

Prayer.

"Men, ought always to pray, and not to faint."—Luke 18. 1.

Pray, always pray; the Holy Spirit pleads Within thee all thy daily, hourly needs.

Pray, always pray; beneath sin's heaviest load Prayer sees the blood from Jesus' side that flowed.

Pray, always pray; though weary, faint, and lone, Prayer nestles by the Father's sheltering throne.

Pray, always pray; amid the world's turmoil Prayer keeps the heart at rest, and nerves for toil.

Pray, always pray; if joys thy pathway throng, Prayer strikes the harp, and sings the angels' song.

Pray, always pray; if loved ones pass the veil, Prayer drinks with them of springs that cannot fail.

All earthly things with earth shall fade away; Prayer grasps eternity; pray, always pray —Elihu Bickerseth.

Kindness in Unanswered Prayer.

J. R. MILLER, D. D.

There are some of our prayers which God loves us to well to answer. If he did what we plead with him, sometimes agonizingly, to do, he would withdraw from us great blessings. But he would rather resist our pleadings and disappoint us than impoverish our life by letting us have what we want.

In one of St. Peter's epistles is a little phrase of three words, which casts a ray of light on many things in life that seem hard. The writer is speaking of trials, and says, "Now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief." "If need be" is the illuminating clause in this sentence. It shines like a star with heavenly light upon the darkness of pain and sorrow. There is a divine reason for the trouble which we long to get rid of. There is a blessing in the thing which is so hard to bear. To take it away would be to take a good, divine gift out of our life.

A marginal reading of an oft-quoted promise tells us the secret that our "burden" is a gift of God to us. This thought changes the meaning of the experience in our life which is hard for us to endure. A burden is something heavy, something hard to carry. It weighs us down, crushes us, so that we feel as if we must faint beneath it. It is natural for us to want to get rid of it. We say we would go on much more easily, with much more celerity, if only we could lay off our heavy load. So we pray God to take it away from us.

But just then our eye catches sight of the alternative reading, "gift"—our burden is God's gift to us. This unlovely, uncomfortable, heavy, crushing thing, under which we are bowing in weakness—it is a gift from God to us. A gift from God! Then it must be good; there must be something gracious and loving in it.

God would not give us anything merely to make us suffer. He does not take pleasure in making life hard for us. This unwelcome thing, this that causes us so much pain, enfolds in its unattractiveness a secret of blessing. It is something we could not afford to have taken away. If only we could see the hidden treasure of good there is in it, we would no longer cry to God to have it removed.

It would be unkind in our Father, therefore, to take away these things which we plead with him to remove. His kindness is shown rather in refusing our prayers. We cast the burden upon him, as he bids us do, but it is still on our own shoulder—he does not carry it for us. Yet the prayer is answered—answered, too, in a far better way than if the heavy weight were lifted off. "He shall sustain thee" is the promise. Instead of bearing the load for us, he gives us strength, so that we can bear it ourselves. Thus we get the blessing of the "need be," and we do not lose the gift of God which came in the burden.

Besides, we are divinely strengthened, and rise to new power as Christians. For it is a great deal better for us if God makes us strong, so that we can carry our own loads, than if he had carried them for us. It was better that Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate should make the lame man well, so that he needed no more to beg, than if they had given him alms enough to provide for him for a whole year. God is much more eager to make something of us than he is to give us an easy time for just a few days.

It will help us better to understand the divine method in answering prayer if we carefully study this phase of the subject. St. Paul's remarkable prayer

for the taking away of his "thorn" illustrates this teaching. This thorn was something which the apostle thought was an insuperable hindrance to him in his life and work. It caused him great distress. If only he were free from this torturing trouble, how much stronger he would be, how much more he could do! So he took it to the Lord in prayer. He prayed very earnestly—three times he made his supplication. To his surprise, however, the thorn was not removed. He must still keep it.

