

Our Christ.

In Christ I feel the heart of God
Throbbing from heaven through earth.
Life stirs again within the clod,
Renewed in baseness birth.
The soul springs up, a flower of prayer,
Breathing His breath out on the air.

In Christ I touch the hand of God,
From His pure heights reached down,
By blessed ways before untrod,
To lift us to our crown;
Victory that only perfect is
Through loving sacrifice, like His.

Holding His hand, my steadied feet
May walk the air, the seas.
On life and death His smile falls sweet,
Lights up all mysteries;
Stranger nor exile can I be
In new words where He leadeth me.

Not my Christ only; He is ours;
Humanity's close bond;
Key to its vast, unopened powers,
Dream of our dreams beyond,
What yet we shall be none can tell;
Now we are His, and all is well.

—Lucy Larcom.

Universality of the Prayer-Cry.

"O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." This is the declaration of the inspired Psalmist, and the widest acquaintance with human nature and with human experiences confirms the truth of the declaration. Man prays because man is man, and needs help from One who is above man and outside of man. The universality of the human prayer-cry is a result and a proof of the need and the fitness of prayer by man to God.

Those who profess to be able to show by a study of the form and the powers of living organisms, the process by which man has arrived at his present state, tell us that an existing need tends to produce a corresponding effort and an ultimate capacity to meet that need. Light calls for sight. If there were no light, there would be no eye to perceive the light. But wherever there is light, life seeks and secures the power to perceive and utilize light. It is in accordance with the principle here suggested that the existence of a Hearer of prayer is in itself an invitation and an incitement to the universal prayer-cry of humanity.

Prayer is not a consequence of any specific command to pray. The duty of prayer is not even included in the scope of the Ten Commandments—or the Ten Words of God's loving covenant with his people. There is no primitive injunction to pray in the earlier pages of the Bible history of the race. The fact, like the fitness and the necessity, of prayer, seems to be taken for granted in Bible teachings, as truly as the existence of God and the dependence of man on God. A cry to God for help in some crisis hour of need or sorrow is instinctive in the human heart, and must be so while man is man and God is God.

Men may repress their impulse to pray in ordinary times, or may neglect and ignore the duty and privilege of prayer, while they are free from any sense of peril, or are thoughtless as to their utter dependence on supernatural aid and guidance; but the time will come when they realize that they are not sufficient unto themselves, and then, in spite of themselves, the prayer-cry is forced out of their heart of hearts. "He that will learn to pray, let him go to the sea," says George Herbert pithily, out of the wisdom of the ages; and many a man has uttered his first conscious prayer-cry in some hour of extremity in an ocean storm, or as he faced death on a battle-field.

"Do you ever pray, my friend?" asked an army chaplain of a wounded soldier in the prison hospital in Charleston, in the Civil War, just after the fierce and fruitless assault on Fort Wagner. "Sometimes chaplain," was the answer; "I prayed last Saturday night, when we were in that fight at Wagner. I guess everybody prayed then." Yes, everybody prays at one time or another, in faith or in fear, in hope or despair.

"There is no God," the foolish saith;—But none, "There is no sorrow!" And nature oft the cry of faith In bitter need will borrow. Eyes which the preacher could not school

By wayside graves are raised,
And lips say, "God be pitiful!"
Who ne'er said, "God be praised!"
Be pitiful, O God!

In the presence of the dread realities of the unknown future, the soul's cry for spiritual help is instinctive and universal. At its least, it is like the unconscious cry of the new-born babe for the food of nature provided of God in the mother's life; or like the unspoken cry of the parched lips, in the delirium of fever, for the cool water which the wandering intellect cannot give words to ask for. Because their human needs require superhuman help, and superhuman help is divinely provided for them, therefore their souls cry for such assistance. The God-given supply prompts the man-elt longing.

K. D. C. for heartburn and our stomach.

Those who are outside of the influence of Bible teachings or of Christian associations give utterance to cries for superhuman aid in their hour of need. They call on the gods to help them, or they cry to the demons to spare them from harm. The prayer-cry of the human heart is universal. He who refuses to pray, sins against the light of revelation and of nature. He wrongs his own soul as surely as if he were to refuse to smile in the hour of joy, or to shed a tear when he is in sorrow.

