

Relationship of Prayer to Soulwinning

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Had you helped them when you saw them [discouraged ones] halting, had you in brotherly love drawn them into safe paths, had you manifested a spirit of interest, and shown that you did care for their souls, had you prayed with them and for them, you might have saved souls from death, and covered a multitude of sins. He who offers up fervent prayers in earnest love for the souls for whom Christ has died, will not only benefit those for whom he prays, but will benefit himself. . . .

There are many who are laborers together with God whom we do not discern; the hands of ministers have never been laid upon them in ordination for the work; but nevertheless they are wearing the yoke of Christ, and exert a saving influence in working in different lines to win souls to Christ. The success of our work depends upon our love to God, and our love to our fellow men. When there is harmonious action among the individual members of the church, when there is love and confidence manifested by brother to brother, there will be proportionate force and power in our work for the salvation of men. Oh how greatly we need a moral renovation! Without the faith that works by love you can do nothing. May the Lord give you hearts to receive this testimony.

Every one who believes in Christ as a personal Saviour, is under bonds to God to be pure and holy, to be a spiritual worker seeking to save the lost, whether they are great or small, rich or poor, bond or free. The greatest work upon earth is to seek and to save those who are lost; for whom Christ has paid the infinite price of His own blood. Every one is to do active service, and if he who has been blessed with light does not diffuse light to others, he will lose the rich grace which has been bestowed upon him, because he neglects a sacred duty plainly marked out in the word of God. As his light diminishes, his own soul is brought into peril, and the ones to whom he should have been a shining light, miss the labor that God intended that they should have through the human instrument. Thus the sheep unsought is not brought back to the fold.

God depends upon you, the human agent, to fulfill your duty to the best of your ability, and He Himself will give the increase. If human agents would but cooperate with the divine intelligences, thousands of souls would be rescued. The Holy Spirit would give devoted workers glimpses of Jesus, that would brace them for every conflict, that would elevate and strengthen them and make them more than conquerors. When two or three are met together to unite their counsel, and to send up their petitions, the promise is for them, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7). "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him" (Luke 11:13).

The Lord has promised that where two or three are met together in His name, there will He be in the midst. Those who meet together for prayer, will receive an unction from the Holy One. There is great need of secret prayer, but there is also need of several Christians meeting together, to unite with earnestness their petitions to God. In these small companies Jesus is present, and the love of souls is deepened in the heart, and the Spirit puts forth His mighty energies, that human agents may be exercised in regard to saving those who are lost. Jesus ever sought to show how worthless were formal ceremonies, and strove to impress upon His disciples that the Holy Spirit must enlighten, renew and sanctify the soul.

I pray that the Lord by his Holy Spirit will work to arouse the church. I am very anxious for all in Battle Creek. I hope there will be a reformation in the publishing house and in the church. If there is not a decided change in the heart; if from every worker there is not sent forth a pure, holy current, disease, spiritual consumption, will be revealed in him and in the work which he is handling. Souls have departed from the counsel of God, and by their headstrong passions, impatient of control, have set an example that has been fatal to others. The Lord has allowed them to have their own way and their own will, and they have abused their opportunities, rushing into methods and schemes and actions which God does not endorse. We have had sufficient warnings from God to work in Christ's lines, to humble self, and exalt the Lord in our hearts. I pray that the Physician of souls may undertake the case of each one, that they may fear and tremble before him.

It is the Lord's plan that men and women of wealth and influence shall feel a safety in a Sanitarium where prayer is offered up to God. They are to see that there is a people in the world having talent and knowledge who are not vain and self-exalted, who follow the pattern Christ has given.

God calls for human instrumentalities through which to work out His divine purposes. And while His messengers go forth into the harvest field, let those who remain at home give themselves to prayer. Let them by speaking encouraging words hold up the hands of those engaged in breaking the bread of life to hungry souls.

In the time when God's judgments are falling without mercy, oh, how enviable to the wicked will be the position of those who abide "in the secret place of the Most High"—the pavilion in which the Lord hides all who have loved Him and have obeyed His commandments! The lot of the righteous is indeed an enviable one at such a time to those who are suffering because of their sins. But the door of mercy is closed to the wicked, no more prayers are offered in their behalf, after probation ends.

