirit's special design and helpfulness. It could not be allowed or answered if God Himself did not inspire it. He purposely answers it. Glory be to His name!

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## 05 -- FAITH AS RELATED TO PRAYER

The Epistle of James contains this significant remark: "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." James 5:15. This links faith and effective prayer together. All true movement in laying hold of God in prayer has faith in it; and unless our effort is thus "mixed with faith," it is useless. John Knox, 1505-1572, in his "Treatise on Prayer," says: "How necessary is the right invocation of God's name, otherwise called perfect prayer, it becomes no Christian to misknow; seeing it is the very branch which springs forth of true faith." But we hear of "naked faith," and of taking God at His "naked word:" expressions which will not bear strict analysis, and frequently are mischievous. God's Word is always true, and it is the channel of our faith; but if "naked" only, it is practically inoperative. That word which invites our faith is not naked, but is clothed with the Unction of God. (Reference is not here made to any particular degree of emotion, but solely to the Spirit, the Unction.) We are only able to "take the blessing by promise," at the moment when the Holy Spirit stamps the promise upon our heart. Then we can grasp it with hooks of steel. No; we can not put our hand into the Bible, and pull out promises promiscuously, or merely at pleasure; the Spirit-stamped promise alone is our present promise. "Practically, then, the one who believes is the one who takes God at His word -- when that word is made personal to him," and only when it is made personal to him.

The more common definition of faith represents it as of man alone. We are exhorted to "trust in the Lord," and to "have faith in God," and to "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." Vastly important advice. We must steadfastly realize this very marked man-character of faith. But we should also as steadfastly realize this other and as very marked God-character of it, namely: The faith of man is the Gift of God. It comes from God the Spirit. To say that the power to have faith is the gift of God states a great truth; but the ground is not all covered by it. Faith itself is a gift from God, and of God. The New Testament clearly formulates this truth, as follows: "Love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. 6:23; Heb. 12:2; 1 Cor. 12:8, 9. This is very plain. In the texts noticed, first the Father, then the Son, and then the Spirit, is said to give us faith.

This faith is definitely named, "The Faith of God," and also, "The Faith of Jesus Christ." Rom. 3:3-22; Gal. 2:20; also, margin, Mark 11:22. Now the faith of God is the faith which belongs to Him as God. It is His personal faith. It is the faith which He has in Himself, and in these three particulars: first, in His own integrity; second, in His own competency; and, third, in His own plans. It is the utter sensibility which He has of His own honesty, power, and wisdom. Or, again, it is His trust and dependency upon Himself alone. Precisely what faith is to us, it first is to Him -- "the evidence of things not seen" -- not seen as things not yet actually accomplished. The Faith of God is also named the "Spirit of Faith." This is so because its foundation is not intellectual but spiritual; and because it is internal to the Holy Spirit, and He imparts it to our spirit. 2 Cor. 4:13. God constantly brings His personal faith into His personal works, and without it He would fail at every step. "Through faith we understand that the worlds," or ages, "were framed." Heb. 11:3.

Now the Faith of God is delivered over to us at the inception of the Spiritual Life, the life of Christ in us, and as a part of it. There is a great capacity in this life for praying; and this capacity is often materially enlarged. Nevertheless, those who possess it are considerably liable to be swayed by doubt and temptation, and by knowing Christ "after the flesh." But the excision of



inbred sin and the Baptism of the personal Holy Ghost give to our faith and prayer their stronger and mightier flight; and there is a deeper insight into the province of these elements than ever before.

The Faith of God gives to us spiritual witnessing. Heb. 11:1. It gives to us spiritual confidence and activity. Our spirit is filled with the Spirit of Faith, and the two are in communion; so that the victory resulting is as personal to us as it is to God. This faith never jumps at conclusions; to jump is to fall into the ditch, with no landing beyond; it is presumption, and not faith. The core of effective prayer is the Faith of God.

But let us take one more text, the words of our Lord; "Whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:22-24, R. V. Instantly, you have these things -- yet do not have them, but wait for them. Murray says: "And ye shall have them -- the things which we first hold in faith, as bestowed in heaven, will also become ours in personal experience." At the moment of faith, God makes out the title-deed for what we pray for, and records it, and passes the record over into our heart, so that we really own the property; but He waits the wise and opportune moment to put us into actual possession of it. Of God it was said: "Who maketh those things which be not as though they were;" and we do the same. Rom. 4:17. Many things are actually and fully received on the instant of faith; but many other things, with faith as real for them, must be waited for, sometimes for years.

The prayer of faith, containing the "witness of things not seen," is the forerunner of God, and is of the prophetic office; the truly praying man is a prophet of God. He "laughs at impossibilities, and cries, It shall be done!" We pray; we get the mind of God; we act upon this mind. As Abraham received the witness of faith, strong and clear, we ought not to wonder that he walked right on in the ways of life, without stopping to stagger."

Here remember that there is often a preliminary faith which teaches us what we may pray for in faith. And many things come up provisionally, until we are able to "pray into their marrow," and thus pray for them conclusively.

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## 06 -- THE QUALITY OF PRAYER -- PREPARATION FOR IT

The Lord is very particular about our prayers; most certainly, He is. He wants good, sweet, wholesome prayers, all of the way through. "Feebleness in prayer is the mark of disease." Many prayers need washing; they are unclean. But there is a recipe for cleansing them. "For He" -- yes, "He, -- is like a Refiner's Fire, and like Fuller's Soap." Mal. 3:2. This Burning Soap will take all of the grit and selfishness out of us, and out of our prayers, and make them presentable and acceptable. Real integrity, even if mistaken in aim, invites the attention of God; but wrong motive repels Him, as much in the Pharisee as in the desperately wicked. The unrighteous Philip II of Spain prayed, and even prayed earnestly, for the success of his great Armada; but Protestant England prayed against him and, behold! it was a horrible unsuccess. As necessary as sincerity is, it is insufficient, if grounded in unrighteousness. There is such a thing as leaving God out entirely, though in form calling upon Him. If we bow to self, it is not bowing to God. A victorious sister, in

speaking of the past, said: "I have seen my privilege in the Lord, and cried long and loud, 'Lord, give me! Lord, give me!' when my hands were so full that I could not take the blessings which He wanted to give me; I wanted all, right off." Here certainly were "vain repetitions." If our attempts at prayer are clogged, we should ask the Holy Spirit to show us the very thing that stands in the way. In fact, our prayers need a Divine editing.

Many prayers are badly frost-bitten. They need to be thawed out, and warmed up. We are to warm up our prayers; yes, get them warmed up. A hot heart makes hot praying, and usually successful praying. It is Fire, Holy Fire -- the "Blast of Burning," Isa. 5:4 -- which heats up hearts, and the prayers which are born into them, and are thrown out from them. Christ has this Blast of Burning ready for us. It is His white heat. It is otherwise known as the "Glory," or the "Glory of God."

An unknown writer, using the figure of the mail, says: "Some prayers never reach God, because they are not addressed to God's office. They are addressed to the audience. God's office is not in our neighbor's care; and if we direct our prayers to that point, they will certainly go to the dead-prayer office." Again: "There is a prayer upon which the address is illegible, because it has so many flourishes. It is uttered in a pompous, grandiloquent [grandiloquent adj. 1 pompous or inflated in language. 2 given to boastful talk. -- Oxford Dict.] style, and is full of long words, scientific terms, and classical quotations. How different, when directed from the heart! It is no wonder that this prayer "gets lost." Again: "The corroding acid of selfishness, sensuality or pride, is sometimes in our prayers. Such a prayer is lost on the way; it is poured out in mid-air; it is never answered, and well for us that it is not." "No legally stamped, sincerely directed and well-meaning prayer is ever lost. The answer may be delayed, but the prayer is 'on file.'" Sometimes prayers are shot out of a thoughtless heart, at random. They cost nothing, and are worth nothing, and therefore go to the rubbish-pile. You never think of looking after them; and if you did, it would do no good. "Praying at people," only on rare occasions and in a very rare manner, has no excellency in it; it is usually an impertinence, and works harm without good. The immediate physical condition, whether active or moderate, is intimately connected with immediate prayer-success. Moreover, we are never fit for successful praying until our spirit is in perfect accord with the Holy Spirit. Any little chafing of the feelings, any improper merriment, is against a proper approach to God. Even want of "recollection" -- which is another term for fixed attention of soul -- prevents suitable prayer. We must have the spirit of prayer or we cannot pray.

Moreover, a general preparedness, where prayer has the naturalness and ease which come of habit and former success, is exceedingly useful. George Muller and countless others have found this to be so. To be comparatively spiritless may mean that prayer is an awkward and clumsy affair; while a keen spiritual preparedness gives an ease and alertness to the whole prayer-effort. There ought to be a constant preparation for prayer.

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## 07 -- THE AMOUNT OF PRAYER

Here is an explicit command: "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. 5:17. Can we do this? Directly, we cannot always ask, but we can always carry along with us an under-current of

devotion to God, and of dependence upon Him. In our best praying state, there is an under-burden of holding up the work of God to God, or that of some particular thing to Him, momentarily and constantly. But here is another definition: Make a life-concern of prayer; a business of it, as of any worldly occupation; a vocation, and not an avocation. In it we find time, and regularity, and forecast. Paul explains his own language, in these words: "Continuing instant in prayer." Rom. 12:12. Always ready for it. Can take it up at any moment.

Even a great many spiritual people do not meet the real requirement. There should be a multitude more of praying; no doubt of it. In fact, the prayer-machinery is not half worked. No wonder, then, that it gets out of gear, and the journals are dry, and even rusty! At this point, practically, lies our success or unsuccess in the Eternal Life, and in all holy achievement. All the mighty men of God of the generations have been men of much prayer, as well as of mighty prayer. A general regularity of times for private and family devotion is needful on various accounts; yet being careful not to be so legal as to think that there can be no proper variation. The morning hour is usually the best for prolonged private devotion; for then the mind and heart are fresh and vigorous for action. The special hours for morning and evening devotion should regard the general convenience, so that no one can find excuse for nonattendance. The evening hour should certainly be early, so that the children of the household and those going out may be present. It is a loose and unsatisfactory way, and dangerous to eternal interests, to mind little or nothing whether all of the children, domestics, and visitors, are present or not. Jehovah stoutly promises a "fury" upon those families that do not call upon him. Jer. 10:25. There is also a precious, instant and ejaculatory prayer, which the spiritually-minded prize. Who that loves the Lord much does not speak to Him by the wayside, and amid the busy circumstances -- some of them very strange ones -- which occur in life? To go, to our knees is excellent; but to be able to pray as we run is the life and stronghold of our relation to Christ. And akin to this is that instant and improvised company-prayer, which is blessed to the edification of the saints on a thousand occasions.

A recurring direction of the Old Testament is, "Wait on the Lord." In the New Testament it is changed to, "Watch," or "Watch and pray," "Watch unto prayer." The Hebrew epistle puts it: "Looking unto Jesus." Psa. 27:14; Matt. 26:41; 1 Peter 4:7; Heb. 12:2. This waiting, this watching, this looking, is itself a kind of praying. Prayer is likely to be mixed plentifully into it, and it prepares the way for prayer. Meditation belongs to the same class of attention to God. A plenty of time must be devoted to prayer. "Let us pray" -- very much.

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## 08 -- PRIVATE PRAYER

In private prayer we gather the moss of grace very blessedly; therefore it requires time, in fact, more than any other kind of prayer. Here we deal with our heavenly Father solely as individuals; a fact not to be forgotten. We can say many things to Him which we would not in company. Some very devoted persons have secured places so secluded as to be able to "let out the voice without hindrance; but while this method is useful, of course it cannot be common. Madame Guyon suggests that ejaculations be sometimes mixed into private prayer. She also says: "When you are reading on religious subjects, you do well to stop now and then, and betake yourself to meditation and prayer in silence, especially when any portion read touches and affects you." Silent

prayer in company is a species of private prayer, and is very effective; a peculiar blessing coming down upon all.

Bramwell was interviewed upon private prayer, and made these remarks: "When we feel distraction, we are often called upon to fight and wrestle, in order to obtain 'a mind stayed upon God.' And sometimes, when it is suggested that we do somethings else, we ought resolutely to persevere in the path of duty; and when we conquer through Christ, those seasons are often most profitable. Should we, however, still feel dissipated, we may rise and walk the room, and sing, or read some portion of the word of God, and then kneel down and pray again. Or, if the body is weak, we may occasionally pray standing, or even sitting." And, we may add, that much effective devotion is made while lying down; although the posture is not the very best to prevent distraction.