"He who goes to bed and doth not pray,
Maketh two nights of every day."

Whatever one may think of the reasons for prayer, or of the reasonableness of the universal heart-cry for supernatural help, he must admit that this cry is natural to man, and that therefore there is some good reason for it. If he represses his impulse at times to share in it, he bears himself unnaturally, and he is less than a man if he lives a prayerless life. It is a shame to man to lead a prayerless life.

"For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain;
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round world is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

S. S. Times.

Jesus, The Good Shepherd

We find here stated the grand purpose of our Saviour's advent: "I am come that they might have life * * * more abundantly." Nothing is so precious in all the universe of God as life. Always a unique divine production, men can construct many things, but never that. The natural and the spiritual forms of it were both righteously forfeited on account of sin. So when Christ, the divine Philanthropist appeared, what He did was to bring 'life and immortality to light through the Gospel.' He proclaimed and secured for all His people not merely a resurrection for the body, but a life for the spirit, like that of God, in purity, blessedness, duration; yes, more, that men might possess the same, and even become partakers of the divine nature. This life, moreover, He was to bring us only by the temporary surrender of His own: "I lay down My life for the sheep." Nor was it to be a mere future gift, but a thing of the present also, to be secured now and here, if at all. Jesus said: "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life."

Multitudes of the young are eager to 'see life'—to 'enjoy life,' as they say. They are right. Christ welcomes them to the endeavor and the success, if they do not look for it in the wrong way. In him is the place to gain it, not in the low average of worldly attainment, but 'more abundantly'—more in happiness, honor, dignity, usefulness, and permanence, in all that makes life worth the living. Jesus came not to make us less, but more. He wants to shivel the weeds and poison plants, but never to suppress life's true strength and beauty; only to give it to us in grander measure 'more abundantly.'

But notice the method of Christ's rule. 'He leadeth them out, * * * He goeth before them.' It was not an Eastern shepherd a way to drive his flock, as is customary now, but to go in advance and call them after him. Hence the necessity of knowing their names, that their inclinations might be worked upon and their following made sure. If the sheep were sent on ahead cracking whips and barking dogs might well be in place behind them to push them onward. No need, then, to know names or watch individuals at all, for the driven flock would go just as well in mass and need no personal persuasion. But it is the glory and charm of our Redeemer that He goes always before, never behind, His flock; calling, not driving; leading, not pushing; saying not 'Go,' but 'Come.' 'Temptations, losses' crosses, dangers, duties, are to be borne after Him, for He has tried them all and shows us how to follow.

How is it possible after this to picture the Christian life as anything but a free, unconstrained service of God? Can any liberty be more absolute than his who follows a leader, held in loyalty by choice of his own desire, by pressure of a felt attraction? Christ's plan in discipleship is not that we should perform duty because we must, but because our hearts are in it. Any man is to be pitied whose work does not attract him, who detests it while doing it, puts no heart into it, always wishes he was at something else. No successes in art are ever reached from work undertaken in that spirit. And joyless, uninspired Christian labor will

For nervous headache use K. D. C.

never do much toward sainthood. Truancy, straggling, loses the flock in thickets that tear, in sloughs that mire, where the shepherd has to come for them, after all, to lead their aching feet again to the sure, well-pastured road they never need have left.—CHARLES S. POMEROY, D. D.

"Father, Forgive Them"

What entire renunciation of self we do behold in this first word from the cross! It was spoken while His hands and feet were being pierced by the cruel nails. He thought not of his own agony; only the wounds of sin were before Him. Pity for a polluted race was all-absorbing. Without reserve, without hesitation, He threw Himself into the fearful chasm. That chasm must be bridged at whatever cost. At this moment His eyes were upturned in prayer for His enemies; His voice was not against, but for them.

Consider that Jesus did not suffer like the two malefactors, helpless. His matchless words, 'All power is given unto Me,' 'I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again,' were not mere figures of speech. 'More than twelve legions' of angels might have been marshaled for His defense. He became our substitute of His own will; 'No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.' 'He gave Himself for us.'