But a blessed, heavenly light was poured upon his trouble, and it appeared in new meaning. Instead of a rough, sharp thorn, it was a shining gift of God. Instead of a hindrance to his usefulness, it became a new secret of power and blessing. The suffering would keep him lowly, save him from spiritual pride, and anything that does that for a successful and honored servant of Christ is an incalculable blessing. Besides, it drew down with it into the apostle's life more of Christ, a greater measure of strength of Christ. So St. Paul learned that his seemingly intolerable burden was indeed a gracious gift from God. If his prayer had been answered he would have been a great loser, his life would have been impoverished. It was not answered, and he found in his heart new blessing, with which he would not have parted for the world's best treasure.

So we get our lesson. Things are not what they seem. We allow sense to interpret for us what is good and what is not good.

If we remember always that the things which are seen are only temporal, while the things which are unseen are eternal, we should see good in what now seems only evil. After all it is safest to let the will of God rule in our life bringing our own will always into quiet submission. God knows what is best for us, and we need not be afraid to trust him with the final decision regarding every prayer we make.

"The Faith of My Father."

Simple, confiding trust in God, with hearty acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as containing a revelation of his will, is the only faith that will bear the test of stern experience in prolonged earthly life. Toying with doubt, playing with liberalism and compromising with the world, sooner or later produce their blighting effects upon the frail spirit as it becomes conscious by the passing years of the frailty of life, the certainty of death and the prospect of eternal existence. This truth was strikingly illustrated recently when a well-known business man of Boston called into the office of Zion's Herald to make inquiries concerning the merits of various commentaries upon the New Testament, saying that he desired to use one in the study of the gospels and the letters of St. Paul. Of the man himself and his impressive testimony we are happy to let Dr. Parkhurst speak:

"He is the son of one of the ablest and best known Methodist ministers of New England, deceased for many years. And this, in substance, is what he volunteered to say, with much seriousness and emphasis: 'For twenty years I have attended the liberal churches of this city and have heard the preaching. It has brought me nothing in the way of a clear and forceful exposition and application of the truth of the Bible. The pulpits have dealt mainly in negations and have left me spiritually famished. I find myself hungering for the truth my father used to preach, and I want this commentary to aid me in a personal study of the New Testament. When I was a young man I thought I knew everything, and I used to think my father was limited and straitened in his theological views; and with boyish confidence would tell him so. But he would say to me with great gentleness, "Willie, you will not think so when you get to be older." I have found his words true, and I want to get back to the comforting faith of my father.' It was a noble and manly confession; but how many have lived to learn a similar lesson!"

A Holy Life

The world never needed holy lives as much as it does at the present hour. Nothing will exert such potential influence and power as holy living. We may have every other accomplishment, but without this our lives will be a failure. With this inward adorning and outward manifestation, although minus many other graces, we will succeed in making an impression on the minds and hearts of others that will stir within them a desire to be good. Holiness of heart and life should be the supreme aim of all to obtain.

The injunction of holy writ is: "Be ye holy." To this command we should yield a willing obedience. No

Christian can live beneath this privilege, and retain the knowledge of salvation in Jesus Christ. There is no room for controversy at this point. The question of the possibility of so doing, it seems to us, cannot be raised. There can be no mental reservation or equivocation here. We stand in the presence of Jehovah's stern decree. To please God I must live a holy life. God will not abide in the heart where sin dwells. When he assumes sway in our natures all rivalry must cease. Obedience to him is the test of discipleship.

No departure from this law is allowable. Every thought, word, and deed must be in accordance with his will. The lack of spiritual power in the individual Christian life is at this point. The profession of salvation is nothing; the exemplification of this is another feature. Normal Christianity will not meet the demand. There must be the practical and the experimental.

There can be no substitute for piety. A revival of holy living is the great need of the church to day; lives deeply rooted in the teachings of the Word of God; lives influenced by the guidance of the Divine Spirit; lives hid with Christ; lives that cannot, and will not tolerate the questionable in thought or practice; lives clear, manly, open, frank, candid, square, transparent, not concealed from the gaze of the world, but lived in the open. Would to God that all who profess his name lived in this way! What an influence would be exerted! How soon would we see the ranks of the enemy waver! —Baltimore Methodist.