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## 09 -- PRESSING INTO PRAYER

A merely natural prayer, so far as immediate answer is concerned, fares as poorly as an unrighteous one. Naturally, we can "lead in prayer, while spiritually, we are "led in prayer" -- the Holy Spirit doing the leading. A slow and lazy-like prayer betrays lack of interest, and is too natural to be answered. What farmer would think of hoeing his potatoes in so slipshod a way as he may hoe in his prayers? What salesman is so listless in selling a bill of goods as he may be in disposing of a bill of prayers? And what housewife is so untidy in her work as she may be in her praying? Yet, even when the body is weary, there are snatches of the most effective prayer -- God helping. Pain, tiresomeness or other distraction, may prevent the fullest desire for prayer, though the spiritual man loves it dearly. And the devil, or other evil spirits, will keep us from praying if possible. Therefore, we shall sometimes find it needful to press ourselves into it, as of some sense across; especially when we know that praying is in Divine order. As nothing impossible is expected of us, if in extreme languor or pain and we cannot pray, we should not count ourselves in condemnation; but we can at least be spiritually trustful, and at rest and fixed, and we will come out all right. Perhaps all at once the body will get ease, while the spirit of prayer is given, or the spirit receives a mighty inflooding of the Divine Glory, and we are made intensely satisfied.

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## 10 -- THE TEACHING OF PRAYER

Prayer should ever be taught. Its Scriptural basis and reasonableness should be made very plain, and its practice fully set forth. The Manly Jesus was deep in prayer; and He gives us careful directions upon it; and Paul and James give us brief but significant discourses upon it. H. MacGregor, at the Mildmay Conference, said: "I would rather train twenty men to pray, than a thousand to preach;" and, "A minister's highest mission ought to be to teach his people to pray." It is clear that pastors and leaders ought to gather the people and themselves together into close relationship "with Christ in the school of prayer." Spiritual people generally say much that is incidental upon prayer; but of systematic training into its philosophy, methods, practice and results, there is not a hundredth part enough done. It is gratifying that the subject is receiving a very increased attention. To God be praise!

We should teach ourselves to pray, and should seek instruction. There is essential need that the sainthood should use the methods of memory and will, to insure the full measure of special prayer.

Isaiah says: "Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Again: "There is none that calleth upon his name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee." Isa. 62:6, 7, R. V.; 64:7. The Holy Spirit stirs us up, and we stir ourselves up. If He stirs and no one answers, then the result is not reached; and if we stir ourselves without Him, the result is also disastrous. Num. 14:40-45. Paul has it: "Stir up (rekindle) the gift of God which is in thee." 2 Tim. 1:6 In the pure and normal state, we receive many stirrings of the Spirit, which prompt us to "take hold of Thee." And when we thus grip on to this Almighty "Thee," it always amounts to something. Oh, that we may watch these joggings, and always stir ourselves up to pray!

One method of being taught is to pray for prayers. Is there dearth? Ask for them; we have an abundant right to good and plentiful prayer-timber. Many a valuable prayer would be gained by going after it; or we loiter by the way, and lose the trail. Sadie Russel once said that she did "not have much on hand but prayers;" but one who has a plenty of these in full blast is sure of a plenty of those things which are required; such prayers are exceeding resultful.

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## 11 -- THE CALL TO PRAYER

There is an instinctive call to prayer. At one time it is to general prayer, and at another to particular prayer. The call is neither material, mechanical, nor human -- although it engages the human -- but comes up into us directly from the resourceful life of Christ, and lends to us the very energy of God. We are to pray always "with all prayer and supplication, in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication, for all the saints;" and then, particularly "for me (Paul)," and for other good things. Eph. 6:18, 19. Great breadth as well as depth is given to prayer; but those who are best taught of God and His truth pray the best. Today, one may be strong in the Lord, mostly because receptive from a thousand prayers which are focalized upon him; but tomorrow his own prayer, single and alone, may be as resourceful and resultful as though a thousand persons prayed for him. Sometimes, in the midst of petitions, it is prayer to stop, and listen only; God would have a chance to answer. And why do all of the asking? Perhaps our Father may have questions to ask us. Sometimes we meet with a kind of rebuff in praying, which is only intended to stimulate our persistency, and accelerate our faith. Mark 7:24-30. However, there are times when the great prayer-factory is not so much running for our present use; and the Spirit checks us and calls us to attend to something else. Deut. 3:23-26. But let us be sure about it. Take time to pray, or make time for it; let us stop all else, and attend to it.

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## 12 -- THE METHODS OF PRAYER

The forms of prayer are not inconsequential. Every prayer has form; and necessarily so, although the most of it is unpremeditated. Prepared forms are doubtless often used of the hymns and rituals; they serve to concentrate the minds of the worshipers. But the Holy Spirit must be free; and freedom mostly belongs to untrammelled utterance. A constant form is likely to run to seed, and then its use is no longer prayer.

Many persons insist upon a particular posture in prayer. A part of them agree upon kneeling, and another part, especially for public prayer, upon standing. Both styles are Scriptural, with kneeling predominating. The latter has the advantage of humility in form; which is worth something. It is decidedly preferable in a common prayer service. The Jews lifted up their hands in praying; and this brought the spiritual and the natural emphasis together. God hears prayer when it is made as we kneel, stand, ride, walk, lie down, and sit still. It is well occasionally to break up monotony, and start out afresh in somewhat an unusual form. Seekers of salvation and special blessings do well to spoil any illusion and break up any pressure, by lifting up their hands, toward the God who hears the confident.

Some prayers are thumped out, as notes may be from a piano -- and with about the same effect. It takes a heart that is filled with the Spirit to pray skillfully, and therefore beautifully. But right prayers are usually sugared with praises and thanksgiving. Put a praise in the cup first; stir one in occasionally as you proceed; and end with a round of them! This recipe is well-tried, and works wonderfully well.

Forget not that there is an argumentative prayer. We reason our case with the Almighty. He is sometimes pleased with it, in that it places our mind before Him in an orderly manner. Our argument, as the Spirit clinches it, makes us sure that our petition is a proper one. After the Israelitish worship of the golden calves, Moses plead with Jehovah for the life of his nation; like a chosen advocate he argued the case clearly -- and won it. Exod. 32:11-14. In a public congregation, the prayer-argument is sometimes very effective in arousing the faith of the people.

The tone and volume of voice in prayer are often of great importance. The main thing is to keep even pace with the Spirit; not louder than He fills, and as loud as He wishes to fill, and nothing different. In public, the voice should not be raised merely to "make a stir;" the Spirit makes the only effective stir. Do not crowd the blessed Spirit by a too loud voice -- He cannot be crowded. What is called the "preacher's sore throat" is often caused by a bellow, in which there is little or none of the Lubricating Oil of God.

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## 13 -- THE DRAWING PRAYER

We often come to a state of repose and quietness in prayer, and no further. We do not know exactly what is to happen, but we know that something is to happen, because Divinely assured that we are heard. There is a new sense of trust in God, as, lightly, or with a solid "Thud," our petition reaches its shelf in the Divine prayer-chamber, the place where many prayers are comfortably lodged until the timely time arrives for their answer. Our prayer comes "up for a memorial before God."

There is a steady, drawing prayer; it has a mighty hold upon the sensibilities, and the emotions are powerfully stirred. This is likely to be the way when those present are immediately affected by it. It is very delightful, but also very exhaustive to the physical energy. In fact, the grip of prayer is sometimes tremendous; even if it lasts long, as sometimes in travail of soul. An "agony" of prayer is not to be despised; the Son of man was acquainted with it. But many a struggle is merely a play of unbelief, and without merit.

There is an equally steady, drawing and assuring prayer, which is gentle, and rests quietly upon the sensibilities. It is physically as well as spiritually refreshing. The mind is then clear, and the Lord's thought drops into the softened spirit with ease and power. Everything in us gladly follows the superintending Divine movement, and without friction. The superficial in grace may like the waterfall with its foam best; yet there are those who, on innumerable occasions, find and love the deeper and quieter waters of grace, and meet their Lord there. All glory to our God!

There is also a drawing prayer which, in form, is a simple presentation. We present ourselves before the Lord, waiting that He may do for or with us what He may; or some outside object is similarly put before Him. If there is a definite desire, it is not mentioned; but there may have been a definite prayer beforehand. Madame Guyon, writing to Fenelon, says: "For seven days I have been in a state of continual prayer for you. I have desired nothing in particular; but my soul, presenting its object before God, that God's will might be manifested in it, has been a lamp that burned without ceasing."

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## 14 -- PRAYING THROUGH

There is much said about our "praying through." Indeed, we ought to pray through. God expects it of us. When we get hold of a prayer, let us go to the bottom of it. Many prayers are finished and effective in a moment, and we never think of lingering over them. They go through smoothly, or perhaps with a crashing rush. But others last much longer. Some prayers continue for years, and never lose their fragrance and power. In other cases, the full answer is detained by satanic interference, as was the case with Daniel; yet the Lord keeps it in view, and would have us bear Him some company in waiting the necessary time. Dan. 10:2-13. It must also be true that many people spend too much time in mere trifles of prayer. Also there are repetitions; and in the former there is at times a wonderful manifestation of the cumulative power of the Spirit. It accumulates by waiting for it. A prayer may have already been answered, yet an addition is made to the answer, or at least to its power, by praying more for it. How often we begin to get an answer, and skip off before the glory fully appears! Some people pray faster than others; and all of us pray faster at some times than at others.

Is there no danger of thinking that we have prayed through when we have not? There certainly is. A false faith may spring up, that is from the devil or some other evil spirit, that tries to make us believe falsely. This is so with the pure; and accordingly, the spirit of our faith must be tried by the Spirit of God. If not pure, then our unrighteous desires, so great even as to become decidedly emotional, may be thought to be a real faith, when they are not. Very much

disappointment, and not a little fanaticism, have sprung up from the possession of a false faith. The enemy has tricks; let us be on the alert.

We "pray through" when we come to a full or categorical answer. Such an answer is as complete as the prayer, at some or all of its points. We get every hindrance out of the way, the time is fully come, and the Lord pours in upon us a flood of light. To doubt this is foolish indeed. Even if an answer is not full, it may be complete as far as it goes, and satisfactory. Many a real faith covers less ground than is supposed; and after a time this is found out perhaps to our great disappointment. Too much was taken for granted. Our faith, though known most certainly to be real, will bear scanning, to see just how much there is to it. If partial, we may have a more comprehensive answer at last.

It sometimes occurs that the Lord delays the major answering of our petition until our faith and earnestness become deeper and fuller than at first we dreamed of. Isabel W. Berry, well known to the present writer, gives the following incident, which is a clear example of such delays: "One with whom I have personally held sweet converse was settled in a town where religion was at a low ebb. She prayed and testified until she suffered persecution, but remained true to God and His work. One night she was filled with the spirit of prayer and supplication: No sleep visited her eyes, but like Jacob of old, she wrestled until dawn. Finally, it was whispered to her ear: 'Are you a child?' 'Yes, Lord.' 'Well, then, what do you want?' Throwing her arms wide open, she called out: 'All of the community, Lord!' though up to that point, she had been praying for the churches only. Soon after, a revival broke out, that left hardly a man, woman or child out of the fold. In the country, during harvest, seven meetings a week were well attended and the fire was burning two years after, bright and clear."

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## 15 -- INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Intercession is the greater department of the Prayer-Life. "Intercessor -- media, middle-man," a third party bringing two parties together. Intercession gives a mighty emphasis to the Commonwealth of God, and to the enlargement of His Kingdom. Says H. MacGregor: "With the single exception of adoration, in which God alone is the object. there is nothing higher than intercession." God does not require pacification; but we are given the glory of adding our spirit of desire and faith to the desire of Christ's Infinite Spirit. We have herein a direct and personal interest in the business and affairs of three worlds. The "paper we handle" is put into the great "clearing-house" of the skies. No wonder. then, that we are named "kings and priests unto God:" for as kings our faith is omnipotent, and as priests we stand between the needs of humanity and the Living Source of supply. Most of the victories of the cross are obtained by interceding for them; and we are the chosen intercessors. When we come to the Father of Lights in the attitude of intercession, He rejoices over us as the promoters of His glory, and leaps in upon us with His free Spirit.

Intercession, in its highest dignity, comprehends and anticipates the Divine provisions and certainties. It experiences the prophetic impulses which are like those which at the first were sponsors for the promises of God. These are not mere quickenings of the intellect, but throbings



of the heart; those which announce the fact of forthcoming answers to the very petitions which human lips are uttering.

Intercession stands upon the high table-land of an imperious necessity. All saved souls were saved through human instrumentality. Says George Bowen, of Bombay: "The celestial theory of this dispensation -- gainsay it who will -- is set forth in these indestructible words of Christ: 'He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father; and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in me.'" John 14:13, 14. Says Andrew Murray: "So wonderful is the surrender of God's work into the hands of the Church; so dependent has He made Himself on it as His Body, through which His work can be done; so real is the power which the Lord has given to His people to exercise in Heaven and on earth, that the number of the laborers and the measure of the harvest do actually depend upon our prayers." Again: "In intercession, our King upon the throne finds His highest glory, too." Said William Bramwell, (1759-1816) of the work at Sheffield: "I have seen nearly twenty souls set at liberty; but I believe that I should have seen many more, but I cannot find one pleading man." "One hundred thousand persons were reported as having connected themselves with churches," beginning with the first great revival 1830, which was engaged in by Charles G. Finney in Rochester, N. Y., and branching out from it. This was all brought about and carried forward by intercession.

