

# The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

THE ORGAN OF THE  
REFORMED BAPTISTS OF CANADA

Published Semi-Monthly at Moncton, N. B.,  
by a Committee of the Alliance

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## SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

Per year, in advance .....	\$1.50
Ministers, per year .....	1.00
Four months' trial subscription .....	.40
Sample Copy .....	Free
United States Subscribers .....	1.75
Ministers, U. S. A. ....	1.25

## SPECIAL NOTICE

All correspondence for The Highway should reach us before the 12th and 25th of each month.  
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MONCTON, N. B., FEBRUARY 29TH, 1936

## EDITORIAL

### PRAYER

Friday, February 28, is set apart for the annual Day of Prayer under the auspices of the Women's Missionary Societies.

Thousands of good women will join together in offering prayer to God for the success of the gospel in all lands, and for the peace of the world, which will be very timely indeed, and we trust very effective. God has promised us so much if we ask Him, that surely every Christian ought to be encouraged to pray much. Some one has said that prayer can do anything that God can do.

He has told us through His inspired servant, James, that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. He has also inspired John to write, "If our heart condemns us not then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

We notice in these scriptures that the promises God has made involve certain conditions or qualifications in us in order to receive what we ask or pray for. John says, "If our heart condemn us not", then have we confidence toward God etc., and we ask and receive, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. The Psalmist also said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." So we understand by these scriptures that those who can expect answers to their prayers must be enjoying a right relationship with God. A heart that condemns us not, means we have been fully and freely justified by His grace. And to not regard iniquity in our hearts means that our heart has been cleansed from all sin, or we are not conscious of anything there which is not in harmony with God's will. Notice again James says it is the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man which avails much. A man must first be righteous, then his prayer must be fervent to avail much.

When I read the foregoing portions of scripture I often wonder just how much God hears and answers of those little nicely worded so-called prayers which are written on paper, and memorized or read by those who profess to pray. To say the least, they are not very fervent. And this might explain why so many so-called prayers that are offered, or said in religious services which are not written or read, bring so little inspiration to the meeting. They are so cold. We can all learn to say prayers, and the tendency is, after we have learned some, to depend upon them; which have often become so cold through long usage, when we try to

pray, instead of depending on the Holy Spirit to indite our petitions. The apostle Paul writes, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.—Rom. 8-26.

It seems then that if our prayers would be effectual and fervent, that the Holy Spirit must be so near us, or in us that he can inspire our petitions, and touch our hearts with fire to give fervency to our prayers. The poet has said, "Prayer is the souls sincere desire unuttered or expressed, the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast". We would do well to pray with the disciples of old. Lord teach us to pray.

### LET GOD DO IT!

By H. H. Smith

This heading is not irreverent slang—or any kind of slang. These thoughts were suggested by the Cole Lectures for 1934 by Dr. Shailer Mathews on "Creative Christianity," in which these significant words were used: "Defeatism has always been able to rationalize itself by passing over to God the duties which really devolve upon men. One can not listen to many public prayers without feeling that prayer is being made a substitute for duty."

Dr. Mathews has laid his finger upon a weakness of the church which is as old as Christianity itself. The Epistle of James, which has been called the "Gospel of Common Sense," bears down severely on those who substitute faith or prayer for Christian activity. Our Lord emphasized the truth that knowledge should lead to action. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." He taught that we should love our neighbor, and enforced the truth by the story of the Good Samaritan, whose love bore fruit in benevolent deeds. The rewards of the faithful are the results of practical efforts: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren."

About twenty years ago, when state-wide prohibition was being voted upon in Virginia, the writer heard a brother say: "I don't expect to vote. Christ will return to earth soon, and these matters will be settled then." A great many people have been ruined by liquor during the past twenty years; but if the Christian church had put forth no efforts against this evil many more would have been destroyed by this great foe of mankind.

But even among those who are considered strictly orthodox there are many who are still in the grip of this old heresy: "God will do it; just call upon Him." God will do it, but only through human agencies. A man was once praying for the conversion of a friend and used this expression: "O Lord, touch him with Thy finger." Then a voice seemed to say to him: "Thou art the finger of God." One of the pioneer missionaries (Hudson Taylor, was it not?) said that, as a young man interested in the salvation of the Chinese, he used to pray very earnestly that God would save China. Like many others since his day, he seemed to think that if only a sufficient volume of prayer could be offered in behalf of China, God would be persuaded to save that great nation. One day, as he was earnestly pleading for China, he seemed to hear a voice from heaven: "My child, I intend to save China, and if you will consecrate your life to this cause you may have a part with me in the salvation of these people." Then he realized that the salvation of China waited not

only upon prayer to move God, but also upon the co-operation of Christians willing to devote themselves to this cause.

After centuries of missionary inactivity among the churches, a young preacher, moved by the Holy Spirit, arose in a convention and said: "Have the churches of Christ done all they ought to have done for heathen nations?" A startled old minister cried out, "Young man, sit down! When God pleases to convert the heathen world He will do so without your help or mine either." But the young preacher—William Carey—was not content to let the matter rest there, and the result was the birth of the modern missionary movement among the Protestant churches of the world. From that day to the present—some one hundred fifty years ago—the missionary cause has prospered in proportion as men and women have let their prayer for the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth lead to action.

"Let God do it." This destructive heresy is causing untold suffering and sorrow to many today. Every now and then we read of some one who has been overcome by the burdens of life. He felt that a heartless world was against him. Unemployed, homeless, in debt, with hungry children—life's burden seemed intolerable and his life was suddenly and tragically ended. And within a short distance from his home were a dozen Christian families, with enough and something to spare, who might have relieved distress and averted a sad tragedy had they been "doers of the Word" and alert for opportunities to aid the unfortunate. "Lord, bless the poor and the needy," was the prayer of a wealthy man, when another said, "Now, give me the keys to your corn-crib, and I'll go out and answer your prayer." God can not answer all of our prayers—we have to answer some of them ourselves.

Sorrow and suffering because of the heresy, "Let God do it?" Yes. Many a poor child is maimed for life, or dies from burns or scalds, or is crushed beneath motor vehicles because a thoughtless mother has not carefully shielded her child from these dangers. We know that in this present life some accidents are unavoidable; but God is grieved and human hearts are made sorrowful because of negligence and carelessness. It is not exercising faith but tempting the Lord for a mother to say: "I never worry about my children; I commit them to the Lord who provides a guardian angel for these little ones"—and then fails to do her part in protecting them from the manifold dangers about them. God does not want us to worry, neither does He want us to distrust Him; but we must not blame a "mysterious providence" for the sorrows we bring upon ourselves through our own carelessness or negligence. Ashland, Virginia.

### PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance counts much with God as well as with man. If Elijah had ceased at his first petition the heavens would have scarcely yielded their rain to his feeble praying. If Jacob had quit praying at decent bedtime he would scarcely have survived the next day's meeting with Esau. If the Syrophenician woman had allowed her faith to faint by silence, humiliation, repulse; or stop midway its struggles, her grief-stricken home would never have been brightened by the healing of her daughter.—E. M. Bounds.