



SUNDAY READING

MORNING SERVICE.

MORNING.

We will lift up our eyes unto the hills, whence cometh our help. Our help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth.

We will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing. We will exalt Him also in the congregation of the people.

Whereof shall we come before the Lord, and bow ourselves before the most high God. He hath showed us what is good; and what doth the Lord require of us, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

Collect.

Almighty God, in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity nor death; the Light, without which there is darkness; the Way, without which there is wandering; the Truth, without which there is error; the Life, without which there is death; say, Let there be Light, and we shall see light, and escape darkness; we shall see life and escape death. Quickened and illumined our souls; lift our affections to things above and help us to make our obedience to Thee a service of perfect freedom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN.

All Live Unto God.

O Lord of Life, where'er they be,
Safe in Thy own eternal care,
Our dead are living unto Thee.

Hallelujah.

All souls are Thine, and here and there,
They rest within Thy sheltering care;
One Providence alike they share.

Hallelujah.

Thy word is true, Thy ways are just;
Above the realm "Dust to dust,"
Shall rise our psalm of grateful trust.

Hallelujah.

O happy they in God who rest,
No more by fear and doubt oppressed;
Living or dying they are blest.

Hallelujah.

SERMON.

The Name of Jesus.

By Rev. Canon Scott, Holland,
Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, England.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto, have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."—John xvi. 23, 24.

Human life is the expression of a want: its inner movement is desire for something unattained. Herein lies its radical distinction from the layers of lower life from out of which it lifts itself.

The plant or the animal has a limited and fixed range of necessary needs, which they set themselves to secure, or else they perish, and these secured they have done: the type is settled: the years come and go, and there is no novel appetite, no push of inward want, no change in habit or in structure, when once the fitting equipoise is reached, development is practically stayed. But in man, as soon as the instinct of civilization touches him, as soon, that is, as his proper manhood begins to work, there appears a power of raising his demands upon life, a power of progressive desire, which uses the satisfaction of the immediate and necessary needs only as a vantage ground from which to extend the range and the variety of his wants. Each fresh rise in the satisfaction does but increase and intensify the capacity of desiring, and the higher the level reached, the wider, the richer, the more illimitable the possibilities that open out above, about, beneath him.

Each satisfaction renders him therefore less and less satisfied; it does not whet his ambition: his restlessness, his movement, his progress do not grow more urgent, and in this very urgency, in this very necessity for unceasing advance, lies his work, his life, his joy, his fulfilment. This is civilization. It is the ever growing demand that man is ever making upon life to fulfill his ever-rising possibilities. Ever he calls upon earth and sea and sky to do more for him than they have ever done before; ever he presses from out their hidden stores, novel treasures; ever he dives and hunts and digs to discover and drag out forces that may open to him fresh opportunities. Man is ever asking: it is his very life to ask more and more; it is his proper growth to improve and to enlarge, to fertilize and to vary his right, his faculty of asking.

And this is one deep reason why prayer belongs to the very stuff of human life. This incessant demand is not to be the mere blind pressure of some mechanical force; it is to be human, spiritual, conscious; it is to recognize itself and to regulate itself, and to direct itself; it is to put itself out in words; it is to pray.

And again, this asking is to be no selfish greed for more, but to be the intelligent motion of a being endowed with a purpose, summoned to a task. The power of a force compelling man to go forward is the witness to a command that bids him be faithful, and multiply, and have dominion over the plants and birds, and every creeping thing, because there is a voice ever behind him, guiding, impelling him, saying, "This is the way: walk ye in it." He is to expect more and more of the earth to respond and an ever-richer response to his efforts, not with the temper of an intoxicated tyrant, burning with a selfish passion to absorb all to himself, but with the free and elastic hope of a child set down in his father's domain, for whom all the father has is his, and he is to see all and know all, and rule all because he is the heir, and is eager to enter into all the secrets of his father's mind and the wonders of his father's splendors, of his father's hopes. Therefore his untiring demands must look ever upward to the Father's face, and his asking is to break out from his lips in increasing prayer to Him from whom, above all, good gifts must come.