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## 16 -- THE INTERCEDING CHRIST

Jesus is the great intercessor. He is the First Paraclete, Advocate, Helper, to the end of time; the "Man, Christ Jesus." 1 John 2:1; 1 Tim. 2:5. He is the great Representative Man; He prayed, and brought the world to Himself. John 12:32. His great prayer of John 17 is His representative prayer for the Church; and He still prays for the "whole world." 1 John 2:1. Rendel Harris, in "Union With God," well says: "All of the prayers of our Lord are singularly timeless." Piercing the cloud, and "carried up into heaven," He "ever liveth to make intercession for us." Heb. 7:25.

In a minor sense, all the people of God become representative men. As of the earth, earthly, we are distinctively called upon to look after the spiritual interests of the race, earthly. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15; 1 Tim. 2:1. As soon as saved, we become intercessors with Christ. As soon as sanctified wholly, our mission of intercession, clarified from all defects of selfishness, is doubled and multiplied. We stand with Christ in the gap; not as detectives, to cut off every one who flees, who has a defective "shibboleth" in his mouth, but to help every one possible through the gap, into the flock and fold of Christ our Lord. Hallelujah!

Again, Harris says: "When you were brought to the Lord, one of your instincts was to go and spread your wings over the needs of somebody else; and by that fact -- that you were made an interceding being, a praying being -- you proved your unity with God in Christ more than by any other confession. Our conversion to God made us members of the Body of an intervening Christ."

Jesus, in the Eternal Spirit, intercedes with the Father in Heaven for mankind; while we, in the same Spirit, intercede with the Father on earth. Here is brought to us a most powerful Affluent, the Holy Spirit. He, the "another" Helper or Comforter, helps us with the suggestions and impulses of prayer, by which we prevail.

When the spirit of intercession comes upon the saintly heart, he finds himself in the succession of the pleaders of the Pentecostal Age. The voice of the "watchman upon the walls" has come to him: "Ye that make mention of Jehovah, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Isa. 62:6, 7. Here is a kind of restlessness which brings out a Divine restlessness, all of which is pleasing and profitable all around. Would to God that there were more of them, and there would be greater victories of the Divine grace. One praying man or woman, shut up with God, will shake Satan's kingdom. It is the Almighty who does the shaking, through the prayer-faith of the praying saint.

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## 17 -- INTERCESSION NECESSARY

Intercession is useful in a thousand ways; for our wants are few, while those of the world are many. Especially, it is a spiritual work for a spiritual success. It is a prayer for the ministry of the Word; and often the Word itself is opened up through the prayer of intercession. This prayer brings sinners to the cross, and believers to the full cleansing and baptism of the Holy Ghost. It is the root of the Travailing Life. We pray for the world, for a mission, for a church and community, for families and individuals. Many successful intercessors have had prayer-lists, which have helped their memory in prayer. Paul, a great intercessor, appears, practically, to have had them. And notice this: intercession often brings the intercessor plump up against the question, "What next? What can I do to help in answering my own prayer?" The Spirit and Providence together may indicate the next thing.

By intercession, we really reach those who, otherwise, are as really inaccessible to us. Says B. M. Adams: "Souls may be inaccessible to me; God can enter by His Spirit. A West Point lieutenant was showing me one day what he said was 'a model of an impregnable fortification.' 'Which means,' said I, 'you cannot take it.' Squaring his shoulder like the true soldier he was, he said, 'We can take anything that is open at the top, sir.' All souls are open on the side toward God." Again: "We proceed on great certitudes of faith to win men." "The Spirit of God, coming on the minister's soul in answer to prayer, sets free his individuality; his words burn, souls are moved, there is authority in his utterances. He knows what he affirms. And the secret is, he has offered the 'prayer of faith,' and the revival has begun in his own heart. There is intelligence in his plans; they are for eternity."

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## 18 -- FITNESS FOR INTERCESSION

It is a pleasure to quote this from Adams, On fitness for the Intercessory Life, he says: "It is an awfully solemn thing to really pray for souls." "At the last analysis, it will be found that the

present flabbiness of the spiritual life in the Church is mainly caused by a forceless ministry and weak pulpits; behind these, an unvictorious closet." "He who, in answer to the prayer of faith, receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost is a man at his best; he has 'entered the holiest by the blood of Jesus,' and is not a possessor merely, but a partaker of the divine nature;" a temple of the Holy Ghost, 'a habitation of God,' 'a building of God,' a furnished man." Fitness for lofty intercession is brought out further by an unknown writer, as follows: "The soul must form the daily, hourly habit of walking with God; of constant, conscious, personal communion with Him; of finding the delight and comfort of its life in His presence and approval ere disinterested love fills the heart to such an extent that, in strong cries and tears, and heart-breaking groans, it pours out its very life for the disinterested object it loves, and refuses to be comforted till its petition is granted. These love-filled and Divinely-controlled persons alone are the ones whom the angel with the ink-horn marks in the forehead, because they sigh and cry for the abominations that are wrought in the land." This is absorption into the Intercessory Life. How many of us are of this degree? Yet God calls for unnumbered millions of them. John Oxtoby, "Praying Johnny" (1762 -- 1830), with his very moderate talent, was exceedingly in advance of most of those who are strong in intellect, in his disturbance of the devil, and in bringing salvation to precious souls.

Fasting is often a great element of success in intercession. It lays up no merit, but it is an act of obedience with which the Lord is well pleased. Self-denial is usually calculated to please the Lord. It is still true that "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." The two go well together. Fasting, as a natural means, diverts the available vitality, temporarily, from the digestion of food, so that it may be used in the necessary work of prayer and faith. Jehovah found fault with Israel, because, as he said, "In the day of your fast, ye find your own pleasure, and exact all your labors." Isa. 58:3.

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## 19 -- COMPANY -- INTERCESSION -- PRAYING BANDS

Jesus interceded alone -- and so do we. But Jesus calls companies into the work -- so must we. He established "praying bands," made up of others with Himself, as found in these ever-remarkable words: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them." And in these words: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:20. How many times a great burden is lifted from a faithful heart, in meeting another one, who joins in the lifting! A multitude of these bands are merely occasionals; whether humanly provided for or utterly improvised, yet all of them Divinely appointed. Mal. 3:16. And these wayside gatherings are glorious. Finney says of the revival in Rome, N. Y., where five hundred persons were saved: "Indeed, the whole town was full of prayer. Pass along the street, and if two or three Christians happened to be together, they were praying." Wherever they met, they prayed. Says Adams: "It seems to me that there is something of a fraternity of prayer; that no sooner does a minister begin to pray in secret for souls, than he finds out that others are doing the same thing for such as he is interested in -- partners in prayer," Spirit-inspired partners. Formal praying bands are sometimes greatly used of God, some of them being stationary, and others evangelical and migratory. The local churches are evidently praying bands in behalf of local and universal interests; their members scattered in secret places and at family altars, or gathered in their regular places of worship. Jehovah calls his house. "My house of prayer for all

people." It is the companying-place where believers pray for believers, and for a world of sinners. The church at large is the great God-appointed Praying Band in behalf of "all men." Isa. 56:7; 1 Tim. 2:2.

How wonderfully important, then, if we would be successful as members of any Intercessory Band, that we should not only be clean before God, but before each other. Otherwise, there is little prospect of a work of faith. Differences, though small, are to be removed, prejudices given up, and the utmost simplicity of spirit and deportment obtained. "How can two (intercede) together, except they be agreed?" Paul and Barnabas could not work together because they could not agree. Acts 15:39. An apostle speaks very plainly of the necessity of right relations between husband and wife, so that their, "your," prayers be not hindered." I Peter 3 :7.

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## 20 -- PLEADING MEN

There are "Pleading Men." It is certain that God sets them apart to the specific office of prayer. Among the "diversities of gifts," we have mention of this one: "To another, faith, by the same Spirit." And "faith" includes prayer. 1 Cor. 12:4-11; James 5:14-16; Acts 6:4. The history of the Church reveals this wonderful scope of the Prayer Life. And the records of Heaven, to be made public when the Jehovah of hosts "makes up His jewels," will show the hidden prayer-sources of a multitude of strange and wonderful victories of the cross of Jesus. Not a few persons, for a considerable time at least, have no other visible spiritual function than that of prayer. They are peculiar "shut-ins" of God. They are shut away and shut up to this precious ministry of intercession.

To be invested with the more extraordinary function of intercessory prayer may well be desired. But whatever the provisional designs of God or the providential indications of it, there must be doubt that it is fully bestowed, until obedience and faith have become the deep and permanent status of the individual spirit. He who has it must be free from sin, sanctified wholly, and filled with the personal Holy Ghost. And more: he must be settled beyond all of the ordinary encroachments of the natural manhood, in what may be called distracting forms. Such persons live in a deep spiritual atmosphere. They are fitted, by thought and sensibility, to be taken into the "secret place of the Most High;" by which expression is now intended the council-chamber of Jehovah, where the secrets of government and of plan are revealed.

Many great things of God are never done until He finds the right "pleading man" to confide them to beforehand. And many other great things of His design never will be done, because, in the scattered remnant of spirituality, He cannot find the proper pleader to ask for them.

Do you know of any of the dear saints of God who have the gift of prayer in this remarkable degree? The modern Church has known a few. Make mention of the case of Abel Clary, who was converted in the same revival of which Charles G. Finney was the first fruit. A witness said of him: "He prays nearly all of the time, night and day. Sometimes he cannot even stand upon his knees, but will lie prostrate upon the floor, and groan and pray in a manner that

quite astonishes me." And Finney says of him: "This Mr. Clary continued in Rochester as long as I did. He never, that I could learn, appeared in public, but gave himself wholly to prayer."

Let us so live before God and in His Spirit that He may greatly use us in prayer. And if He so desires, let Him make constant intercessors of us, in an unwonted and powerful degree. Amen.

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## 21 -- LENDING AND BORROWING FAITH

Paul said to Philemon: "That the communication of your faith may become effectual." The Revision has it: "That the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual."

Faith is not in the market to be sold and bought. But, thank God, it is in the neighborhood, and may be lent and borrowed. Every one ought to have a supply on hand, to employ both home and abroad. When the writer was a boy there were "raisings" in the community. The buildings were framed from heavy timbers, and the men for a considerable distance were invited together to lift these timbers, first formed into "bents," into their places in the building. So, spiritually, we invite and answer invitations in the way of faith.

Lending out our faith to help our neighbor is very proper. It does him good in a great many ways. It does us good and makes us stronger for coming exercises of the precious commodity. We must "lend hoping for nothing again." That is, we must so love the good, and the success of it, as gladly to lay to our hand and do what we can.

Borrowing faith of our neighbor, under various circumstances, is as creditable as it is to lend. We may as well feel ashamed to ask anything of God as to be ashamed to ask the use of our neighbor's faith.

We borrow and lend faith for the purpose of a united and increased faith. Some are willing to be helped, but not willing to help themselves. They are lazy or covetous, and unworthy. If we try to lend such folks a section or two of our faith, we find it impossible to do so. We may feel led to exercise an independent faith for them, in their weakness and foolishness; but to lend them faith -- to get it into their hands so they can handle it -- is out of the question.

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## 22 -- HELPING OTHERS TO VICTORY

It is a great thing to be able to help others to pray into saving victory. Not every one is prepared to do much of this. A sound knowledge of the things of God is necessary, also faith and perseverance: and a good knowledge of human nature does not come amiss.

The penitent presents himself among God's people. To him it is a great step, and he needs all of the help which the people of God can afford. Alas for the company of disciples if he does not get it! The believer presents himself among his brethren as a seeker of entire sanctification, the

Baptism of the Holy Ghost. In this hour of his far-reaching effort, has he not a right to expect that they will now focalize their love and faith in his behalf?

It is important that we soon find out what the seeker needs. In some cases he does not know himself what it is. He may have some teaching, and yet progress is not made. If he does not know what he needs, or thinks that he does and is mistaken, one of the best things in order to get him to see it, is to have him pray aloud. It very often happens that one will pray out his condition much better than he knows or can describe it. From his prayer, we may now instruct him.

Another thing: great confusion is often made by a confusion of counsel. One helper may come near getting the seeker to the right position and acting, but another comes along and diverts him to another set of ideas and efforts. In such cases, the one who especially directs is called upon to exercise great wisdom and tenderness and, it may be, firmness.

The Spirit does not always intend to show the seeker some forms of righteousness; some light is reserved among the things which are known as the "unknown." Yet, in very substance, all sin is to be given up, and all righteousness received. In our instructions upon the forms of sin and the practices of sainthood, it is needful to be especially careful to speak of those only which the Holy Spirit, at the very moment, designs.

Light having come, will the seeker receive it? His self-righteousness says, "No." But he is to be taught teachableness and obedience. Get him to listen to you, and to God. The great desideratum is to get the seeker to yield -- yield -- yield -- to God. To yield at one point now; and to be held at every point until he does so, and knows that he does so, inclusively of everything. This certainly includes the unknown as well as the known.

But unbelief (not disbelief) is the last point of inbred sin, and is, in fact, the crucial point of victory. When unbelief gives way, faith is easy. If we let go, we can take hold. At this point, it is often necessary for the helpers to ask for the special help and flow of the Holy Spirit, and to have faith for the seeker, or with him. Always show him that it is not the mere belief of the written promise which is sufficient. Real faith, in receiving real salvation, is always spiritual; it is of the heart. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Amen.

