

## PRAYER THE INDEX OF CHARACTER.

Our prayers indicate what we are. We pray for those things we consider of the most consequence. True prayer is the desire of the heart.

When Solomon asked of God the gift of wisdom, he showed what his real heart life was. It showed humility of heart that felt its need of heavenly wisdom more than anything else. The divine reply was that his prayer was granted because he had not asked for long life, or riches or the life of his enemies. Had he asked for these he would have shown himself to be covetous, sordid and revengeful.

When Elijah, about to be translated asked Elisha to make his request, he asked for a double portion of his spirit. He might have asked the power to do great works or for wealth. He showed that he appreciated the Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets. It is no wonder that the people who knew him called him "holy man of God."

We may all well take the lesson to heart and ask ourselves about our prayers. What are they? What do we ask God for the most vehemently? If we are asking simply for joy or ecstasy, we are selfish. If we are asking for wealth we are avaricious. If we want power for service so as to be great in the eyes of the church, we are full of the self life. If we are praying for ourselves mostly and very little for the world about us, we are narrow and selfish. We might, with great profit look over what we have prayed for in the past and find out thereby what we really are.—Sel.

## LISTENING TO GOD.

"Oh that they had harkened to Me" is a reminder to God's people as to what might have been in the way of fruitfulness and victory. Activity and even much talking to God may dull the ear that should be kept open to Him. The sound of the hammer may make it difficult for the architect to talk of plans. Direction from the sky may be overlooked even in the act of sailing. The knock of the divine Guest at the door may not be heard on account of the bustle and noise within. "Be still and know that I am God."

The boy who sits quietly with his father gets a new idea of life which the boy would not be able to receive in his more active moments. The deeper things of God cannot be known, neither can God have a chance to work through a life until it becomes receptive and open to Him.

A scientist has figured that 95 per cent. of the energy expended in producing a crop of wheat is the universe taking advantage of the chance which the farmer gave it.

So God's greater servants have not thought chiefly of what they could do for God but of what God could do through them, if they gave Him opportunity. Never to be unresponsive to His will was their chief concern.

Take out of life solitude, where God's voice can be heard, the receptive mood that welcomes His guidance, the willingness to do whatever God wills, and what can God do through any life? "I will hear what God the Lord will speak."—Psalms 85:8.—The Christian Sun.

## A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT.

A small boy sat quietly in one of the seats in the coach on a train running between two of our western cities. It was a hot, dusty day, very uncomfortable for travelling, and that peculiar ride is perhaps the most uninteresting day's journey in our whole land. But the little fellow sat patiently watching the fields and fences hurrying by, until a motherly old lady, leaning forward asked sympathetically:

"Aren't you tired of the long ride, dear, and the dust and the heat?"

....The lad looked up brightly, and replied, with a smile: "Yes, ma'am, a little. But I don't mind it much, because my father is going to meet me when I get to the end of it."

What a beautiful thought it is, that, when life seems wearisome and monotonous, as it sometimes does, we can look forward hopefully and trustingly, and like the lonely little lad, 'not mind it much,' because our Father, too, will be waiting to meet us at our journey's end.—Sel.

"The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail" (I. Kings 17:14).

'God always hears when we scrape the bottom of a flour barrel.' So said the child of a poor widow to his mother, one morning, after she had prayed as only the needy can, "Give us this day our daily bread." Beautiful faith of childhood! Why may it not be ours? God always hears the prayers of His children, and He knows when to answer. Our spiritual as well as temporal wants are known to Him, and every sincere cry for help enters His compassionate ear. When we feel entirely our dependence on Him; when our stock of pride and self-confidence is exhausted; when earthly friends and earthly comforts fail us; the humble cry of "O my Father!" the oftenest brings the speedy answer, "Here, my child."—Sel.

## GETTING READY.

While Abraham Lincoln was cutting wood he often had a book with him and his odd moments were spent in study.

One day while resting he was sitting on the ground intently reading a law book.

A pompous squire on passing, called out: "Hello, Abe, what! studying law? expect to be president some day?"

"Don't know," said Lincoln, "but I am going to get ready for anything God may have for me to do."

Boys, this is your get-ready time for what God has for you to do. It may be to farm; to work in wood, stone, brick or iron; to be a mechanic, merchant, minister, or missionary. Leave that with God to guide. But make good use of your boyhood days.—Presbyterian Record.

People with sore and bruised hearts usually need loving sympathy and strong kindly friendship much more than they need theology.

Religion is life, character, conduct; it reaches up to God and down into the smallest details of daily duty; it covers everything.

## WITNESSING OR BOASTING.

It has been said that testimony to holiness as a present experience is boasting. Some thus dismiss the whole subject. We once knew a preacher who said that it is not necessary to say, "I am an honest man, for people will find it out if we are honest." We replied that this was not a fair statement of the case. This was not a fair argument. If all men were naturally dishonest and could not break themselves of this sin after all their efforts, it would not be boasting if we testified that we had found a power that saved us from dishonesty. It would be our duty to tell it. This is precisely the case as regards our sinful nature. We all find ourselves possessed by a nature that is sinful—a tendency of the heart towards evil. "The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin." And it is the duty of those who have experienced the truth of this promise to let it be known. This is not boasting. It is simply recommending the remedy that has cured us. It is simply testifying for the glory of God. How may one accuse a sick man cured of boasting, who simply testifies that he took the medicine and is now cured, we fail to discover. If by any stretch of imagination any one can construe it as boasting, then it is of the same kind of boasting that David made when he said, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord." He adds still further, "The humble shall hear thereof and be glad." We know from this who the people are that like to hear such testimony and we infer that the people that do not like to hear it are the reverse of humble and therefore proud.

God commands testimony. It recommends the Great Physician and glorifies him. The inspired men of the Bible set us the example of telling what God did for them. Paul says to the Thessalonians, "Ye are witnesses, brethren, and God also how justly and holily and unblamable we behaved ourselves among you that believed." Was he boasting? God has chosen testimony as the chief agency of spreading his truth. Therefore, as Wesley says, Satan stirs "up his own children and the weak children of God" to oppose it. A spiritually bright man will always try to find on what side of the question the devil is, and take the other side.

The Church of God has always been its best when testimony has not been restrained. It has always been at its lowest when testimony has been withheld and discouraged.—Christian Witness.

If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all, was the lesson that Jesus impressed upon his followers at Capernaum, after they had been disputing among themselves as to who of them was the greatest. And the Saviour enforced his words by taking a little child and setting him in the midst of them and then, taking the child up in his arms teaching those ambitious followers that they must serve the little ones of earth if they would serve their Lord.

"Sociability with spirituality is the soul of Christianity, but sociability apart from spirituality is the bane of many churches."