

Poetry.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

He knoweth the way that I take."—Job xxiii. 10. I know not the way that's before me. The joys or the griefs it may bring; What clouds are o'erhanging the future. What flowers by the wayside may spring; But there's One who will journey beside me. Nor in weal, nor in woe will forsake; And this is my solace and comfort. "He knoweth the way that I take."

The Visitor's Pulpit.

PRAYER AND FAITH.

The Rev. George Mueller, of Bristol, England, preached to a large and respectable audience, in Wickliffe Hall, Wednesday evening Nov. 5th. Rev. W.H. Porter introduced the services with singing and prayer. Mr. Mueller opened his Bible at Luke xi: 9, 10. "And I say unto you, ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

ASK IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.

In John xiv. 13-14, this condition is plainly stated, in fact, to render it more imperative, it is twice stated. But why ask in the name of Jesus Christ? It is because we have no worth of his own; we none of us can plead our own goodness. Jesus Christ was always obedient to the Father; he was therefore always worthy to receive God's good gifts. Only when we plead his merits are we to receive our petitions. When we plead the holiness of Christ we are then encouraged to expect great things. I have travelled in eleven countries and have now been preaching God's Gospel fifty-four years and I have never found one in his natural state, who by anything he had done of himself, was worthy of God's great blessings. No, I and we all, in our best natural state are but hell-desiring creatures.

If we place our full dependence in Christ, then for Christ's sake God will pour upon us richly of his Great blessings. We must understand this in order to have our prayer answered.

The third condition for success in prayer is that we

EXERCISE FAITH IN THE POWER AND WILL OF GOD.

In Mark xi. 24, this faith is plainly commanded. We must believe if we would receive the blessing. First we must ask God to increase our faith. I may say from my experience that I invariably find when I make a request in faith, and in accordance with the will of God, that, sooner or later, and often soon, the answer comes. It is only through faith in Christ the poor sinner can get his sins removed, and obtain Divine blessings. See James i. 6-7.

Fourthly, we should

PATIENTLY WAIT GOD'S OWN TIME

for the fulfillment of our requests. Many of us often forget and overlook a great many immediate answers to our prayers. When the Christian retires to rest he thanks God for the blessings of the day, and asks for protection and sweet sleep. In the morning he arises, after a good night's rest, in the enjoyment of health. Is this not a daily and immediate answer to prayer. Then in these times of bustle and travel, when we are surrounded by thousands of elements destructive of life, how often God has preserved us from dangers and immediately answered our prayers. We should thank the Lord for all these and have our faith strengthened to trust him more. "Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live."

But often God's dear children find weeks and months, and years pass without having any visible answer to their prayers. They are apt to grow weary and despondent with the long waiting.

MOTHERS WHO HAVE BEEN PRAYING YEARS FOR THEIR CHILDREN,

husbands for their wives, wives for their husbands, and relatives and friends for each other, and though these objects are just the objects for which Christ has promised answers, the answers do not come as we expected. We have only to wait God's time, continue in faithful prayer, and the realization will surely come.

There are four reasons why I think the Lord often does not give immediate answers to the faithful prayer.

First, he sees that it will be for our spiritual good to have our faith exercised.

Second, that we should glorify God by our patience.

Third, that when the answer does come we are to find we have been doubly blest by waiting.

Fourth, that while we are often praying for mercies our heart is not prepared for the blessing.

As an illustration of this, a young woman has lately given her heart to God, and in her new found joy and zeal, she goes and obtains a class in a Sunday School. Now this young lady wishes the immediate conversion of these children, and she determines to pray every day of the week earnestly for this object. One week passes and no result, and another week of prayer, and yet no answer. Why is this? The object is commendable and the prayer is earnest. It may be that she was not prepared to receive the blessing, or, if it had been answered as she wished, she might have been one who would lay the glory of the conversion to her own efforts. Her duty, however, is to go quietly on trusting in God. After my conversion, and I had

LEFT MY WICKED, GODLESS LIFE,

One day spoke earnestly to, and then

went down on my knees and prayed before and for the conversion of two of my unconverted comrades. Then, leaving them, I went to my room and prayed, and, after a little while, went back to the room where I had left them, and found them both in tears, and happy in God's Love. One of these became a pastor in Hanover, the other a preacher in Berlin, where, after forty-eight years, I found him earnestly working for God. These were immediate answers to my prayers, but I have not always found it thus. In November 1844, I commenced praying for the conversion of five friends of mine. Day by day, by land or by sea, I have been praying for the conversion of some of these five ever since although invariably I have prayed for the conversion of these, in faith and through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of these was converted in five years after I commenced praying, another at the end of six-and-a-half years, and another six years after him. But there are even now two of them unconverted, even after

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF PRAYER.