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## PART II -- SOUL TRAVAIL

### 23 -- THE GENERAL SUBJECT

As salvation in the Atonement is a universal provision, the Holy Spirit goes forth to convict men and women of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He also shows to them Jesus Christ as able to save them, and ready to save them, when they forsake their sin and believe on His precious name. But this is not all; far from it. God has made His proffered salvation a matter of family concern. It is His business; and it is our business as well. We are called to be "workers together with him." 2 Cor. 6:1. It is a fact -- that we may well affirm, an astonishing fact -- that scarcely a soul is saved to God without some special human agency. Even the Son of God was

clothed with humanity before He could save the children of men. What a glorious privilege is accorded to the Church of the Living God, in His offers to it of the plenitude of His Spirit, and of the power of engaging with Him in wooing men to Christ, to life, and to Heaven!

In order that the truth on the subject of Soul Travail might be fairly rounded out, the present author sent a short series of questions to a few ministers of experience. The answers received from them are remarkably accordant. A free use of these answers is herein made; and, in quoting from them, an initial letter for each particular author is appended, as follows: "B.," "D.," or "R."

The subject of Soul Travail requires elucidation. It is not true that all professing Christians see this fact, or will see it. Upon this point, a minister of our Lord Jesus Christ has written these trenchant words: "I believe that there are vital truths upon this precious doctrine and experience of Soul Travail of which the Church, in this age of spiritual declension and formality, has well-nigh lost sight. The Church is full of spiritual adultery, and married to the world; and, as a result, is producing illegitimate children who know nothing about the new birth -- 'bastards, and not sons' -- having the devil for their father, 'and his works they do follow.' We ought not to let anything deter us from imparting to others the light and truth which we have received."

There is no inconsiderable imagery in the Old Testament which proceeds upon the theory that God is the Husband of His people; and that, when they depart from Him to worship other gods, it is nothing less than spiritual adultery. Andrew Jukes, in "Names of God," when discoursing upon Adonai, usually translated "Lord," shows very conclusively that the term not only belongs to God as the ruler of men, they being His servants, but, as well, to the marital relation.

The Church, in its Pentecostal form, is named "Beulah," Married; and as such, Jehovah says she shall be called "Hephzi-bah," "My Delight is in Her." Isa 62:4. But look at Isa. 54:1-4: This is a prophecy of the Church -- the "Church of the Old Testament," developing into that of the New. It is immediately preceded by the greatest Messianic chapter of the Old Testament which includes the "travail of soul" of Jesus, wherein He is "satisfied."

Israel in prosperity had comparatively few proselytes; but, after being desolated by idolatry (spiritual adultery) and captivity, the Church, recovered to the wifely condition, shall have -- and does have -- an abundance of spiritual children. "For thy Maker is thy husband; the Jehovah of Hosts is his name." "For Jehovah hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God." The result is: "And all thy children shall be taught of Jehovah; and great shall be the peace of thy children." In subsequent chapters, the same subject is carried forward. Isa. 56:1-8; 59:19-21; 60; 62:4, 5; 66:7-9.

By inspiration, Rosen speaks of the unwifeliness of Israel, and the recovery from it in "that day," the Pentecostal day. He says: "It shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more, Baali." Ishi -- "My husband, my man;" Baali -- "My Lord," from Baalim, their false god. And further: "I will betroth thee to me forever -- in righteousness -- in mercies -- in faithfulness." Then is added that strange expression, so often found in the Old Testament as indicative of the husbandly and wifely relation: "And thou shalt know Jehovah." Hos. 2:16-20. To "know Jehovah" is not a symbolism, but it actually indicates the relationship and fruitfulness, in a purely spiritual way, of Jehovah and His people.

Charles G. Finney received the distinctive blessing of entire sanctification in Boston, in 1843. Of the succeeding period he says: "At this time it seemed as if my soul was wedded to Christ, in a sense in which I had never had any thought or conception of before. The language of the Song of Solomon was as natural to me as my breath. I thought I could understand well the state of mind he was in when he wrote that song; and concluded then, as I have ever thought since, that that song was written by him, after he had been recovered from his great backsliding."

John the Revelator quotes an angelic speech thus: "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Jesus said to John: "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come."

There is truly a wonderful difference between the Infinite and the Finite, or God and the Church. It is only in a very limited sense that they can be called Husband and Wife together. But, under the Scriptures, there is certainly something in this direction which is so real, something so rich and noble, something so holy and of good report, and therefore something so experimental and desirable, that it ought not to be rejected, but claimed and enjoyed. It belongs to the collection of the saints of all ages, and, in its place and relation, to the individual believer into our Lord Jesus Christ. It peculiarly belongs to us on the earth. What a powerful helpmeet the good wife is to the good husband! And God sets His Great Wife to the noble task of helping Him. He communicates His plans to her, and also Himself. She understands His motives and business. She does what none other than she, in her purity, can do -- and does it well. She presents, and declares, and communicates God to men.

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## 24 -- THE LIFE AND ITS RESULTS

In the work of bringing sinners to the Eternal Life, the Church (and so, at times, some of its members) bears a relationship which is at least strongly akin to that of mother. This is "Travail of Soul," or, the Travailing Life. Let us carefully inquire into it. This life, among other things, is a specific Spirit of Prayer. It is the spirit which belongs to all genuine prayer. It comes immediately from God, and is His gift for the occasion. An intimation of it comes to the child of God, from the Spirit of God. A desire for it is thus created. This desire is followed up thoroughly. The result is the prayer of faith and Travail of Soul. Then the Lord, taking His own time and the proper time to work, answers this prayer and Travail in converting power. Or, it may be, several hearts feel the same kind of moving, and make the same kind of prayer, which is the same kind of Travail; and the result is the same, or more extended. Thus the designs of God in our behalf and in behalf of others are accomplished. Herein is a circuit, starting from God, reaching men, and returning to its source, to God. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself (himself) maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26.

The term "burden" is variously employed in the Scriptures, In the Old Testament, it is applied to prophecy; by which is indicated the weight and pressure of inspiration, sometimes including a vision. At the present day, the term "burden" is applied to prayer of various kinds, as follows:



1. "Burden of Soul." This is a general term. It denotes a pressure of the Holy Spirit, in almost any needful direction, indicating that light and help are coming from the Lord.

2. "Travail of Soul." Quite properly, this term does not apply to every possible Spirit-burden, but only to the kind that is designed for the bringing of a soul into the family of God, that is, the term itself indicates this use of it alone.

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## 25 -- THE NATURE OF SOUL TRAVAIL

What, then, is Soul Travail? Answer: It is the Living God, through a spiritually Living Soul, bringing a spiritually Dead Soul into the Spiritual Life. A soul is "born of the Spirit." John 3:8. It is admitted, not always at the instant of Soul Travail; yet certainly, in due time, it is "born again" -- born into the family of God. Another answer: "The Travailing Life is a Heaven-inspired and heavenly-offered prayer, which culminates in an anointed and Heaven-inspired faith. Thereby the Eternal Spirit is enabled to bring a soul that is "dead in trespasses and sins," into the Eternal Life. Eph. 2:1. The believer, as a "priest unto God," accompanies the intercession of Jesus in heaven with His own upon earth. The intercessory "groanings" of the Spirit take place within the believer, so that they become his own. The Spirit works; the believer works; and, lo! the end reached is a son, a daughter, born into the kingdom of grace. Amen, and Amen.

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## 26 -- CONCERNING ACTUAL RESULTS

But is it intended to declare here that Soul Travail actually results in the conversion of sinners? If so, does this always occur immediately? Answer: Sinners are always brought to God through this life. When a person is present who is already seeking Christ, sometimes the assurance that he is saved is given to the burdened one at the very moment of such salvation; but in other cases the work is delayed for days, or weeks, or even years. However, in a burden of soul without real Travail of Soul, the sinner may be convicted without yielding to be saved. Another answer: "The assurance will be immediate; but the accomplishment in some cases may be somewhat delayed." (B.) Another answer: "The conversion of the individual for whom there is travail may follow immediately after the assurance of faith is given, or there may be years of waiting. In some instances, mothers have been burdened for their sons, and in Travail of Soul have received the promise, and held it against all temptations; and after years of waiting they have gone down to their graves, declaring their faith that those sons would be saved, though they were still going on in sin. But at last they were brought into the fold." (D.)

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## 27 -- FITNESS FOR THIS LIFE

There must be qualities of fitness in those who are called to the Travailing Life. What are these qualities? First answer: A church, as a body, should always be ready for this blessed call. "The more holy a church, the more Travail of Soul will it have, and the more fruit there will be borne for God."

A further answer: The "Captain of our Salvation" was perfect in every human attribute; yet in the way of a knowledge or experience in the bringing of humanity to God, so as to be "satisfied" therewith, He only became "perfect through suffering." Isa. 53:11; Heb. 2:10. And so the sainthood seems to be little effective in the Travailing Life, until there is an actual knowledge or experience -- a taste -- of the quality of sin, and of the danger and punishment of the lost.

The power to carry the burden of a soul's spiritual death up to the point of transformation into its Spiritual Life is enjoyed by a few only. Yet it is the general heritage of the children of God. There is no doubt that God is pleased to have His little ones earnestly and persistently seek Him for this inestimable gift. Consult 1 Cor. 14:1. You can have it, O man of God, if you do not have it. If you see that little is accomplished around you for souls, it does not appear to be wise to spend much time in laying this fact to their hardness of heart, nor even to the indifference of the Church. It is better to see how much of the responsibility lies at our own door, Give the Lord a good chance, and see what He will do in helping you to help others into the Eternal Life.

It takes a steady evening of the glory of God, and instant attention to the Spirit of Truth, if we would be sure of following Him in the Travailing Life. We must be able to read the call of God, and obey it.

It is sad to see any one finding fault with the Travailing Life, and its joyful yet painful manifestations. It betokens ignorance of the methods of Salvation, or a low spirituality, or none at all. John Fletcher well says: "Beware of vilifying the spiritual agonies of the children of God, by calling them mad-fits" (Checks to Antinomianism). God is intensely interested for the sinner, and He requires an intense co-operation.

The following instance occurred in 1893, in the experience of a minister known to the present writer. It is remarkable, as showing an impression for a soul at sight. "God put the Travail of Soul upon me at the -- camp meeting for a man who was a confirmed drunkard. I followed a brother in an exhortation, and the Holy Ghost was mightily upon me. I saw the man standing in the congregation while I was speaking, and there came upon me such a desire and burden for his soul that the tears gushed from my eyes. As soon as the altar service began, I felt led of the Spirit to go and kneel in the preachers' stand; and, as soon as I knelt, there came an awful Soul Travail upon me for that man," etc. "Three days after the close of the meeting, a letter came telling me of this man's glorious conversion.

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## 28 -- IMPRESSIONS OF SOUL-DANGER

What impressions of danger come upon one concerning a soul before and during a burden and Travail therefor? Answer: There is a deep and settled sense of the danger of that soul, as lost

from God. Sometimes hell itself seems to be uncapped until the beholder starts back at the awful vision. This experience is a special help in bringing on a special love for the soul indicated, and a desire for his salvation. Then, so far as may be applicable to a saint on earth, Gethsemane is repeated, until Gethsemane's victory is assured. Another answer: "Impressions of danger, made by the Holy Ghost upon the mind of the one burdened, vary according to the real facts of the case, and as God would have them apprehended. Sometimes he is impressed that this is the last opportunity the lost soul will ever have; and his condition is so vividly pictured before the believer that, in sympathy, and to some extent, he suffers as he would suffer if himself were known as doomed to be finally lost. I have myself shaken like a leaf in the wind, and felt an indescribable horror come over me, when burdened to an unusual degree for a soul."

Soul Travail is a state of spiritual tension. And, by a common law of being, this tension communicates itself more or less to the mental and physical man, and these suffer from it. From a purely spiritual standpoint also, there is nothing strange about this tension, even to the point of suffering. It is a part of the Divine plan that we, in some measure like our blessed Lord, should suffer for others. In the Travailing Life, the experience of suffering comes from the startling danger that is brought into the horizon of the soul. It may be short and comparatively light, and yet the work effective; or it may be protracted and severe, that the work may also be complete. But God usually calls out the wealth of the believer's determination, the fiery purpose of his soul, through prevailing prayer, before He ushers him into the chamber of victory. No very great mountain of sin is cast into the sea without strong feeling and mighty cries to God. An occasional cause of the prolongation of the struggle that belongs to this work is mentioned by Charles G. Finney, as follows: "When professors of religion get loaded down with the weight of souls, they often pray again and again, and yet the burden is not gone nor their distress abated; because they have never thrown it upon the Lord in faith." (Lectures on Revivals.)

Another answer: "There is usually more or less mental and physical pain connected with Soul Travail. But in my own experience I immediately regain my usual strength and normal condition, as soon as the burden is passed, so that I feel no injurious effects therefrom. In conversation with others upon this point, they have said substantially the same. There are some cases which are comparatively light, and yet effectual. I think that Travail for children and young people, as a rule, will be light and less painful. Still, there may be exceptions to this, as some who are young are hard and unbelieving." (D.)