Love from fathomless depths constrained Him. He chose to cover our offenses from the eyes of Justice by means of an adequate sacrifice, to relieve our captivity by a price of infinite value, to open for sinners the highway of complete reconciliation with God, to avert divine wrath, 'being wounded for our transgressions.' In no sense did He choose this agony for the expiation of His own guilt. His spotless life had silenced obloquy, had extorted from profane lips, 'I find no fault in Him,' and from a soul in self-despair, 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.' 'We receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss, was the righteous judgment of the dying penitent. That stainless life has won the admiration of succeeding ages. Virtue exalts herself. The spotless Galilean, whose sanctity was attested by supernatural power at Golgotha, receives the unconscious tribute of hostile minds 'in our own day.' Truly this was the Son of God.' This omnipotent, voluntary, holy sufferer 'opened not His mouth,' only in blessing upon His murderers. As though He would say, I am nothing; their cause is everything. Let Me be 'despised and rejected'; only let pity weep for them mercy rescue them.

Behold in this scene not only self-renunciation for the dweller in Jerusalem or for the Roman soldier. In this 'Father, forgive them,' is revealed the heart toward all. Our vacillating purposes, secret unbelief, and inconstant love are nothing less than sharp thorns pressing His brow. The bold assaults of our day upon His divine person and vicarious work are but repetitions of the crucifixion. How does Jesus bear Himself toward us in all our conscious or unconscious weakness? When we rely upon our insufficiency, despise His riches, and choose the sensual and earthly, how does He feel? When modern doubt condemns Him to ignominy and shame, what answer is returned from the Man of sorrows? Hear it in His first word from the cross. O, it is the outburst of love, tender as it is profound. Does the world need an example of forgiveness? Here it is found. He magnifies His own word: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

A Wrong Idea of Frankness and Sincerity.

Sincerity does not necessarily involve the speaking out of one's whole mind, or the showing out of all one's feelings. Repressing thought and feeling, and all signs of them, when they ought not to be shown, is entirely consistent with sincerity, and is often an unmistakable duty. There is such a thing as brutal frankness and an abominable show of sincerity. The man who thinks he ought to let another know just how he feels, or just what he thinks, under all circumstances, is an intolerable nuisance. If, for instance, he is sorely tempted to be profane, or irreverent, or indecent, or ill-tempered, or uncivil, he ought religiously to repress every sign of his temptation. He ought to be decent, whether he feels like being so or not. The claim of sincerity and frankness is no excuse for brutality, indecency, incivility, or discourtesy. If we cannot feel as Christians and as gentlemen ought to feel, let us at least act and speak and seem as they ought to seem and speak and act.—S. S. Times.

K. D. C. Pills tone and regulate the liver.

Perfect Through Suffering.

That we are made perfect through suffering is a fact too plainly revealed to be denied, but why it is so, is a mystery belonging to God alone.

We have a right to deal with facts as we find them, but we are not able to look into or understand the deep secrets of an Infinite Being. When we accept the law in its best and highest sense, we are in the line of duty; but as we rebel, or seek to criticize God's ways, we sin against him.

The law of suffering is a hard one many times to accept, especially when we are in no way responsible for the pain we bear; and yet God's grace is always sufficient for the trial. If we had no arm of support on which to lean in times of trial, it would be a greater mystery still; but as the strong hand is ever extended to us, we ought to accept it, as we accept a refuge in the midst of a wild storm.

I have often thought that God averts trial and disaster until they are actually needed to purify the soul and lift it up nearer to his heart of love. He always does his work perfectly; so nothing is left undone to establish our feet upon the strong Rock of Ages. We are melted down in the fierce furnace fires, that we may come out with all the dross forever removed, and with his face shining in the beater gold. Then we all like him, and are made perfect by the furnace fires.

Some flowers never send out their sweet perfume until crushed and trampled to the earth. And there are multitudes in the world that never wear the smile of peace until the burning tears have washed away the worldly desire, the worldly hope and the human will.

"We shall know hereafter." Surely this is comforting to believe, that after God has "wiped all our tears away" we shall look into the secrets that we are not capable of understanding here. I think many a face will wear the light of eternal gratitude because of suffering in the dim years that were touched with so much mystery. Let us have sufficient faith in God to be glad even in this life.—The Christian Worker.