But I am not discouraged, and will pray on. During the long time I have been praying for these two I have had thousands and thousands of immediate answers to my prayers, while again I have had to wait long periods for God to answer prayer.

At one time I had prayer for a special object, which I knew was in accordance with God's will and I had to wait three years and ten months before the full blessing came; at another my heavenly father kept me waiting six years and I, during that time prayed three or four times every day for the one object. At another time I had to wait eleven years before my prayers were answered. I was fully assured that the good Lord in his own good time would answer me. I was not discouraged, and I say this now that some of the weak children of the Lord may have their faith strengthened, that they may find it good to have sweet patience to the heavenly will.

I consider it a matter of great importance that Christians treasure up the answers they receive to prayer. There are more of your prayers answered than you sometimes imagine. If you would cherish up the answers you would more readily see God's hand. "Whose is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

The more we know of God the less distrust we will have of him. I would advise all to have

A PRAYER MEMORANDUM BOOK.

I mean a blank book. On the one side place the time and the request made, leaving the other blank, so that when the answer to that particular prayer comes, you can enter it in the blank and thank God. In after life when you peruse the pages of that prayer book, you will be more inclined to praise God for the wonderful way in which he has led you and will feel a greater desire to serve and trust him more and more. If there are sinners here knowing nothing of God's love, to you I say, if you will only ask God to teach you, he will show you the way to trust him and to eternal life. God's blessing rest upon us all. Amen.

Hints to Ministers.

If you are the pastor of a church, don't give an "intimation of your intention to resign," unless you have some fixed ideas about leaving.

Don't resign unless you are quite sure it is your duty to leave.

If Providence directed you where you are, don't hastily conclude it is your duty to "seek another sphere," when He has not as yet opened the way.

Don't attach too much importance to the promise of your brother ministers to "look out for you," to "think of you if they should hear of a suitable opening." Remember that the "chief butler forgot Joseph."

Don't imagine that by leaving your present charge you will get clear of difficulties, or that another position will be free from them.

If a vacant church invite you to preach, don't hastily conclude they mean "the pastorate," and hint to your friends that you will "probably be leaving shortly."

In accepting an invitation to preach for a Sunday, don't volunteer to lecture or conduct week night services. Do what you are asked, and, having done so, leave.

Don't conclude, because some of the members or deacons inform you that "you are the most acceptable supply they have had, and are sure to receive a call," that such will really be the case.

Discourage by all means "competitive preaching." If invited to preach "with a view to the pastorate," and you learn that no decision has yet been come to with reference to the brother who preceded you with a similar invite, kindly but firmly refuse to be put into competition with your brother, or to preach until the question respecting his candidature be settled.

If at present engaged in some calling, and serving a church, by no means be persuaded to "give up your calling to devote yourself wholly to the ministry." Many have done so, and have found time and reasons for repentance. It is often a delusion and a snare. Serve God faithfully and preach the Gospel, but don't be ambitious to become "dependent on the churches," lest you some day be somewhat forcibly reminded that such is the case.

Unwise Comparisons.

A Christian lady, hearing a fellow church member talking of her heavenly hopes, felt discouraged because she could not relate a corresponding experience. On expressing her distress to her pastor, a man of rugged sense and plain speech, he said:—"Madam, you can't wear sister's clothes, try as you will, because you are entirely another sort of person. Be yourself!"

If we would make up our minds to stop imitating others, it would often add greatly to our power of pen and tongue, and our peace of mind.

Christians vary as the leaves of the forest and are only prepared to be useful when they cease "comparing themselves among themselves, and measuring themselves by themselves." Do not try to be like your friend whose life work is as unlike yours as the expression of his face and the form of his person.

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