A Cure for Spiritual Poverty.

The poverty of modern Christian life will never be cured until a far greater portion of time, until a far greater earnestness, is put into the hard and happy work of praying. It is instructive to read in the life of Frederick Maurice how he would often be engaged in prayer all the night through; and if everything were known, it would be found that all Christians who have made a deep mark have sought and found the Lord in a like manner. To live in the atmosphere of prayer is to live in the atmosphere of miracle, in the atmosphere of the New Testament, and it is in this way, and in this way only, that faith in the divine manifestation is kept alive and burning. When the strength, the joy, the peace, and the power of the Christian Church are unimpaired, it is because her ministers and her people are proving that through Christ we have access in one Spirit to the Father, and confessing that Jesus is Lord in the Holy Ghost. Then there is no complaint of failures to attend Christian worship. There is a longing even on the part of those outside to touch the hands of those who have walked with the Most High. The brethren are able to speak to one another of what the Lord has delivered unto them, of their comprehension of the supernatural revelation. They shine with the divine splendor which fills each star, one star differing from another in glory. The Holy Ghost comes upon them, and the power of the Highest overshadows them. So confessing with their mouths the Lord Jesus, and believing in their hearts that God has raised Him from the dead they are saved.—British Weekly.

Loyalty to the Pastor.

We would love to see a revival of loyalty to the pastor as pastor. Many love and respect him as a man, but care little or nothing for his office. The present age is rapidly growing away from the old idea "of respect for the cloth." The sufferer in consequence. The young have not been trained to honor it as a heathen-ordained and God-given relation. It is true the minister should commend himself to the good will and respect of the community, and he generally does if he is made of true stuff; but God's people should recognize and honor his calling, and stand by him as the ambassador of their heavenly King and Lord. They should speak of him and act toward him in a way to show their spiritual regard for him as a religious teacher, who stands in Christ's stead to beseech men to be reconciled to God. They should admit him to their homes in the name and in the spirit of the Master. They should remember him around the family altar as God's servant. They should train their dear ones to love and honor him, not only for his worth's sake, but for his office's sake. But for his office's sake. We know this is now counted old-fashioned doctrine, but it is scriptural teaching; and at the risk of being regarded a fogy, we plead for more of this ministerial loyalty in the pew and in the home. Ministers have a right to it, though they put in no such claim in these days. A church will prosper better that lives up to this New Testa-

ment conception of God's servant. There will be stronger and more helpful bonds established between pastor and people, while God will be pleased, and His cause increasingly benefited. —The Presbyterian.

Living Prayer.

After a prayer-meeting, at which a woman had been among those who spoke aloud in prayer, a person slightly observed, "As for that woman, she could pray all night."

"Yes," replied a devout friend, "and I have no doubt she has often done so."

This was a first-rate reply. Of how few would it have been spoken! Yet those who are much in prayer alone are those who pray to purpose in the assembly. You can tell the other sort, however ready their utterance. It is as per usual. It is parrot—to ogle to be earnest, too professional to be deep. This kind of prayer is a mist which does not wet you, a fire which does not warm you. You could sleep from "Our Father" to "Amen" under such a performance. Yet it is very good and proper. There is nothing the matter with it except that it is dead—dead as the woman's child, which neither of the two mothers cared to own in Solomon's court. Oh for more living children! We mean true, crying, struggling prayers. These can only come from those who in private wrestle, and weep, and prevail. An occasional breakdown is very refreshing. To observe a heart too full to express itself with the tongue is most arousing to the soul.—Ex.

And After.

"I think a Christian can go anywhere," said a young woman who was defending her continued attendance at some very doubtful places of amusement.

"Certainly she can," rejoined her friend, "but I am reminded of a little incident that happened last summer when I went with a party of friends to explore a coal mine. One of the young women appeared dressed in a dainty white gown. When her friends remonstrated with her, she appealed to the old miner who was to act as guide to the party.