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A LIFE OF PRAYING.

Human life then, is the life of growth, of growing desire, a life of asking, a life of prayer. But what a strange and bewildering noise is this actual prayer of men as it ascends from an unregenerative world into the ear of the great God. What a hubbub of requests! What a jumble of contradictory demands. No steady, intelligent appeal built up by disciplined experience, taking wise and careful measure of the achievements that are one by one disclosing their possibility, counting the reasons, serious in the consciousness of a divine task. Alas! that is not the appeal that goes up towards God. No appeal of the trustful child anxious to be loyal to the father's wish, no appeal inspired by that veracity and that security which the perfect understanding of responsive love alone secure. No; sin has disturbed the even flow of men's desires, and they no longer set themselves along the steady channels that would bear them onward to their destined position; and the voices that rise from the lower floods are broken and turbulent and lost. Man has lost the secret of asking, and the demands he makes on God are the issue of a distracted will. He asks—he knows not what he asks. No moral standard governs and trains his expectation of what God may do for him, or what he may fitly make request before God for. So the earth is full of a swarm of prayers. The asking reflects the mere passion of the asker. Here is it the loud, protesting, angry outcry of a clamorous will; there it is the strong and manful demand of a cheerful heart, that counts on obtaining long life, with robust days and prolonged cheerfulness; or, here again, it is the scream of terror, the wild outburst of a wounded animal robbed of its prey; or, yet, again it may be the complaint of a heart that is jaded, and sore, and bruised, or sometimes it is wilful sin that will have at all costs that enticing evil to which it has surrendered its soul, and will dare to appeal to God in its blindness to serve its lusts, to satiate its appetites. So man asks. "Out of the corruption of the hear the mouth speaketh," as in that dreadful diary of a girl who said, "I want to be rich, to have a jewel, to have a palace; I want to be brilliant; I want to have all, and God has made me so." So man asks, and even his best speeches are distorted by that which debases them, and rarely does there enter into God's ears the high and pure prayer of a will that is bent on a task to which God has sent it. So man prays, and his prayers moreover, use such strange methods of enforcing such demands. The religions of heathendom are the shapes in which such prayers clothe themselves. God the Father listens while men crowd round their fetish idols with a maddening monotony of drums; or they enforce their claims by charms, or with cutting themselves with knives; or they raise bloody altars and bring as pledges of their needs the bodies of their sons and daughters; they will even pass children through the fire by that they can win an answer from an obstinate God. So strange and so wild are the blunderings of men's prayers, so cruel has been the story to which God has been compelled to listen. But within it all there is nevertheless the desire of a child to know his father, and God in merciful recognition of this half-stilted desire, and in view of that blessed day when the one true Son should stand upon earth, endured in patience the weary years, and did not wholly turn away from these confessions. Looking to the Lamb yet to be slain He tolerated the appeal of pleading hearts and accepted the zeal that was offered though it was clouded, and suffered His own voice to be heard even though the medium was so obscure. The times of man's ignorance He winked at, content if He could lift the fashion of men's habitual appeals to Him into some nearer harmony with His own will, into the temple service of His people, through whom He prepared the advent of the Mediator.

THE POWER IN PRAYER.

Now, at last, we are told in the words of my text, there is to be a change. A principle is to assert itself, which will sift, and test, and ordain, until all will be built together in articulate speech. The name of Jesus: that is the energy which will move over these waters so formless and void, under the plastic touch of which the whole fabric should grow up together into a seamless whole. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name He will give it you." "My name." That name is to put all man's askings to the proper proof. Now, we know how to ask, and what to ask. Before we tossed up, as it were, every passionate need that throbbed in our heart, it was enough that we prayed, and then to make our request good we did this or that which dim tradition authorized: we ran with fruit or flowers, or slew a bullock, while perhaps we said, "We will cry aloud for fear God is asleep: we will do the things that seem to please Him, lest He be angry or malicious, or unkind." So it has been all a dark and doubtful experience, but now we know the name of Jesus must determine all. Under that name alone can a petition be sanctioned. The force of this name alone wins it favorable hearing. All other religions, then, that offer to bring our requests home to God are abolished by that one word. They are claimed a peculiar entry, but all other methods and devices are stripped of their merit. There is one only way: it is the name of Jesus Christ. That is the great religious discovery, that is the new secret, at the hearing of which all heathen forces must perish. "Hitherto, ye have asked nothing in My name; ask, and ye shall receive that your joy may be full."