I have spent the greater part of the night praying that the Lord, by some way of His own choosing, will open Dr. Kellogg's understanding, that he may see that he is departing from the faith. Unless he is led to realize his true spiritual condition, he will walk away from Christ into false paths.

I wake in the night, and my heart is drawn out after you [J. H. Kellogg]. I ask myself, "Should his life end suddenly, would I be guiltless if I do not now do all in my power to lead his mind away from the world?" I find myself sitting up in bed, sending heavenward the petition, "Lord, open his eyes, that he may see wondrous things out of Thy law. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."

There must be more praying among us. And we must have increased faith. Then God will work for us when we are in difficult places. God can soften the hardest heart. . . .

We are lamentably deficient in faith. We need a firmer belief in the words, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: It shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10, 11).

We must pray more earnestly than we have done in the past for the deep moving of the Holy Spirit. We must not depend upon money as our means of success. All the riches in the world could not save one soul. But we can, through the Holy Spirit's power, draw near to souls, and lead them to look away from the things of earth to the things of heaven, to lift their eyes to Christ. We must consecrate all the powers of our being to the work of rescuing those whom Satan is seeking to draw to destruction. And in this work Christ is to be exalted as all and in all.

Prayer is acceptable to God only when offered in humility and contrition and in the name of Christ. He who hears and answers prayer knows those who pray in humbleness of heart. The true Christian asks for nothing except in the name of Christ, and he expects nothing except through His mediation. He desires that Christ shall have the glory of presenting his prayers to the Father, and he is willing to receive the blessing from God through Christ.

The Spirit of God has much to do with acceptable prayer. He softens the heart; He enlightens the mind, enabling it to discern its own wants; He quickens our desires, causing us to hunger and thirst after righteousness; He intercedes in behalf of the sincere suppliant. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: 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. And He that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:26).

"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). The human being must draw nigh to God, realizing that he must have the help that God alone can give. It is the glory of God to be known as the hearer of prayer because the human suppliant believes that He will hear and answer.

Christ declares, "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). Paul's language is explicit and encouraging: "Be careful for nothing;"—that is, Do not worry or fret—"but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6).

The prayer of faith is the key that unlocks the treasury of heaven. As we commit our souls to God, let us remember that He holds Himself responsible to hear and answer our supplications. He invites us to come to Him, and He bestows on us His best and choicest gifts—gifts that will supply our great need. He loves to help us. Let us trust in His wisdom and His power. O what faith we should have! O what peace and comfort we should enjoy! Open your heart to the Spirit of God. Then the Lord will work through you and bless your labors.

When such a worker offers prayer to God in the family where he is visiting, the hearts of the members are touched as they would not be by any prayer offered in a public assembly. Angels of God enter the family circle with him, and the minds of the hearers are prepared to receive the word of God; for if the messenger is humble and contrite, if he has a living connection with God, the Holy Spirit takes the word and shows it to those for whom he is laboring.

This work is just what is needed to soften and subdue hearts, but I have been shown that it is too sparingly done. I tell you in the fear of God that there is more sermonizing than ministering. The field is a large one, but the servants of God, by straining themselves beyond their strength in their effort to do much preaching, neglect the corners of the Lord's vineyard, and overlook the hundred weekly opportunities for doing good.

There is abundant reason why we have not more of the power of God's grace, why our light does not shine more brightly. Christ says, "You have left your first love. Except you repent, I will come unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place." (See Revelation 2:4, 5.)

Shall we not humble ourselves before God in behalf of those who apparently have little spiritual life. Shall we not have appointed seasons of prayer for them. Shall we not pray every day for those who seem to be dead in trespasses and sins. As we plead with God to break the hearts of stone, our own hearts will become more sensitive. We shall be quicker to see our own sin.

Let us be careful that we do not offend one of the little ones that believes in Jesus. All about us are souls that are tempted. They know not how to receive from Christ the grace and help that He can give. As Christians we are ever to stand ready to help such ones. With all the powers of our influence we are to seek to draw to Jesus Christ those that are in need of His grace. We are not to stand in indifference and coldness, with no sympathy for those who are tempted. We must work, pray for, and encourage one another. 8 Manuscript Release p.189.