"Sometimes, persons who join in the intercession become sharers of the pain, and this will alternate or rotate in order, in regular or irregular periods. Care should be taken lest a mere sympathetic burden be taken for the true one, of which it may be a close imitation." (B.) Another answer: "Doubtless, the prayers and faith of others are a great help in Soul Travail, and are often ordered of the Spirit. At times, one may be so absorbed in the work as to be wholly unconscious of what is occurring around him; but at others, he may desire and call for prayers and co-operation. I believe that great caution ought to be used by those present that they pray and work in harmony with the Spirit. I have seen great havoc wrought by the interference of those who did not have spiritual discernment enough to know what was occurring. The Spirit was grieved, and ceased operations." (D.)

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## 29 -- NOT ESPECIALLY A MATTER OF SEX

Do women appear affected with burden and the Travailing Life oftener than men? If so, from what cause? Answer: "Very likely women are oftener thus affected than men; because they are in numerical excess in the Church. Sex, I think, has nothing to do with actual Soul Travail; but sympathetic burden doubtless is more frequently with women than with men." (B.)

Various examples of the Travailing Life are given in Wicle's "Prevailing Prayer," in Terrill's "Life of Redfield," and in Finney's "Autobiography." A notable example is found in the "Remains of Melville B. Cox," the early missionary to Liberia. Many other examples are also to be found in print; and those unprinted no man could number.

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## 30 -- MY BLESSED OLD BARN

Helpful to stimulate our hearts in this holy and God-accompanied work are the following paragraphs, written for the New York Christian Advocate a few years ago, by Benjamin M. Adams. Already this spiritual writer has been freely quoted. But note especially his "blessed old barn."

"The question is, Why may not every minister move into the use of this Wonderful Force today? What if fifteen thousand Methodist ministers" -- and the ten thousands of other ministers who have any real heart for soul-saving -- "should simply go to God and pray till they prevailed, dropping everything else, or that which may interfere with successful prayer? Who can doubt that in three months we would change things in the Church and nation?"

"Why should these Lofty Forces of the Spirit be unused, to a great extent, by the very men in whose doctrines, hymns and usages the power of the Spirit is most recognized, and by whom they can be had for the asking? There is a tremendous responsibility somewhere."

"On one of my charges was a bright boy of seventeen or thereabouts, for whom his father, mother and sister were much concerned, and asked me to pray for him. His name was already on my prayer list of thirty-two young people in the place. One night, in my blessed old barn, I offered the prayer of faith for that boy and the other thirty-one. About three months after, I asked him to go forward for prayer. He went, was a most earnest seeker; and in a little while, in the same barn where his friend had prayed for him, he was blessedly saved. Every one of the others on my list was saved, and many besides; and only one failed to hold out, so far as I have been able to know the subsequent history. This is one of the peculiarities of this sort of soul-saving, they hold out."

"My youngest brother was a popular, pleasure-loving young man, who gave his father and mother great uneasiness because of his drift away from God. I received a letter from his mother, telling how he was going on in New York -- chairman of a committee having in hand a whole winter of balls and dances -- and entreating me to pray for 'Sam.' That night I went to my barn to pray for him, and about midnight offered, as I believe, the 'prayer of faith,' had the assurance that I

was heard; and wrote my mother next day to that effect. I never for a moment after that had any uncertainty as to his salvation, though 'watching unto prayer' for seven years; when in the providence of God, he moved to the place where I was pastor, and in a meeting I held was gloriously converted."

"Herman Bangs told me that, before the revival in New Haven, he sought first for himself the baptism of God's Spirit on his soul, and found it. The plan of his campaign came to him at the same time. He said, 'I prayed until I saw victory.' He started a meeting with services three times a day, for three weeks. He preached at every service to the church only, inviting the members forward for prayer every time. The meeting had been going on for a fortnight, when a committee of the official board waited on him and asked him why he did not ask sinners to come to the altar, and why he so persistently dealt with the church. I did not answer the question directly, but asked the spokesman, Do you pray in your family, brother? I said to the next one, Are your affairs with your former partner settled? And so on, questions all around, and no reply from any of them. I said, Let us pray; and it was a weeping time. They left in tears. At the end of three weeks, I gave my first invitation to sinners; over six hundred professed religion."

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### 31 -- SECRET AND PREVAILING PRAYER -- By E. E. S.

The great majority of professors never pray in secret; then a less number go through with a form because they feel it is their duty and consequently brings relief of conscience; then still a less number enjoy secret prayer, but only do enough of it to keep saved and free from condemnation; and there is still a less number who go beyond this, and know how to hold on and prevail with God for great things.

Yea, the majority of holiness professors have never learned the secret of prevailing prayer. In every generation there have been only a few, one here and there, who continually outgrew himself, outstripped his sluggish brethren, and kept making rapid strides in growth in grace.

Spasmodic efforts will not produce lasting results. Some get stirred up on this line, and do very well for several weeks or months, but influenced by others, or having compared themselves with the generality of professed Christians, they finally slack up on their oars, and though they may still hold their own, their aggressive, penetrating power has departed.

It seems it is not in some souls to keep up a steady aggression without the help of others. It is so easy for them to come to a standstill, and feel content with the thought that they are not degenerating; rather than being pushed forward by a longing desire to test all the possibilities of grace. They are too easy-going and aimless in their make-up; they do not stir themselves and push out, only as they have to. Such souls may finally get to Heaven if they have some one to accompany them and keep them from settling down in the lap of carnal ease, but this is about all.

One reason why souls do not find delight in approaching unto God is that they do not want to look at the thing that He invariably calls their attention to; that thing that grieves the Spirit and

separates between them and His shining face. It is a pretty sure sign of being backslidden in heart when you do not love to look forward for an opportunity to get alone with Jesus.

Do not be in a hurry to get through tarrying in the holy of holies. After you get complete victory over all the rush, noise and cares, then you are only getting into a proper attitude where God can draw near and speak His wonderful secrets. Many times one is about to arise from his knees when another floodgate is opened that deluges the soul.

It pays to hold on and wait before the Lord. Satan is aware that he who does this is sure to renew his strength, so he sets himself to fill that mind with cares, wandering thoughts and a thousand suggestions; and if one of these is successfully resisted, he will put something else in its place, and in every way possible try to divert the mind.

"He may try to accuse you of some wrong, for he is the accuser of the brethren; and since in the presence of God the praying one wants to be entirely honest, he will perhaps be induced to dissect the accusation of the devil and assure himself that his motives are right and that he did no wrong.

This is all the devil wants. He will get you to dwell on some imagined wrong until you lose for the time all desire for real, earnest prayer, since you cannot do the two things at once. As a last resort the devil may tell you that you have so much to do for the Lord that you cannot afford to spend much time in your closet. This sounds reasonable to the inexperienced, but it is a great mistake. We must take time for secret prayer. Time spent alone with God is always profitable, besides, work done for God cannot be effectual unless we keep prayed through."

"One of the holiest men that ever lived expressed his regret that he had spent so little time with God and so much time with men and things. We all commune with God too little, and are too much engrossed with distracting cares. Daniel knelt before God three times a day. David in his better years had seven regular seasons for prayer each day. Jesus was much in prayer. Robert Murray McChesney allowed that 'he ought to spend the best hours of the day in communion with God.' 'It is my noblest and most fruitful employment,' said he, and is not therefore to be thrust into a corner.' Secret prayer is the key to success in public Christian work. Fifteen minutes with God is the best qualification for an hour with men. Rapt communion with the Divine begets holy trust for contact with the human. 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.' The mightiest Christians that ever lived, like Jacob, Moses, Paul, Peter, Luther, Fletcher and Asbury, were often and long on their knees waiting for the baptism."

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## 32 -- WHY SOME PRAYERS ARE NOT ANSWERED

In view of the many passages of Scripture which go to encourage us in asking blessings and benefits, why is it that we do not see more answers to our prayers? God challenges the world and says, "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened." And again, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my (Jesus) name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the

Son." And yet again, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."

These passages with many more go to prove that God is more anxious to answer than we are to receive.

Well then, why is it that those who pray do not receive more answers to their prayers? We are forced to one of two conclusions: either God is not faithful to His word, or there is something radically wrong with our prayers.

We wish to mention three kinds of prayers that God declares He will not answer.

1st. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." -- Ps. 66:18. This applies to heart sins, such as the harboring of old grudges, prejudices, party feelings, family troubles, etc., etc. If it is not this it may be pride and rebellion of heart which keeps you from making a needed apology, confession, or restitution to some injured one. No difference how eloquently or earnestly you appear to pray, yet if God can look down and see that you are justifying anything that is wrong in your heart or life, He declares He will not answer. Begin at once to clear out the rubbish and "prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," for He will not go around anything that is crooked, to save the whole world.

2nd. Another kind of prayer that God declares He will not answer is recorded in Prov. 28:9. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination." This applies to a person who, after coming in contact with the uncompromising truth, turns away to a more popular, ease-taking way. He may have bosom sins with which he is loath to part, and dislikes to hear mentioned, hence he turns away his ear from hearing the law on that particular point. He may find fault with the sermon, prayer, tract or passage that laid bare his sin and exposed it to the light. He may not acknowledge it to be a sin, yet he squirms and feels sore when it is located and uncovered. Such old sores might properly be designated the secret-society sore, the tobacco sore, worldly-conformity sore, spiritual-affinity sore, divorced-wife sore, sexual-impurity sore, jealousy sore and a thousand other old sores from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet which have never been bound up nor mollified with ointment. Now so long as a man feels sore and turns away from loving the truth upon any point, he can mouth over words and appear very pious, but at the very time he is doing so, God pronounces the whole thing an abomination.

3rd. And another kind of prayer that is never answered is recorded in James 1:6, 7. "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. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." It honors God to believe Him. Nothing will drive darkness and discouragement away as quickly as to declare your faith in God. It is stimulating to the soul and disarms the devil, as he cannot accomplish a thing until one first begins to waver. But how can one "ask in faith nothing wavering"? We answer, not until complete submission and surrender pervades the heart. Right here is the main trouble -- souls are urged to believe it is done right over unconfessed and unrepented sins. It is simply impossible. How foolish then to profess the favor of God as long as the heart is rebelling or even questioning on a single point! We have frequently heard souls say that what they needed was more faith, but we informed them it was not more faith, but more implicit

obedience. If you obediently walk in every ray of light you will have all the faith you need. Then no one will need to urge you to be quick to testify to it for fear you might lose it. No! bless you, you will not need to keep it, for the Christ that dwells and reigns within will most blessedly keep you. Hallelujah! E. E. S.

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### 33 -- PRAYING PREACHERS

Prayer is the first thing, the second thing, the third thing, necessary to a minister. Pray then, my dear brother, pray, pray, pray. -- Edward Payson.

Preachers are human folks, and are exposed to, and often caught by, the strong driftings of strong human currents. Praying is spiritual work; and human nature does not like taxing, spiritual work. Human nature wants to sail to heaven under a favoring breeze, a full, smooth sea. Prayer is humbling work, abases intellect and pride, crucifies vain glory, and signs our spiritual bankruptcy, and all these are hard for flesh and blood to bear. It is easier not to pray than to bear them. So we come to one of the crying evils of these times, maybe of all times, little or no praying. Of these two evils, perhaps little praying is worse than no praying. Little praying is a kind of make-believe, a salve for the conscience, a farce and a delusion.

The little estimate we put on prayer is evident from the little time we give to it. The time given to prayer by the average preacher scarcely counts in the sum of the daily aggregate. Not infrequently the preacher's only praying is by his bedside in his night-dress, ready for bed and soon in it, with, perchance, the addition of a few hasty snatches of prayer ere he is dressed in the morning. How feeble, vain and little is such praying compared with the time and energy devoted to praying by holy men in and out of the Bible! How poor and mean our petty, childish praying is beside the habits of the true men of God in all ages! To men who think praying their main business and devote time to it according to this estimate of its importance, does God commit the keys of His Kingdom, and by them does He work His spiritual wonders in this world. Great praying is the sign and seal of God's great leaders and the earnest of the conquering forces with which God will crown their labors.

The preacher is commissioned to pray as well as to preach. His commission is incomplete if he does not do both well. The preacher may speak with all the eloquence of men and angels, but unless he can pray with a faith that draws all Heaven to his aid, his preaching will be as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

It may be put down as a spiritual axiom that in every truly successful ministry prayer is an evident and controlling force; evident and controlling in the life of the preacher; evident and controlling in the deep spirituality of his work. A ministry may be a very thoughtful ministry without prayer; the preacher may secure fame and popularity without prayer; the whole machinery of the preacher's life and work may be run without the oil of prayer, or with scarcely enough to grease one cog; but no ministry can be a spiritual one, securing holiness in the preacher and in his people, without prayer being made an evident and controlling force.