The name of Jesus is to bring its power to bear upon our requests in two or three special ways. First, we know it is redemptive for poor, blind wants that we bring before God are in themselves so beside the

A PLAIN FACT!

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mark, we have lost the instinct of asking right; we have let selfishness and wilfulness and dishonorable appetite disturb spiritual insight, and we throw out our hopes in vague directions: we cannot make our petitions tally with the deep rule that governs all christian prayer, the rule that our heavenly father knows what we need before we ask.

He knows exactly: He never requires to be told: He knows: and He waits to give out just what our being wants the moment we give Him the chance by our desire for it. So, God knowing all that we have need of, has all in perfect readiness if only we could open the channel and feel the want of it, and desire it, and ask in prayer for it. Yet we go pressing some silly request; we stumble, groping about; we want this and the other, and all is wrong. We offer unavailing prayers for the wrong thing, and so we grow flushed and angry against God, and our prayers seem useless, aimless, unaccountable and perplexing. So we pray.

And if we were alone our prayers could make but little way, could not but be sadly ineffectual and stupid, and disappointing; but now the name of Jesus stands over them all. That name enters the Father's ears without the whole power of love going to greet it; at the sound of that blessed name the Father's heart is aglow, and that name is now identified with us; it spreads itself out over us; it fastens on us, it encompasses us; it binds us into His own life; there we lie in His name, encased and ensconced, and its identity protects us, and its force overflows us. We are in Jesus, Jesus in us. His name is ours; He is not ashamed to gather us up into Himself, and therefore our requests go up inside His; they enter into heaven through His mouth and from His lips; He takes them from us, and makes them His own, so that they are purged of their contempt, they are redeemed from their natural shame. Over and above our thin beseechings there pleads the mighty voice of the Intercessor; we become acceptable in the Beloved. We can only picture by images the deep effect of this; but we can, at least, imagine what it may mean if we picture the Father listening to our poor prayers with just the same loving attention and devotion as if Jesus Christ Himself offered them.

THE ENERGY OF CHRIST'S NAME.

It is very hard to pray. We feel so hopelessly small, insignificant and powerless, so ignorant, so short-sighted, so shut out in such grim silence, feeling what is it we should say, and what is for our good, and if we know and could utter it, what good could we do. Yet, feeble and stammering though our lips be, it is in the name of Jesus that we pray inside His name, not outside in the cold, beseeching some remote and hidden God within, and it is from a heart glowing and out-flowing that He hearkens to our petitions, and bends Himself to our prayers. And we pray in that name. It is not only redemptive in winning for us a favorable fashioning hearing, but it is regulative also in fashioning our prayers. We pray within the energy of that living name. We must conform our nature to His model. Slowly we have to suffer this name of Jesus to pass over our anxious understandings, our feverish needs, and to instill into them its coolness, its steadiness, its rhythm. Its governing force will select and prune, and modify; it will, indeed, forgive, and compassionate and pity, as hot words come from our lips; but it will not be satisfied with passing over and forgiving; it will aim at better things; it will wait until the heat of impassioned longing is done, and straighten much that is crooked. It will wait for us to pray better. Our want depends on our character, and as our inner character yields to the discipline of the name, our wants will signalize the growing change, they will become more and more conformable to the mind of Christ; more and more we should be accustomed to offer our petitions in His name. "Would my Lord Jesus offer this petition on my behalf? Could I imagine myself framing it in His presence? Can I genuinely ask the Father to receive it as from the lips of Jesus Himself? Is my prayer of that kind? So alone do I pray in His name. My brethren, it is not, perhaps very often, that we can win the strong comfort of knowing that our prayer entirely conforms to the mind of Jesus Christ.

