



Parable of the Power Poles

Morton W. Dorsey

Last winter a severe sleet storm hit central Ohio. Extensive damage was done to trees and power lines. There were places where, for stretches of half a mile or so, every utility pole was broken off and the wires were lying on the ground.

As I drove along and observed the damage. I became aware of a pattern among the fallen poles. The first evidence of damage that one would see was not a pole broken off and lying flat, but one leaning slightly, then the next one would be leaning more and the next one more until the following one would be lying flat on the ground. Then, for an extensive distance every pole would be broken off and lying flat. Then one would observe the opposite, with a pole not quite to the ground and the next one leaning slightly less and the next one less until they would be standing upright again.

After observing that several times, I began to wonder why some fell and some stood when all had been subjected to the same burden of ice and wind. I then noticed that in the center of each series of standing poles there would be one straight, stalwart pole which, either because of its own strength or because of extra bracing, had been able to bear far more than its share of weight. It survived the strain, and helped to support those on either side of it.

By the same token, when a weak pole broke under the strain, it threw extra weight upon those on either side which were tied to it by the wires.

Seeing that, my soul was deeply stirred by a parallel which I have seen in life. In the close-knit fraternity of the Christian ministry, I have seen the extended damage that resulted when a man, overburdened by various pressures, broke and fell before the storm. Such a one seldom falls alone, but may pull down those on either side of him. One has been made to weep to see how far-reaching can be the discouragement occasioned by his downfall.

But oh! How good it is to contemplate the possibilities of standing steadfastly and thereby helping to support another who might otherwise have fallen!

I came away from the parable of the power poles with a prayer in my heart, "Please, God, help me to be among those who stand. Give me the strength of character and the inner bracing of the Holy Spirit that I may stand, however heavy the burden and however fierce the gale."

—The Wesleyan Methodist

KEEP THE FIRE BURNING

Keep the altar of private prayer burning. This is the very life of all piety. The sanctuary and the family altar borrow their fires here; therefore let this fire burn well. Secret devotion is the very essence, evidence, and barometer of vital and experiential religion.

Burn here the fat of your sacrifices. Let your closet-seasons be, if possible, regular, frequent, and undisturbed. Effectual prayer availeth much.

Let us examine ourselves on this important matter. Do we engage with lukewarmness in private devotions? Is the fire of devotion burning dimly on our hearts? Do the chariot wheels drag heavily? If so, let us be alarmed at this sign of decay. Let us go with weeping, and ask for the Spirit of grace and of supplication.—Sel.

APRIL PRAYER CALENDAR

1. Prayer of thanks for encouraging word from school inspector about the prospect of secondary school for Bethesda Mission in 1965. Continued prayer requested
2. Prayer of thanks for government's willingness for Bethesda Hospital to administer the Victoria Falls Government Clinic—prayer that it may be an open door to reaching many with the Gospel
3. For new services recently undertaken by Rev. Gene Hudson at Bore Hole 130, Rhodesia
4. For new teachers who are teaching for the first time this year in our mission operated schools in Rhodesia—that they may present a real witness of salvation for the pupils to see
5. Communion Sunday at Meahashini, Paulpietersburg District, Rev. Karl Gorman in charge
6. For an old Msutu man at Klipaan outpost, Ermelo District, who wishes to be saved but is bound by drink, snuff and ancestral worship
7. Missionary children—especially those of school age; prayer for their salvation and spiritual growth
8. Paul Sanders—Birthday
9. The Kumalo family (African preacher) at Daveyton, Reef, who have lost a daughter through tuberculosis
10. For the other Kumalo daughter, Virginia, living in the Altona area, married to the son of Rev. Mbokazi, native elder at our Kipunyawo outpost
11. Elsie Morgan—Birthday
12. Special services at Driefontein, Ermelo District, Rev. Charles Sanders in charge.
13. Alice Kierstead (Mrs. E. A. M. Kierstead)—Birthday
14. Several Europeans in the Ermelo area contacted by Rev. Charles Sanders—prayer for their salvation.
15. Stevie Gorman—Birthday
16. Prayer of thanks for money gained from sale of Balmoral Farm, Paulpietersburg area, to be used for purchase of a mission house in Ermelo
17. Prayer for guidance in seeking the right location for a mission house in Ermelo
18. Prayer of thanks that two members of Preacher Timothy Twala's family, Ermelo District, have received treatment for tuberculosis—continued prayer for the family
19. Esther Emmett—Birthday
20. For an old Mkonza grandmother, Ermelo District, who is being treated by witch doctors—fear that she may enter witchcraft herself.
21. For Ngobeza, young woman from Ermelo, who believes she is bewitched—that she may trust God for healing and salvation.
22. For brother of Ermelo Bible woman who lives in the Altona area; he has had treatment to make him a witch doctor but failed—that he may be saved and healed of a nervous condition.
23. Swaziland outpost and leader Paulosi Nkosi—that he may live a clear witness for the Lord
24. For two prayer women, Ermelo area, both with weak hearts—pray for healing and that God will give them a real burden for the lost.
25. Glendon Kierstead—Birthday
26. Communion Sunday at Mzinsango, Altona District, Rev. Mbokazi in charge.
27. Those in the Ndala Group, Reef District, who wish to join our church but are bound by worldly practises—that they may see the light of salvation and be saved.
28. That necessary funds and labor may be available to finish church hall for European services at Vryheid.
29. Sherry Gorman—Birthday
30. Continued prayer for the obtaining of a new Ermelo church site and also for a site at the new Breyten Location, Ermelo District.