The preacher that prays indeed puts God into the preacher's work as a matter of course, or on general principles, but He comes by prayer and special urgency. That God will be found of us in the day that we seek Him with the whole heart is as true of the preacher as of the penitent. A prayerful ministry is the only ministry that brings the preacher into sympathy with the people. Prayer as essentially unites us to the human as it does to the divine. A prayerful ministry is the only ministry qualified for the high offices and responsibilities of the preacher. Colleges, learning, books, theology, and preaching cannot make a preacher, but praying does. The apostles' commission to preach was a blank until filled up by the Pentecost which praying brought. A prayerful ministry has passed beyond the regions of the popular, beyond the man of mere affairs, of secularities, of pulpit attractiveness; passed beyond the ecclesiastical organizer or general into a sublimer and mightier region, the region of the spiritual; holiness is the product of his work; transfigured hearts and lives emblazon the reality of his work, its trueness and substantial nature. God is with him. His ministry is not projected on worldly or surface principles. He is deeply stored with and deeply schooled in the things of God. His long, deep communings with God about his people, the agony of his wrestling spirit, have crowned him as a prince in the things of God. The iciness of the mere professional has long since melted under the intensity of his praying.

The superficial results of many a ministry, the deadness of others, are to be found in the lack of praying. No ministry can succeed without much praying, and this praying must be fundamental, ever-abiding, ever-increasing. The text, the sermon, should be the result of prayer. The study should be bathed in prayer; all its duties impregnated with prayer; its whole spirit the spirit of prayer. "I am sorry that I have prayed so little" was the deathbed regret of one of God's chosen ones. A sad and remorseful regret for a preacher! "I want a life of greater, deeper, truer prayer," said the late Archbishop Tait. So may we all say, and this may we all secure.

God's true preachers have been distinguished by one great feature; they were men of prayer. Differing often in many things, they have always had a common center. They may have started from different points, and traveled by different roads, but they converged to one point; they were one in prayer. God to them was the center of attraction; and prayer the path that led to God. These men prayed not occasionally, not a little at regular or at odd times, but they so prayed that it entered into and shaped their characters; they so prayed as to affect their own lives and the lives of others; they so prayed as to make the history of the Church, and influence the current of the times. They spent much time in prayer, not because they marked the shadow on the dial, or the hands on the clock, but because it was to them so momentous and engaging a business that they could scarcely give over.

Prayer was to them what it was to Paul, a striving with earnest effort of soul; what it was to Jacob, a wrestling and prevailing; what it was to Christ, "strong crying and tears." "They prayed always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance." "The effectual, fervent prayer" has been the mightiest weapon of God's mightiest soldiers. The statement in regard to Elijah that "he was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit," comprehends all prophets and preachers who have moved their generation for God, and shows the instrument by which they worked their wonders.

While many private prayers, in the nature of things, must be short; while public prayers, as a rule, ought to be short and condensed; while there is ample room for and value put on ejaculatory prayer, yet in our private communions with God time is a feature essential to its value. Much time spent with God is the secret of all successful praying. Prayer which is felt as a mighty force is the mediate or immediate product of much time spent with God. Our short prayers owe their point and efficiency to the long ones that have preceded them. The short prevailing prayer cannot be prayed by one who has not prevailed with God in a mightier struggle of long continuance. Jacob's victory of faith could not have been gained without that all-night wrestling. God's acquaintance is not made by pop calls. God does not bestow His gifts on the casual or hasty comers and goers. Much with God alone is the secret of knowing Him, and of influence with Him. He yields to the persistency of a faith that knows Him. He bestows His richest gifts upon those who declare their desire for and appreciation of those gifts by the constancy as well as earnestness of their importunity. Christ who, in this as well as in other things, is our example, spent many whole nights in prayer. His custom was to pray much. He had His habitual place to pray. Many long seasons of praying make up His history and character. Paul prayed day and night. It took time from very important interests for Daniel to pray three times a day. David's morning, noon and night praying were doubtless on many occasions very protracted. While we have no specific account of the time these Bible saints spent in prayer, yet the indications are that they consumed much time in prayer, and on some occasions long seasons of praying was their custom.

The men who have most fully illustrated Christ in their character, and have most powerfully affected the world for Him, have been men who spent so much time with God as to make it a notable feature of their lives. Charles Simeon devoted the hours from four till eight in the morning to God. Mr. Wesley spent two hours daily in prayer. He began at four in the morning. Of him, one who knew him well wrote, "He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else and I have seen him come out of his closet with a serenity of face next to shining." John Fletcher stained the walls of his room by the breath of his prayers. Sometimes all night he would pray. Always, frequently and with great earnestness. His whole life was a life of prayer. "I would not rise from my seat," he said, "without lifting my heart to God." His greeting to a friend was always, "Do I meet you praying?" Luther said: "If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning, the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer." He had a motto: "He that has prayed well has studied well."

Archbishop Leighton was so much alone with God that he seemed to be in a perpetual meditation. "Prayer and praise were his business and his pleasure," says his biographer. Bishop Ken was so much with God that his soul was said to be God-enamored. He was with God before the clock struck three every morning. Bishop Asbury said: "I propose to rise at four o'clock as often as I can and spend two hours in prayer and meditation." Samuel Rutherford, the fragrance of whose piety is still rich, rose at three in the morning to meet God in prayer. Joseph Alleine arose at four o'clock for his business of praying till eight. If he heard other tradesmen plying their business before he was up, he would exclaim: "Oh, how this shames me! Doth not my Master deserve more than theirs?" He who has learned this trade well draws, at will, on sight and with acceptance on Heaven's unfailing bank.

One of the holiest and among the most gifted of Scotch preachers says: "I ought to spend the best hours in communion with God. It is my noblest and most fruitful employment and is not to be

thrust into a corner. The morning, from six to eight, are the most uninterrupted and should be thus employed. After tea is my best hour and that should be solemnly dedicated to God. I ought not to give up the good old habit of prayer before going to bed; but guard must be kept against sleep. When I awake in the night, I ought to rise and pray. A little time after breakfast might be given to intercession." This was the praying plan of Robert McCheyne. The memorable Methodist band in their praying shame us. "From four to five in the morning, private prayer. From five to six in the evening, private prayer."

John Welch, the holy and wonderful Scotch preacher, thought the day ill spent if he did not spend eight or ten hours in prayer. He kept a plaid that he might wrap himself when he arose to pray at night. His wife would complain when she found him lying on the ground weeping. He would reply: "O woman, I have the souls of 3,000 to answer for and I know not how it is with many of them."

Payson wore the hardwood boards into grooves where his knees pressed so often and so long. His biographer says: "His continuing instant in prayer, be his circumstances what they might, is the most noticeable fact in his history, and points out the duty of all who would rival his eminency. To his ardent and persevering prayers must no doubt be ascribed in a great measure his distinguished and almost uninterrupted success."

The Marquis DeRenty, to whom Christ was most precious, ordered his servant to call him from his devotions at the end of half an hour. The servant at the time saw his face through an aperture. It was marked with such holiness that he hated to arouse him. His lips were moving, but he was perfectly silent. He waited until three half-hours had passed; then he called to him, when he arose from his knees, saying that the half-hour was so short when he was communing with Christ.

Brainerd said: "I love to be alone in my cottage where I can spend much time in prayer."

William Bramwell is famous in Methodist annals for personal holiness, and for his wonderful success in preaching and for the marvelous answers to his prayers. For hours at a time he would pray. He almost lived on his knees. He went over his circuits like a flame of fire. The fire was kindled by the time he spent in prayer.

He often spent as much as four hours in a single season of prayer in retirement.

Bishop Andrews spent the greatest part of five hours every day in prayer and devotion.

Sir Henry Havelock always spent the first two hours of each day alone with God, If the encampment was struck at six a. m., he would rise at four. Earl Cairns rose daily at six o'clock to secure an hour and a half for the study of the Bible and for prayer, before conducting family worship at quarter to eight.

Dr. Judson's success in prayer is attributable to the fact that he gave much time to prayer. He says on this point: "Arrange thy affairs, if possible. so that thou canst leisurely devote two or three hours every day, not merely to devotional exercises, but to the very act of secret prayer and communion with God. Endeavor seven times a day to withdraw from business and company and

lift up thy soul to God in private retirement. Begin the day by rising after midnight and devoting some time amid the silence and darkness of the night to this sacred work. Let the hour of opening dawn find thee at the same work. Let the hours of nine, twelve, three, six and nine at night, witness the same. Be resolute in His cause.

Make all practicable sacrifices to maintain it. Consider that thy time is short and that business and company must not be allowed to rob thee of thy God." Impossible, say we, fanatical directions! Dr. Judson impressed an empire for Christ and laid the foundations of God's Kingdom with imperishable granite in the heart of Burmah. He was successful, one of the few men who mightily impressed the world for Christ. Many men of greater gifts and genius and learning than he have made no such impression; their religious work have been like footsteps in the sands, but he has engraven his work on the adamant. The secret of its profundity and endurance is found in the fact that he gave time to prayer. He kept the iron red-hot with prayer, and God's skill fashioned it with enduring power. No man can do a great and enduring work for God who is not a man of prayer; and no man can be a man of prayer who does not give much time to praying. -- From Preacher and Prayer, By E. M. Bounds.

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#### 34 -- A SHORT METHOD OF PRAYER

Prayer is the key of perfection and of sovereign happiness, it is the efficacious means of getting rid of all vices and of acquiring all virtues; for the way to become perfect is to live in the presence of God. Prayer alone can bring you into His presence, and keep you there continually.

What we need, then, is an attitude of prayer, in which we can constantly abide, and out of which exterior occupations cannot draw us; a prayer which can be offered alike by princes, kings, prelates, magistrates, soldiers, children, artisans, laborers, women, and the sick. This prayer is not mental, but of the heart.

It is not a prayer of thought alone, because the mind of man is so limited, that while it is occupied with one thing it cannot be thinking of another.

But it is the PRAYER OF THE HEART, which cannot be interrupted by the occupations of the mind. Nothing can interrupt the prayers of the heart but unruly affections; and when once we have tasted of the love of God, it is impossible to find our delight in anything but Himself.

Nothing is easier than to have God and to live upon Him. He is more truly in us than we are in ourselves. He is more anxious to give Himself to us than we are to possess Him. All that we want is to know the way to seek Him, which is so easy and so natural, that breathing itself is not more so.

Oh, you who imagine yourselves incapable of religious feeling, you may live in prayer and in God as easily and as continuously as you live by the air you breathe. Will you not, then, be inexcusable if you neglect to do it, after you have learned the way?

There are two means by which we may be led into the higher forms of prayer. One is Meditation, the other is Meditative Reading, By meditative reading I mean the taking of some truths, either doctrinal or practical -- the latter rather than former -- and reading them in this way :-- Take the truth which has presented itself to you, and read two or three lines, seeking to enter into the full meaning of the words, and go on no further so long as you find satisfaction in them; leave the place only when it becomes insipid. After that, take another passage, and do the same,. not reading more than half a page at once. It is not so much from the amount read that we derive profit, as from the manner of reading. Those people who get through so much do not profit from it; the bees can draw the juice from the flowers only by resting on them, not by flying round them. Much reading is more for scholastic than for spiritual science; but in order to derive profit from spiritual books, we should read them in this way; and I am sure that this manner of reading accustoms us gradually to prayer, and gives us a deeper desire for it. The other way is Meditation, in which we should engage at a chosen time, and not in the hour given to reading. I think the way to enter into it is this: After having brought ourselves into the presence of God by a definite act of faith, we should read something substantial, not so much to reason upon it as to fix the attention, observing that the principle exercise should be the presence of God, and that the subject should rather fix the attention than exercise reason.

This is a short and efficacious way of fighting with distractions, because those who endeavor directly to oppose them irritate and increase them; but by losing ourselves in the thought of a present God, and suffering our thoughts to be drawn to Him, we combat them indirectly, and without thinking of them, but in an effectual manner. And here let me warn beginners not to run from one truth to another, from one subject to another; but to keep themselves to one so long as they feel a taste for it: this is the way to enter deeply into truths, to taste them, and to have them impressed upon us. I say it is difficult at first thus to retire within ourselves, because of the habits, which are natural to us, of being taken up with the outside; but when we are little accustomed to it, it becomes exceedingly easy; both because we have formed the habit of it, and because God, who only desires to communicate Himself to us, sends us abundant grace, and an experimental sense of His presence which renders it easy. -- Madame Guyon.

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### 35 -- INTERCESSIONS FOR ALL MEN

"I will therefore that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions . . . be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty." -- 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.

A number of years ago while living in Chicago, Sister Helen and I were on the third story of our home busily engaged cleaning out a trunk, when suddenly the spirit of prayer fell upon us, impressing us to pray for President McKinley. At first it seemed strange, if not useless, for he was so great and we so insignificant. But we reasoned that God who gave the spirit of prayer would answer; so in the sincerity of our girlish hearts we wept and prayed out our petitions.

This was no ordinary season of prayer. We prayed until relief was given, then resumed the work, almost unconscious of what had transpired.

What was our astonishment when, the next day, came the awful intelligence of the assassination of our President!

We understood then why we had been moved upon to pray so fervently for him. He lingered but a few days when his soul left the body, ready, we trust, for the unexpected change.

Another instance: While sitting writing at the front window of our Mission in Atlanta, day after day, I noticed a woman leading her blind husband. He looked old and sad and, feeling sorry for him, I stopped my work and prayed earnestly for his salvation.

Not many days after, this couple came to the door and the wife, being the intercessor, said her husband was in great distress of mind and wanted to find some one who could pray for him.