"Can't I wear a white dress down into the mine?" she asked p. tunately. "Yes'm," returned the old man. "There's nothin' to keep you from wearin' a white frock down there, but there'll be considerable to keep you from wearin' one back."

There is nothing to prevent the Christian wearing his white garments when he seeks the fellowship of that which is unclean, but there is a good deal to prevent him from wearing white garments afterwards.

CROUPY COUGHS OF CHILDREN.

The tendency to croup is a foe that all parents have to fight. Croup comes in the night, when the help must be right at hand if it is to be helped at all. Adamson's Botanic Cough Balsam is a blessing to all families where there are children subject to attacks of croup or any mean cough. It has a wonderful reputation for its efficiency and fully deserves it.

You cannot tell what night your child may wake up and choke to death with croup. In such a case what do you do? Send for a doctor and wait an hour, or perhaps two hours, while the child is gasping for breath? How much simpler where the true specific for croupy coughs and all throat troubles is right at hand. Indeed, no other way is safe with young children in the house.

Adamson's Cough Balsam is a most delicate medicine for children, relieving the little throats at once. Its action is soothing and certain. It clears out the phlegm, which produces the croupy condition, and is a safeguard which no mother who knows what it will dispense with. All coughs and inflammation of the throat or bronchial tubes are cured by the Balsam with promptness that surprises. All druggists sell it 25 cents. The genuine has "F. W. Kinsman & Co." blown in the bottle.

"My Children Still."

A young preacher recently called on an eminent divine, and in the course of conversation asked him how many children. "Four, sir," was the reply.

At the supper table, the visitor perceived two beautiful children seated by the side of the mother. Turning to his host, he said: "I thought you had four children, sir; where are the other two?"

Lifting his eyes, the holy man of God pointed upwards, while a sweet smile broke over his countenance. "They are in heaven," he repeated, slowly and calmly; "yet my children still: not dead, but gone before."—Christian Life.

Life passes. Work is permanent. Youth goes. Mind decays. That which is done remains. Through ages through eternity, what you have done for God, that, and only that, you are. Deeds never die.—F. W. Robertson.

The Hidden Sin.

A majestic tree fell at its prime, fell on a calm evening, when there was scarcely a breath of air stirring. It had withstood a century of storms, and now was broken off by a zephyr. The secret was disclosed at its falling. A boy's hatchet had been struck into it when it was a tender sapling. The wound had been grown over and hidden away under exuberant life, but it had never healed. There at the heart of the tree it stayed, a spot of decay, ever eating a little farther and deeper into the trunk, until at last the tree was rotted through, and fell of its own weight, when it seemed to be at its best. So do many lives fall when they seem to be at their strongest, because some sin or fault of youth has left its wounding and its consequent weakness at the heart.—Selected.

A faithful Christian's manner of words, as well as of life, already has the mark of heaven's purity upon it. Speaking the truth in love, men trust him. Seeking not his own, men come to speak unselfishly in his presence. Considering others, they in turn become considerate. Cherishing no resentments, he awakens no angry feelings. Such a Christian self-control is not easily attained, but it is worth striving for, and by God's help, it is not out of reach.—The Congregationalist.

Absorbed in the things of this life men forget their souls, the future beyond, and the day of reckoning.

Now I want you to think that in life troubles will come which seem as if they would never pass away. The night and the storm look as if they would last forever, but the calm and the morning cannot be stayed; the storm in its very nature is transient. —Geo. Macdonald.

SORE FEET.—Mrs. E. J. Neill, New Armagh, P. Q., writes: "For nearly six months I was troubled with burning aches and pains in my feet to such an extent that I could not sleep at night, and as my feet were badly swollen I could not wear my boots for weeks. At last I got a bottle of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil and resolved to try it and to my astonishment I got almost instant relief, and the one bottle accomplished a perfect cure."

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