But today I am desired by your bishop to remind you that there is a wide, a deep prayer going up before God from Christ's churches in London—the very key in hardly but be tuned to the throne of prayer today; to the heart of Jesus, and into His will, affections, desires, can throw itself without reserve, for it is the prayer of his own chosen and appointed church, that His name may be hallowed among them who now are denied success; that His truth may find a free way given to find out and touch those who need it sorest: the poor, the halt, the blind, the maimed, the desolate, the forsaken. It is a prayer that in a christian city there should not be thousands upon thousands whom no news of such blessed privilege ever reached, on whom the kindly hand of Jesus Christ laid bidding them to turn to Him, on whom no inviting voice ever falls.

So long as the bishop of London's fund exists, it is a confession that this is not yet done, for the fund only exists in order to remedy the lack of absolutely essential ministers. It lacks only where there is a sheer want of all that can bring the gospel news within the range of the people: it lacks only where without it there would be no witness to the risen Lord made by the church at all. It never passes beyond the work which is really obligatory. The bishop of London's fund, he tells us himself, exists for the sole purpose of making the work of the church in this diocese possible. It has done very much. It has helped to build more than 150 churches, it is still continuing that much-needed work. But far more is wanted. In many

parishes a change has come over the population. The wealthier residents have gone, and a very much larger number of poor have come in their places. I pray you, if you value the religious blessings you have received yourself to help to extend it to others. So the case stands. It is a prayer into which the breath of Jesus our Lord is poured, for it is His own name and honor which is at stake. It is yours and ours today to breathe that prayer, and to pledge our pleadings before God by the gifts which we give. Give what you can simply as a witness to the hearty passion with which you send up this prayer in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Let it be no weak prayer, costing no effort, but a prayer backed by a will and a solid effort. It should be a sacrifice of something that you would like to keep, only the love of God constraining you, and showing itself in the prayer that God may look down in pity on His people, and make known in London the name of His Christ.

Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life.

My son, the more thou canst go out of thyself, so much the more wilt thou be able to enter into Me.

As to desire no outward thing produceth inward peace, so the forsaking of ourselves inwardly, joineth us unto God.

I will have thee learn perfect resignation of thyself to my will, without contradiction or complaint.

Follow thou me: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Without the way, there is no going; without the truth, there is no knowing; without the life, there is no living. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow; the truth, which thou oughtest to trust; the life, which thou oughtest to hope for.

I am the way inviolable, the truth intangible, the life that cannot end.

I am the straight way, the highest truth, the true life, the blessed life, the life uncreated.

If thou remain in my way, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall make thee free, and thou shalt lay hold on eternal life.

If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

If thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, sell all.

If thou wilt be my disciple, deny thyself utterly.

If thou wilt possess a blessed life, despise this life present.

If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thyself in this world.

If thou wilt reign with me, bear the cross with me.

For only the servants of the cross can find the way of blessedness and of true light.

For the servant is not greater than his Lord, nor the disciple above his Master.

Let thy servant be exercised in thy life, for therein consisteth my salvation and my true holiness.

Whatsoever I read or hear besides it, doth not give me full refreshment or delight.

Collect.

O God, the Comforter of the humble and the Strength of the faithful, be merciful to Thy supplicants; that our human weakness which by itself is prone to fall, may be evermore supported by Thee to stand upright, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN.

Partakers of the Divine Nature.

God of our fathers, in whose sight
The thousand years that sweep away
Man and the traces of his might,
Are but the break and close of day.

Grant us that love of truth sublime,
That love of goodness and of Thee,
Which makes Thy children in all time
To share Thine own eternity.

—J. Pierpont.

Benediction.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen.

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