Of course they were gladly welcomed and a special prayer service held for them, which resulted in his glorious conversion. He had considerable restitution to make, so at his request one of our brethren (Rev. H. W. Hodge) led him from store to store and house to house, that he might straighten up the dishonest things of the past. It was marvelous to note that in nearly every case he was forgiven, and sent on his way rejoicing.

Only a short time elapsed before he passed away, dying in the triumphs of a living faith.

God knows His business and everyone, old and young, should consider it a great benediction to be drawn out in prayer for others. "When God inclines the heart to pray. He hath an ear to hear."

Mrs. Julia A. Shelhamer.

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### PART III -- SOME RESULTS OF PRAYER

#### 36 -- FIVE HUNDRED CONVERTED

John Livingston, of Scotland, once spent a whole night in prayer with a company of his brethren, for God's blessing, all of them besieging the throne; and the next day, under his sermon, five hundred souls were saved. All the world has heard how the audience of the elder President Edwards was moved by his terrible sermon on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God;" over five hundred were converted, some of them even grasping hold of the pillars of the sanctuary, from feeling that their feet were actually sliding into the pit. But the secret of that sermon's power is known to but few. Some Christians in the vicinity (Enfield, Mass.), had become alarmed, lest, while God was blessing other places, He should in anger pass them by; and so they met on the preceding evening, and spent the whole night in agonizing prayer. -- Foster's Cyclopaedia.

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## 37 -- JOHN WESLEY HEALED IN ANSWER TO PRAYER

An illustrious example of constancy and power in prayer we find in John Wesley: "It is said that 'as a matter of habit and rule, John Wesley's ordinary private praying consumed two hours a day.' At times he would gather his company and pray all night, or till the power of God came down. Nothing was considered too great or too small to take to the Lord. Seized with a pain in the midst of his preaching, so that he could not speak, 'I know my remedy,' he says and immediately kneeled down. In a moment the pain was gone, and the voice of the Lord cried aloud to sinners. Being seized with a pain, fever and cough, so that he could scarcely speak, 'I called on Jesus aloud to increase my faith. While I was speaking my pain vanished away, my fever left me, and my bodily strength returned.'

"The elements, as well as sickness, were often in his way, and prayer removed the hindrances. 'Just as I began to preach the sun broke out and shone exceedingly hot on my head. I found if it continued I should not be able to speak long, and I lifted up my heart to God. In a minute or two it was covered with clouds which continued till the service was over.' And he says: 'Let any one who please call this chance, I call it an answer to prayer.' It was raining, and Wesley and his congregation were crowded out of the church, and the rain ceased the moment they came out. He says in regard to this incident: 'How many proofs must we have that there is no petition too little, any more than too great, for God to grant?'

"Wesley moved things mightily, because he moved God mightily. He became the prince of evangelists, because he was the prince of pray-ers. He stirred the world with the fire of his zeal, because he had stirred heaven by the fire of his prayers. His pleas had access to men's consciences, because they had access to God. If more men prayed as John Wesley prayed, there would be more of John Wesley's thoroughly spiritual work done." -- Prevailing Prayer, by Wicle.

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## 38 -- A PREVAILING PRAYER OF MRS. VAN COTT

In 1868, Mrs. Maggie Newton Van Cott held a revival meeting at Stone Ridge, Ulster Co., N. Y. At the opening of the meeting she announced, under the influence of the Spirit as she believed, that there would be a glorious revival, and that two hundred souls would be converted. Some were shocked at the prediction; and some of the very best people in the church were grieved, for they felt certain that she was doomed to disappointment. She labored for more than a week with little fruit. Her strength began to give way. Her warmest co-workers began to tremble for her. One morning she remarked to the lady at whose residence she was staying: "I am going into the parlor to settle this church matter with my dear Master. Please do not allow any one to come near me. If I do not come out in time for dinner, do not call me. If I am not with you in time for the afternoon meeting, you may call in the friends. I shall, in the name of God, this day have victory or death."

It was a bitter cold day in February, and no fire had been kindled in that room all winter, and the frost was thick on the window-panes. She wrapped a large shawl around her and bowed before God, and presented the promises covered with blood of the Savior, and in them there could be no failure. "Ask, and ye shall receive," stood before her as in characters of living fire. Also: "If

ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." It was the same voice that awoke slumbering chaos, and new-made worlds teeming with life, glorious and grand. An hour passed -- another followed -- she had grappled in with God's Word, and in the anguish of her spirit, as she afterwards declared, she could in a certain degree understand the Scripture which describes the Master's agony in the garden, when He sweat great drops of blood. In those hours of the most intense struggle of spirit, the great drops of sweat rolled from her brow. The tempter suggested: "Give it up, God will not give the answer today." "Then today, on this spot, I die," was her answer. The agony increased. The prayer became a struggle as for life. "I will not let Thee go. Thy word is truth. Thou hast said, 'Now is the time.' O God, now send the answer; now, my Father, hear me for the sake of souls -- for the two hundred. Christ has paid the price of their redemption. I plead His merits -- I will not yield -- I will not move -- I will not let go my hold -- Thou canst not turn me away. Behold Thine own dear Son pleads -- the Spirit intercedes. Give, O give the answer."

That moment a sweet ripple of peace floated over her soul, and soon shouts of rapture flooded her spirit.

That night twenty seekers bowed at the altar of prayer. In less than five weeks two hundred and thirty-five persons professed faith in Christ.

Thus it ever is, "The fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous availeth." -- The Harvest and the Reaper.

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### 39 -- CORN THE FROST COULD NOT KILL

By our request, Brother L. G. Whitney, a reliable Christian man, of Hemlock, Mich., writes us of a remarkable interposition of Providence in reference to his field of corn. This is his story:

"Two years ago, the seed-corn in this part of the country proved poor -- not having sufficiently ripened the previous year. I saw an advertisement of a ninety-days' corn, and sent to Pennsylvania and obtained enough to plant eleven acres. It grew rapidly, and became tall and stout. When other corn was out of the way of the frost, mine was just beginning to fill. One day as I was walking through it, I realized that it could not come to maturity. I fell on my knees, and talked to my heavenly Father about it. I well remember how I addressed Him, saying: 'Father, I have been deceived in this corn; according to the season and the nature of the corn it cannot ripen. But, Father, it is all in Thy hands, I have given myself and all I have into Thy care. It is only by Thy power that this field of corn can ever ripen. Thy will be done. I will not complain.' While I was thus addressing Him, heavenly peace filled my soul. Frost after frost came, and froze ice as thick as a window-glass. My neighbors would say: 'What is the matter with Whitney's corn that the frosts do not kill it?' It stood like a green forest through all the frosts until it ripened. I never had such a crop of corn before or since. I know the Lord will answer the prayers of the faithful in heart, and 'no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.'"



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#### 40 -- THE CONVERSION OF HUDSON TAYLOR

Hudson Taylor, founder of China Inland Mission, says that about 1830 his father became so interested in the spiritual condition of China that he was led to pray that if God ever gave him a son, he might be privileged to labor as a missionary there, a prayer unknown to the son until after seven years of service in that mission field. Though carefully trained to the study of God's Word and a life of devotion, yet at the age of fifteen the lad was a skeptic.

Of his conversion he says: "One day, which I shall never forget, when I was about fifteen years old, my dear mother being absent from home some eighty miles away, I had a holiday. I searched through the library for a book to while away time. I selected a Gospel tract which looked unattractive, saying, 'There will be an interesting story at the commencement, and a sermon or moral at the end; I will take the former, and leave the latter for those who like it.' I little knew what was going on in the heart of my dear mother. She arose from the dinner table with an intense yearning for the conversion of her boy, and feeling that, being from home, and having more leisure than she otherwise would, there was a special opportunity afforded her of pleading with God for me. She went to her bedroom, and turned the key in the door, and resolved not to leave the room until her prayers were answered. Hour after hour did that dear mother plead for me, until she could only praise God for the conversion of her son. In the meantime, as I was reading the tract, 'The Finished Work of Christ,' a light was flashed into my soul by the Holy Spirit, that there was nothing to be done but to fall on my knees and accept this Savior and His salvation, and praise God for evermore. While my mother was praising God in her closet, I was praising Him in the old warehouse, where I had retired to read my book. When I met mother at the door on her return with the glad news, she said: 'I know, my boy; I have been rejoicing for a fortnight in the glad tidings you have to tell me!'"

Many souls are lost for want of persistent pleading with God in their behalf. Time that might be used in prayer is consumed in other ways, and souls and opportunities pass forever from our reach. For those hours of pleading with God, this faithful mother received not only her son for God, but the great work God put into his hands -- China Inland Mission. Hudson Taylor has led out into the heart of China more than one hundred and seventy apostolic missionaries, none of whom receive support except through faith in God. -- Anna Abrams, in Vanguard.

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#### 41 -- ONE WOMAN'S PRAYER

Sometime in the last century a poor woman in England, of whom the world knows but little, had a son, and she poured out her prayers and her tears for his conversion, But he grew up reckless and dissipated and profane. He engaged in the slave trade on the coast of Africa, and was perhaps as hopelessly abandoned as any pirate who ever trod the deck of a slave-trader. But at last, when all hopes had nearly expired, his mother's ceaseless prayers were answered. He was converted,

and finally he became one of the most eminent ministers in London. That man was the celebrated John Newton.

John Newton, in turn, was the instrument in opening the eyes of that moralist and skeptic, Thomas Scott, afterwards the distinguished author of the commentary on the Bible. Thomas Scott had in his parish a young man of the most delicate sensibilities, and whose soul was "touched with the finest issues, but he was a dyspeptic, and sorrowful and despairing." At times he believed there was no hope for him. After long and repeated efforts Dr. Scott persuaded him to change his course of life. That young man was William Cowper, the household Christian poet, whose sweet, delightful hymns have allured hundreds of wanderers, and the most polluted, to the

"Fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins."

Among others whom he influenced to turn from the "broad road" was William Wilberforce, a distinguished member of the British Parliament, who gave the deathblow to the slave trade in Great Britain. Wilberforce brought Leigh Richmond to see the "better way," who wrote the "Dairyman's Daughter," which has been read with the devoutest gratitude through blinding tears in many languages all over the earth. All this indescribable amount of good, which will be redoubled and reduplicated through all time, can be traced back to the fidelity of John Newton's mother, that humble, unheralded woman, whose history is almost unknown. -- Selected

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#### 42 -- HOW A BLACKSMITH PREVAILED WITH GOD FOR A REVIVAL

A story related by Mr. Finney will illustrate the power of the mighty prayer of faith, even when every human aid seems withheld, and nothing remains but the burning, throbbing heart, breathing out its longings, and pouring out its groans and tears before the Lord.

In a certain town there had been no revival for many years; the church was nearly run out, the youth were all unconverted, and desolation reigned unbroken. There lived in a retired part of the town an aged man, a blacksmith by trade, and of so stammering a tongue that it was painful to hear him speak. On one Friday, as he was at work in his shop, alone, his mind became greatly exercised about the state of the church, and of the impenitent. His agony became so great that he was induced to lay aside his work, lock the shop door, and spend the afternoon in prayer.

He prevailed, and on the Lord's day called on the minister and desired him to appoint a conference meeting. After some hesitation the minister consented, observing, however, that he feared but few would attend. He appointed it the same evening, at a large, private house.

The people gathered from far and near, doubtless to the surprise of the unbelieving and fainthearted. A solemn sense of the presence of God seemed to oppress the assembly, and feelings too deep for speech were welling up in many hearts. All was silent for a time, until one sinner broke out in tears, and said, if any one could pray, he begged him to pray for him. Another followed, and still another, until it was found that persons from every quarter of the town were

under deep conviction. And what was remarkable was that they all dated their conviction at the hour when the old man was praying in his shop. A powerful revival followed. Thus this old stammering man prevailed, and as a prince had power with God. -- Records of Prevailing Prayer.

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#### 43 -- HOW CARVOSSO PREVAILED WITH GOD FOR HIS CHILDREN

Carvosso, noted for the earnestness and faith of his prayers, tells as follows of the conversion of his children:

"I had always prayed for my children, but now I grasped the promise, with the hand of faith, and retired daily at special seasons to put the Lord to His word. I said nothing of what I felt or did, to any one but the Searcher of hearts, with whom I wrestled in an agony of prayer."

About two weeks after he was called from his work, to pray with his daughter, who became a seeker of Christ. His oldest son was converted at the same time.

Regarding his younger son he says: "I laid hold, by faith, on the promise which I had while pleading for my other children. One day while I was wrestling with God in mighty prayer for him, these words were applied with power to my mind: 'There shall not a hoof be left behind.' Soon after he yielded, and obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins."

"A dull and careless way of praying for our friends will avail nothing. It may conceal hypocrisy, or strengthen deception concerning our own piety, but it will not move God nor convert a single soul. Our friends know that we are not in earnest, and care little for it. But, let us take hold of the matter in a spirit corresponding to the magnitude of the object to be secured, and there will be a movement!" -- Prevailing Prayer, by Wigle.

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#### 44 -- NEW ENGLAND SAVED IN ANSWER TO PRAYER

At an early date in our history, 1746, the French fitted out a powerful fleet for the destruction of New England. This fleet consisted of forty ships of war, and seemed to all human judgment a sufficient force to render that destruction certain. It was put under the command of the resolute and experienced Duke de'Anville, and set sail on its terrible errand, from Chedabucto, in Nova Scotia.

