

IS PRAYER AS REAL AS WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY?

(Extracts from an address by Rev. Cortland Myers, D.D.)

On the high seas to-day one of the absolute necessities seems to be wireless telegraphy. The ships are all equipped with it and human lives are being saved by the hundreds because of it, and we have to name it as the most wonderful of all modern inventions, with its mysteries and yet with its marvellous reality.

The bell rang on my desk this week, and they said that someone two hundred miles away wanted to talk to me. I heard the voice as distinct and clear as though at my side. That is an every-day transaction with us, and we cease to be amazed at it.

Is prayer just as great a reality as these very things which are so mysterious and which are real to us to-day? These mysteries are beyond our explanation, but they are real to us and we have no hesitation in acting according to the laws that govern them. Is prayer in the same catalogue? Still having its mysteries and yet its great reality as proven by the tests men have applied to it? Yes, prayer is as great a reality in this world as wireless telegraphy, or anything else in the modern inventive world?

SCIENCE SAYS SO.

Sir Oliver Lodge has come to be the leading scientist among the English-speaking people. He has startled the world in recent years by his papers concerning God and His relation to men. He made this declaration before the great convention of scientists, that the greatest reality in the universe is the spiritual. On another occasion he flung out this challenge into the face of the Christian church when he said, "You do not pray enough, for the one reality in human life is prayer." The trend of science to-day is toward the spiritual. It is toward the reality of prayer. It is toward God and His supreme purpose concerning men.

SCRIPTURE SAYS SO.

On every page of this Book the statement is written. There is no revelation that is given us from God that is plainer than the power of prayer. All the promises are printed in capital letters throughout the Bible, and you come to the climax when you reach that statement of Christ, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in My name, ye shall receive." Then He also said, "If any man asks of God and believes it when he asks, and has the right purpose in the asking, that the very mountain can be taken up and cast into the sea." There was nothing impossible in the vision of Christ. Prayer is the one reality by which He lived. It was the great truth which He Himself taught. He lived in communion with God. At every great crisis in His life He went alone to pray.

I love to think of Elijah, that king among men of prayer, who carried in his pockets for three years and six months the keys of heaven. I like to think of that mighty man on Mount Carmel, in the midst of the enemies of the Most High. I like to think of him alone with his face lifted towards God and calling fire from heaven to earth.

The disciples are in jail, bound and fastened to soldiers, there to stay until death. Oh, wait, that's the story half completed. Over yonder is a prayer-meeting and God's angel comes in answer to prayer. I like to think of a prayer-meeting breaking jail doors open.

EXPERIENCE SAYS SO.

Millions have given their testimony as to the reality of prayer. It cannot be possible that so many thinking men and women can have been deceived.

George Muller, of England, without a far-thing in his possession, secured in answer to prayer, seven millions and a half for benevolence and missionary work, and he never asked a man for a penny. He supported ten thousand orphans, cared for them up to young manhood and womanhood and sent them out into the world able to make their own living. He educated in the schools eighty-thousand boys and girls. He gave away a million Bibles and three million religious books, and never once in all the history of that prayer-life did God fail to answer prayer. Oh, would to God that Christian men and women could learn this great art and be able to pray like that!

Hudson Taylor, that mighty man of God, went alone into inland China to do that monumental service in the missionary work of the world. He went without a dollar, but he had God, and throughout all the history of that work he met each crisis on his knees.

ARE YOU PROVING PRAYER REAL?

You will have to live a godly life if you are to have answers to your prayers. "Hereby we know that we have the things we ask of Him when we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight."

At Northampton, Mass., you can find a stone on which is engraved "David Brainerd, Missionary to the Indians." He was a man of prayer, the man who stayed all night on his knees. He was almost like his Master under the olives of Gethsemane. He prayed for the Indians, lived with them and sacrificed for them and loved them into the Kingdom. Then his letters fell into the hands of William Cary and made him a missionary and he went to India and moved the throne of God for India. Then Henry Martyn read about David Brainerd and his prayers. He went to Arabia and died on his knees. Thus David Brainerd's great influence has spread throughout the world because he lived his prayers.

