

MISSIONARY PAGE

A Missionary's Plea For Prayer

By Pastor C. T. Morris

If there is one thing more than another needed by missionaries on the field, it is real heart-gripping prayer. As never before, we need to be garrisoned by your prayers that we may press the battle to the gates.

Without wishing to enlarge upon our difficulties, I do want to bring before you dear people in England the pressing urgency of further supporting, defending, and advancing the cause of God in all mission fields.

Thank you immensely for your prayers in the past years; they have made an invaluable contribution to any success vouchsafed to us by God. But we need you now more than ever before, for Satan, knowing his time is shortening, is fighting savagely but cunningly, seeking to frustrate what the Holy Spirit is doing. We are besieged by evil spirits full of venom. They are attacking all who endeavour to lead the people in holiness and victory. Nothing but real vital prayer will give us power to stand up and answer their deadly challenge.

Dr. J. H. Jowett wrote on one occasion these heart-moving words: "If we pray in cold blood, we are no longer the ministers of the Cross. True intercession is a sacrifice, a bleeding sacrifice, a perpetuation of Calvary, a 'filling up' of the sacrifice of Christ. Brethren, all vital intercession makes a draught upon a man's vitality. Real supplication leaves us tired and spent. Why, the apostle Paul, when he wishes to express the poignancy of his yearning intercession for the souls of men, does not hesitate to lay hold of the pangs of labour to give it adequate interpretation. 'Ye remember, brethren, our travail.' 'My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you.' Again, I say, it was only the echo of a stronger word, 'He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.' Are we in the succession? Is intercession with us a travail, or is it the least exacting of all things, an exercise in which there is neither labour nor blood?"

Such disturbing words make us think deeply, and should cause us to wonder whether we have prayed as we ought. I am certain, too, that such praying will be practical in every way.

C. H. Spurgeon was once present in one of his deacons' meetings when a great need of one of the branches of the work was discussed, and it was felt that prayer upon the matter should be offered at once. But Mr. Spurgeon interrupted with, "Wait a minute, brethren," and taking a sheet of paper, wrote, "C. H. Spurgeon, £50," and passed it round for the others to add their names and amounts. When this was done, he said, "Now, brethren, we can conscientiously pray."

Now I think that real intercessory prayer will produce the ammunitions of our war—men and money—and will keep the supply in constant flow too, for it is not like God to begin a work and then abandon it for the lack of supplies.

I bring forward this practical aspect of prayer because of the unfortunate impression some unpractical people have made upon others. Prayer is not a sentiment or a theory. Prayer is a working instrument—just as a pen is to write, or a knife to cut. We could say in a very real sense that Holy Ghost praying can do all God can do, for God is evidently moved by the prayers of His people.

"If," says J. H. Jowett again, "we think of prayer as one of the preliminaries we shall treat it accordingly. We shall stumble up to it. We shall say just what comes to us, for anything that comes will be as good as anything else. Anything will do for a preliminary. We have prepared the words we are to speak to man, but any heedless speech will suffice for your communion with God. And, so our prayerful people are chilled, and our prayerless people are hardened. We have offered unto the Lord God a preliminary, and lo, the heavens are as brass, and the earth receives no rain."

I know you will agree that such praying is not Apostolic . . . and will not stir heaven to intervene with what is happening in the world.

It seems to me that Satan is keeping up a harassing, guerilla warfare, but, thank God, the Lord has put within our grasp the mightiest weapon of all, and if we are skilled in the use of it, we shall overcome Satan by the Blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony.

On the mission fields we are faced with peculiar temptations, especially where God is working in power, and signs and wonders are being witnessed. But I believe there are no new temptations. They may be dressed up in modern garb, but essentially they are the same as beset our forefolk. The spiritual temptations are ever the most deadly, and we are often up against very real attacks of the Devil. He aims at the secret of our strength, and would dearly love to succeed in getting us to neglect our communion with God. He does not object to us working; in fact, the busier we are to the neglecting of our souls, the happier he is. He has many traps for us, and one of them is to catch us in the net of social work to the exclusion of real spiritual labour. He tries to cause disunity among the leaders, and is ever sowing his tares. He is the originator of spiritual jealousy, and tries to make the best of God's people fall into his cunningly-laid snare of taking the glory for what has been done.

You have similar temptations in the homeland, but I am certain they are intensified on the missionary fields. Very often a missionary is entirely on his own, and in the course of time the work appears to grow around him. The temptation then to look upon it as a personal achievement is insidious. How crafty is the Devil! In spite of many object lessons in past years, he still contrives to catch some in this deadly trap! He will try to cause despondency, and will mass all the doubts he can think of for one grand frontal attack, especially when the poor missionary is in the throes of malaria fever or some painful tropical malady! Yes, he knows all the methods of modern warfare, and will never give up trying to break up the work of God.

Hartland M. S.

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of "Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." That debt of love and sacrifice I can never repay, but I must try to spend, and be spent, to show Him my gratitude. I must try to satisfy Him.

As I think of leaving Hartland and moving to a new field, that is about how I feel. As I look back to the time and effort spent here, and look forward to the new challenge that I am called to meet, there are feelings of sorrow, and of joy. Feelings of disappointment and of satisfaction. With myself and what I have been able to do, I must say I feel rather disappointed. I hoped for so much more to have been accomplished before I left Hartland. However, there are some things that I have a feeling of satisfaction about. One of these is the way our native Christians are taking our departure. We have tried to teach them to have an independent relationship with God. So many of them have spoken of this idea that they are not leaning upon the missionary. I trust that this is more than reiterating what they have been taught. Time will tell.

Getting ready to leave, with the usual packing that is necessary, going as we are from a large house to a small one, will make it necessary to do away with quite a few things that we would like to take. However, it will help us to cull out quite a bit that probably would be of little value to us even if we took it. This getting ready to leave has many interruptions, such as sickness, daily routine, and soon introducing our Brother Morgan to his new field of labour. Then of course there is the usual coming and going of natives who come to say good-bye.

As to the two fields, Hartland and Lowsburg, I feel that both need a lot of hard work. Each has its peculiar difficulties and advantages. With the new Government scheme making the Hartland area a Native Trust area, which will eventually double the population, it is thought this will just about double the challenge, and the need. The roads are being improved, and the natives being put in residential areas. These two factors will make it easier to reach more natives than before. We pray that God will bless and use our brother as he works for his Master on this field.

I can not say much about Lowsburg, as I am about a stranger there, but I understand that it is about two thousand feet higher above sea level than where we are now living. From this mountain top the area to be worked lies in every direction. We already have outposts connecting Hartland with Lowsburg and going out beyond. However, they are quite far apart. My prayer is that God will be able to use us on the new field that He has called us to. Your prayers, friends will be much appreciated.

Yours looking to Him for great things,
C. D. M. SANDERS.

All these temptations beset the missionary as he seeks to labour for God, and this is where you can assist us so much by your Holy Ghost praying. No one can assess the worth of such praying, nor can any measure its results. Only eternity will disclose what the saints have accomplished in the service of God by continual intercessory prayer.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."—Spiritual Life.