Do Not be a Lazy Christian.

Be lazy in your worldly matters, if you will; you will soon feel the effects of it; but do not be lazy in your Christian work. Let it be done promptly. Keep up to time with it. It must not lag behind. Do not be late in the house of God. Do not come in five minutes after the service begins, to disturb the pastor and the worship. Do not be late at the prayer-meeting. You lose much by it. It is the disadvantage of others also. Do not neglect the evening service because you are weary, or it is too warm. Do not let your class believe you are a lazy laggard, because they are there and you are not. Be on hand, be up to time, be energetic as one determined by the grace of God to succeed, and you will know no failure. The sluggard is the man who says: "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep."—Christian Instructor.

A Genius for Helping.

"There" said a neighbor, pointing to a village carpenter, 'there is a man who has done more good, I believe, in this community, than any other man who has ever lived in it. He cannot talk very much in public, and he does not try. He is not worth two thousand dollars, and it is very little he can put down on subscription papers. But a new family never moves into the village that he does not find out and give them a neighborly welcome and offer them some service. He is on the lookout to give strangers a seat in his pew at church. He is always ready to watch with a sick neighbor and to look after his affairs for him. He finds time for a pleasant word to every child he meets, and you will always see the children climbing into his wagon when he has no other load. He has a genius for helping folks, and it does me good to meet him on the street.'—Ex

TRUE PRAYER.—"I used to believe in prayer," said a sad, lonely woman, whose loved ones had been removed by death. "But I prayed for the life of the one dearest to me, and, since it was not spared, I know our prayers are not heard." But the prayer that has no 'Thy will be done' in it is a demand, not a petition. The true philosophy of prayer could not be better stated than it was stated by the little girl who said, 'God always answers prayer; but sometimes he answers 'Yes,' and sometimes he answers 'No.' True faith will not be staggered when the Father tenderly answers 'No.'

Take K. D. C. for sour stomach and sickheadache.

Unpreached Sermons.

A man's best sermons he never preaches. Despite the paradoxical style of the expression there are silent voices in the soul of every true interpreter of the gospel. The man knows that they are there, in a measure he himself hears them—but he cannot utter their sweetness. Yet the preacher is a better teacher of the truth just because of these deep heart inspirations, which come of the voice of God sounding in the holiest sanctuary of his being.

THE HON. JOHN WANAMAKER recently spoke to a large meeting of non-church goers at the Kensington Theatre, Philadelphia, says the Star. It was the first of a series of four meetings under the care of the Evangelical Alliance. Mr. Wanamaker talked so earnestly and forcibly that he kept an audience of restless young men quiet for an hour and a half. He told them how, when he was an awkward country boy of eighteen, he went to a religious meeting, sitting far back in the audience, and heard an aged preacher say that now he was old he felt how good it was to have the religion of Christ to die by. Mr. Wanamaker then and there decided that he would have that religion to live by. He also spoke of frequently visiting the late Samuel J. Randall during his last illness, and reading to him from the Bible. At one of these visits the statesman said: "Mr. Wanamaker, I have found it there," pointing to his Bible, "and I am happy now."

Random Readings.

If the way to heaven be narrow, it is not long, and if the gate be strait, it opens into endless life.

What can a man do more than die for his countrymen? Live for them. It is a longer work, and therefore a more difficult and a nobler one.—

Whether a man is a success or a failure must be determined, not by what the world says of him, nor by the money he has accumulated, nor by the glory he has won, but by his becoming or not becoming what God has called him to be.

Little by little, when a man prays, he ceases to make supplications alone. He prays because it is a comfort to pray. I go and see friends, not because I have anything to ask of them. I do not want their bread; I do not want their silver and gold; I do not want their things; I want them. It is a joyful experience to be in their company. And prayer has pre-eminently that element in it. It is communion with God. It is being in his conscious presence. It is keeping company that it is good for anybody to keep.

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James E. Nicholson.

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Mr. Nicholson says: "I consulted doctors who prescribed for me, but to no purpose; the cancer began to eat into the flesh, spread to my chin, and I suffered in agony for seven long years. Finally, I began taking Ayer's Sarsaparilla. In a week or two I noticed a decided improvement."

Decided Improvement.

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