In the meantime, our pious forefathers, apprised of their danger, and feeling that their safety was in God, appointed a season of fasting and prayer, to be observed in all their churches.

While the Rev. Mr. Prince was officiating in Old South Church (Boston), on this fast-day, and praying most fervently to God to avert the dreaded calamity, the wind suddenly rose (the day had till now been perfectly clear and calm), and became so powerful as to rattle violently all the windows in the building. The man of God, startled for a moment, paused in his prayer, and cast a

look round upon the congregation. He then resumed his supplications, and besought Almighty God to cause that wind to frustrate the object of their enemies, and save the country from conquest and popery. The wind increased to a tempest, and that very night the greater part of the French fleet was wrecked on the coast of Nova Scotia. The Duke de'Anville, the principle general, and the second in command, both committed suicide. Many died with disease, and thousands were consigned to a watery grave. The small number that remained alive returned to France without health and without spirits. The enterprise was abandoned, and never again resumed. -- Present Conflict of Science with Religion.

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#### 45 -- A WOULD-BE MURDERER'S ARM PARALYZED

A prominent minister in Canada relates the following remarkable instance of God's miraculous care over His people: "I am frequently impressed by the Spirit to perform actions, at the time unaccountable to myself. These impressions are so vivid that I dare not disobey them.

"Some time ago, on a stormy night, I was suddenly impressed to go to the distant house of an aged couple. and there to pray. So imperative was the call that I harnessed the horse and drove to the spot, fastened the horse under the shed, and entered the house unperceived, by a door which had been left open. There, kneeling down, I poured out my petitions to God, in an audible voice, for the divine protection over the inmates, after which I departed and returned home. Months after, I was visiting one of the principal prisons in Canada, and, moving amongst the prisoners, was accosted by one of them, who claimed to know me. I had no recollection of the convict, and was fairly startled when the latter said: 'Do you remember going to such a house one night, and offering prayer in the dark for the inmates?' I told him I did, and asked how he came to know anything about it. He said: 'I had gone to that house to steal a sum of money, known to be in the possession of the old man. When you drove into the yard, I thought you were he, and intended to kill you while you were hitching your horses. I saw when you spoke to the horse you were a stranger. I followed you into the house, and heard your prayer. You prayed God to protect the old people from violence of any kind, and especially from murder; and if there was any hand uplifted to strike them, that it might be paralyzed.' Then the prisoner pointed to his right arm, which hung lifeless by his side, saying: 'Do you see that arm?' It was paralyzed on the spot, and I have never moved it since. Of course I left the place without doing any harm, but am here now, for other offenses'." -- Reported by Lily Blakeney Howe.

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#### 46 -- JOHN KNOX'S PREVAILING PRAYER FOR SCOTLAND

Among the mighty men of faith and prayer whose names will stand forth until this world's history is completed, is that of John Knox. The days of turbulence developed their holy zeal and courage. Summoned before the highest of earth's great ones, true everywhere to God, and a man mighty in prayer, Queen Mary of Scotland once said of Knox that she feared his prayers more than an army of ten thousand men. On England's throne sat Mary, the daughter of Henry VIII, who had been brought up by her mother, Catharine of Aragon, in the dark faith of Rome, a complete tool in

the hands of the priests, whose one design was to destroy the Protestants. Soon the jails were filled, the fires kindled in Smithfield, and the whole land was one scene of desolation, and the Protestants were hunted as partridges on the mountains. The great heart of John Knox was stirred, On his knees, on his face for hours together before God, he pleaded for Scotland. "All Scotland for Christ!" was his ceaseless cry.

In one of these seasons of mighty taking hold of God, he sprang to his feet with the cry: "Deliverance has come! Deliverance has come!" As soon as the courier could speed his way from London to the city where John Knox lived, he made the proclamation: "Mary, Queen of England, is dead!"

Pray ye the Lord of the Harvest, to raise up such men in our days, when the tide of worldliness threatens the whole church, and Catholicism is spreading her baneful influence over the free institutions of our land; only waiting for the chance to re-enact the scenes of St. Bartholomew's day in France, or the massacre of ten thousand Protestants in one day as in Ireland, to crush out the religion of our fathers, to burn the Bible, and plunge the whole land into papal darkness. -- Sarah A. Cooke.

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#### 47 -- REVIVALS VS. FAIRS -- WONDERS OF PRAYER

The Methodist Preachers' Meeting of Boston was well attended last Monday, and Rev. W. N. Brodbeck, the pastor of the Tremont Street Church of this city, thrilled the brethren with an address on "The relation of the Ministers to Revivals," during which he pointedly referred to church fairs and festivals as barriers to revivals.

He declared that some ministers and churches would never have a revival, because they would not do the hard work, and make the sacrifice essential to secure said results. At Urbana, Ohio, he began revival services, but at first only doubtful characters came to the altar, in whom the public had no confidence. Many were offended, and some said: "Do you know those people that are coming to the altar?"

He replied: "Yes, I know them; they are immortal souls for whom Christ died." When the meetings had run three weeks, one of his leading members came to him and said: "I think it is time these meeting were stopped; we have held them three weeks, and we want to hold a fair, and have some entertainments."

The pastor firmly and promptly replied: "You may do as you please, but these meetings will not stop."

His heart was broken, and so was the heart of one of the devout women members. They expressed their feelings to each other and parted. They both spent the night in prayer, and at 10 o'clock the next morning the pastor gained the evidence that his prayers were answered. After dinner he went out, and met the devout lady on the street, her face shining with the glory of God. She said: "The victory is coming."

"How do you know?"

"I got the evidence at 10 o'clock this morning, after spending a whole night in prayer.

This was the very time the pastor gained the evidence. That very night, while the pastor was preaching, a young man arose and came to the altar; others followed, so that the pastor had to stop preaching. God was among the people in power; the church was quickened, backsliders were reclaimed, hundreds of sinners were converted. Places of amusement and saloons were closed. The face of the community was changed, and 275 converts joined that one church, and the fair was not held -- all because they refused to have the fair. Oh, for more nights of prayer Oh. for more agony of soul for perishing sinners! Oh, for more of the mind of Christ! Then would revivals prevail, and thousands would be converted to God. -- Christian witness.

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#### 48 -- HOW WILLIAM TENNENT DEFEATED THE POWERS OF DARKNESS

During the great revival of religion in America, which took place under Mr. Whitefield, and others distinguished for their piety and zeal at that period, Mr. Tennent was laboriously active, and much engaged to help forward the work, in the performance of which he met with strong and powerful temptations. The following is from his own lips:

On the evening preceding public worship, he selected a subject for the discourse intended to be delivered, and made some progress in his preparations. In the morning he resumed the same subject, with an intention to extend his thoughts further on it, but was presently assaulted with a temptation that the Bible was not of Divine authority, but the invention of man. He instantly endeavored to repel the temptation by prayer, but his endeavors proved unavailing. The temptation continued, and fastened upon him with greater strength as the time advanced for public service. He lost all the thoughts which he had prepared on the preceding evening. He tried other subjects, but could get nothing for the people. The whole Book of God, under that distressing state of mind, was a sealed book to him; and, to add to his affliction, he was "shut up in prayer;" a cloud, dark as that of Egypt, oppressed his mind.

Thus agonized in spirit, he proceeded to the church, where he found a large congregation assembled, and waiting to hear the Word; and then he was more deeply distressed than ever; and especially for the dishonor which he feared would fall upon religion through him that day. He resolved, however, to attempt the service. He introduced it by singing a psalm, during which time his agitation increased to the highest degree. When the moment for prayer commenced, he arose, as one in the most painful and perilous situation, and, with arms extended to heaven, began with this exclamation: "Lord, have mercy upon me!" On the utterance of this petition he was heard; the thick cloud instantly broke away, and light shone upon his soul. The result was a deep solemnity throughout the congregation, and the house, at the end of the prayer, was a place of weeping. He delivered the subject of his evening meditation, which was brought to his full remembrance, with an overflowing abundance of other weighty and solemn matter, The Lord blessed this discourse, so

that it proved the happy means of the conversion of about thirty persons. This day he ever afterwards spoke of as his "harvest-day." -- -- -Anecdotes of the Ministry.

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#### 49 -- A CANCER HEALED, AND A WITHERED ARM RESTORED

Brother W. B. Bailey wrote us from Hybrid, Mo., January 7, 1887:

"I had a cancer in my left breast. It pained me very much, had become very bad and tender, and was a running sore. The saints prayed for me, and the Lord answered our prayers. Praise His holy name! The pain left me instantly, but the cancer healed gradually. It healed up without medicine or plaster, or anything but by trusting God alone. Praise the Lord for healing me, both soul and body! See Mark 16:18 and James 5:13-16."

His wife wrote at the same time:

"'And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.' -- Matt. 21:22. I praise the Lord, prayer was answered for me. I was very much afflicted in body. I went to the doctors. They could not cure me, I only grew worse. Was taken with a pain in my right shoulder. How I suffered none can tell. I could not use my arm without great pain. I could not raise my hand to comb my hair. My arm wasted away until it was less than the other. My hand was cold most all of the time. I was a cripple ten years. The saints prayed for me, and I was healed in answer to prayer. I can use my arm now. My hand is like the other. I can write and work with my right hand. I also had the dyspepsia seventeen years, and am healed in answer to prayer." -- Touching Incidents, by Rev. S. B. Shaw.

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#### 50 -- A DOUBLE CURE

Hark! A light step, followed by a heavy tread is approaching my study. What does it mean? It is a cold freezing day in February, and it is Saturday -- a very busy day for me. Well, I should think wife would entertain company in the parlor. But here she comes, followed by a person right from the State lunatic asylum -- one that I had met with before. I must confess that I felt a little strange with such company; but I immediately arose and gave the brother my hand and said: "Good morning, Mr. Van Benschoten; how do you do?" "I am well, bless God! I called, Brother Osborne, to tell you what great tidings the Lord has done for me." He then gave me his experience, which is as follows: "I have been in the New York asylum for two years, and have been growing worse, so that for several months I have not been outside those prison walls. Recently, Mr. Gray, the superintendent, wrote my wife that I was an incurable case. Of course, I expected to remain incarcerated within those prison walls; but what was still worse, I expected my reason to remain dethroned, which in the past had been periodically. But I was growing worse; my body was quite emaciated; I had lost my appetite, and in fact, I was full of fearful forebodings, a wretched man. My case was a sad one. Here I must suffer out this brief existence, in misery, pain, sorrow, shame and remorse and then an eternity with devils and damned spirits: and all this brought on by my own

licentiousness. 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' A companion in tribulation said to me, 'The Lord can heal you, soul and body,' and gave me this passage of Scripture: 'And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins they shall be forgiven him.' I thought, that just covers my case -- but how, to make it available? I was told by my comrade in distress that I must fast and pray, which I did, until I wore my knees sore. I was then watched very narrowly, and prohibited from getting upon my knees; and finally, I was shut up at night in a crib in order to prevent -- as I suppose the doctors viewed it -- a further development of my new phase of insanity. The crib is something like a large cradle without rocker -- with a cover of slats that shut over the top, and is locked down when occupied by anyone. While in this condition, I was led to think of God's goodness to me in sparing my life so long, and I a rebel against Him.

"I thought of the effort I had been making to get to Him; my sins had appeared in dreadful array, which I loathed with all my heart. I felt that there was real godly sorrow in me. I had besought the Lord to pardon my sins and heal my body. I believed that He was able to do its yea, I thought that He was willing to do it; I thought of the promise, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick,' etc. I said, 'O Lord, why not now? They have locked me up to prevent my getting upon my knees; but can't the Lord bless me lying on my back? Can't the Almighty come right through these slats?'

"I heard a voice saying, 'Yes, He can.' The next moment I was believing in God with all my heart. Something said, 'Why not believe that God will do His work, and do it now?' I said, 'Lord, Thou wilt do it now!' Just then I felt a very strange sensation going all through my body, and with it a conviction that the work was done. I felt it all through my soul and body. It flowed from my heart like oil from a flowing well, and continued to bubble up just as Jesus promised it should do. 'The water that I give you shall be in you a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life.' Praise our God forever. The next morning, soon after coming out of the crib, I met the head physician. He said, 'Good morning, Van; how are you?' 'I am well,' I replied, 'glory to God!' 'Van, what do you mean?' 'I mean that the good Lord came right down into my crib last night and He healed my soul and body -- glory to God!' The doctor looked wild and said, 'Van, be careful, or we shall put you up in No. 11.' (The hall where the incurable cases were kept.) The brother constantly affirmed that God had made him whole, every whit. Within four weeks from the time the superintendent wrote this brother's wife that her husband was incurable, he wrote her that he was so much better that she could come after him. but did not state how he was cured.

Three years after I met this brother on the cars. His first utterances were, as I approached him, "Glory to God, Brother Osborne, the Lord saves me, soul and body." He said that he had not had a symptom. of his old disease since his last night in the crib. Our God is mighty to save --  
From Born of the Spirit, by Rev. Zenas Osborne.

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THE END