A gentleman over in Edinburgh was talking with an old Scotchman about McCheyne. "Oh" he said, "I have heard McCheyne when he was before his people, pray as if God was right in front of him and as if the only reality in the world was his prayer and his talking with God. I have seen him stop in the middle of his sermon, drop his head and say, 'Oh, God, I cannot myself and fill them with Thyself.' Oh, what go on. Tell my people what I cannot tell them a wonderful thing it is to pray like that!"—*Zion's Advocate*.

HUMBLE INSTRUMENTS.

The great Earl of Shaftesbury, one of Britain's noblest philanthropists, was brought to Christ by the ministry of his godly nurse. Naaman would not have been healed if his wife's "little maid" had not recommended the prophet in Israel to cure him of his leprosy. Again and again, in reading the biographies of great men and women who achieved splendid deeds, one finds that the names of the teachers or humble friend who first inspired them are forgotten. Yet without those modest, faithful souls, the men and women might never have done their work. Miss Agnes Weston, "the Sailors' Friend," was encouraged in her fine labours for the sailors by a letter from an American doctor who has watched the widening area of her influence with growing delight.

What is the mission of the church in the world, if not to get people saved and to build them up in the grace of God and to counteract the evil that is in the world? *Ye are the light of the world. Ye are the salt of the earth.*

SPARKS FROM THE ANVIL.

REV. A. P. GOUTHEY, B. D.

Unwillingness has dull ears.
To stir a rumpus, touch the idol.
Ignorance is usually the loud critic.
Truth purifies—buy it, my friend, at any price.

Outside religion can't endure rubbing.
Family jars are usually filled with vinegar.
Little meanness is the very scum of meanness.

Real friendship carries mustard as well as balm.

He is a criminal indeed who pets carnality in another.

A sharp tongue is usually run by a dull understanding and a blunt heart.

A faithful friend, like a mirror, will show you your faults.

The person who desires a high place is usually unqualified for it.

One of two things usually prompts tattling—pride or jealousy.

Many seem to have mistaken a few dry, mouldy, tattered notions for religious convictions.

The congregation that would have God's message must not trammel the messenger.

The church that would win souls must not burden itself with too much ecclesiastical harness.

No man can be large of brain and heart who is compelled to stifle his best thoughts, and murder within himself the desire for high and holy action, because of the prejudice and interference of some ecclesiastical dictator.

In order to grow great men we must give large liberty. They must have room for expansion, freedom of mind for flight in the open sunlight. They must think, speak and act without cringing fear of some human master.

The church that would abide and bless humanity must be apostolic in teaching, simple enough in organization to allow the Holy Spirit a large margin for leadership, and exalt Jesus Christ as the Saviour of all men from all sin.

FAITH.

A striking evidence of one man's faith in another is contained in the following incident of King Edward's student days. It was while the Prince was living in Edinburgh as Dr. Playfair's pupil. The Prince and Playfair were standing near a cauldron containing lead which was boiling at white heat. "Has Your Royal Highness any faith in science?" said Dr. Playfair. "Certainly," replied the Prince. Dr. Playfair then carefully washed the Prince's hand with ammonia to get rid of any grease that might be on it. "Willyou now place your hand in this boiling metal and ladle out a portion of it?" he said to his distinguished pupil. "Do you tell me to do this?" asked the Prince. "I do," replied Playfair. The Prince instantly put his hand into the cauldron and ladled out some of the boiling lead without sustaining any injury. It is a well known scientific fact that the human hand, if perfectly cleansed, may be placed uninjured in lead boiling at white heat, the moisture of the skin protecting it under these conditions from any injury. But should the lead be at a perceptibly lower temperature, the effect would, of course, be very different. It requires, however, courage of no common order for a novice to try such an experiment, even at the bidding of a man so distinguished in science as was Playfair. If one man can thus trust another, how plausible faith in God the Almighty becomes.—*Selected*.