

HIS IN A . . . LIFE OF PRAYER

by

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CHAPTER SIX

PRACTICAL RESULTS FROM A LIFE OF PRAYER

“He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him” (Psalm 91:15).

God hears and answers prayer. He is able to do, and does, **“exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.”** As we meet the rightful, revealed conditions of a Life of Prayer we may have the experience of His personal response. Nothing is more satisfying or stimulating to our spiritual life.

God’s saints in all ages have had such experiences. For the most part they have gone unheralded, yet those that are of record would require volumes to recount. As a spur to our prayer-life, as well as a tribute to our Faithful God, we give the few that follow, necessarily limited by considerations of space.

Note that we group them in conformity to the classification given at the close of Chapter II, pages 33-35. The reader will do well to turn back to these for the Scriptures covering the various circumstances of need.

I—In Trouble—Needing Deliverance

THE LOST RECEIPT FOUND

A poor woman, living in a small cottage, had paid a large sum of money to a tradesman. He was dishonest and pressed her a second time for the money. The poor woman was certain she had paid the money, but she could not find the receipt anywhere, and the tradesman said, “Unless you find that receipt you will have to pay it; I shall send the bailiff, and will sell you out.” What did the poor woman do? She went straight to God and said, “O, my Heavenly Father, Thou knowest the distress I am in, that it will ruin me if my little cottage and place are sold; O, my Heavenly Father, undertake for me, for I know I paid that man. My Father, have mercy on me, and find this bill for me.”

As she rose from her knees, the sun shone out gloriously, and in flew a butterfly through the cottage door, and after it came quite a little child. The child caught at the butterfly, but it flew behind a cupboard. Then the child screamed, trying in vain to get at it. The poor woman sought to quiet the child, but in vain; and a neighbor coming in said,

“Oh, Mrs., what is the matter with the child?”

“Well,” she replied, “a butterfly flew in, and the child wants to get it; it is behind that heavy cupboard, which I cannot move.”

“Oh,” said the woman, “let us move the cupboard.”

As they did so a bit of paper fluttered down to the floor. When the old lady took it up, she beheld the receipted bill.

—*Our Faithful God.*

CROPS SAVED

A grasshopper plague visited Minnesota in the days of Gov. “Honest John” Pillsbury. A similar plague the preceding year had devastated all the crops. Its repetition would spell ruin to thousands throughout the State. Dr. R. A. Torrey tells how it was averted:

“A number of influential men from various States met in consultation as to the best means of ridding them of the plague. The Governor of a neighboring State urged that the only thing to be done to escape the threatening plague was to appoint a day of prayer wherein all praying people should unite in praying God to remove the grasshoppers. John S. Pillsbury accepted the suggestion, returned home to St. Paul, and issued a proclamation that all people who believed in a God that answered prayer should proceed on a given day to their places of worship and pray God to remove the grasshoppers from Minnesota. On the appointed day a wonderful thing occurred. In some places the grasshoppers died by millions in the trenches; those that were able to fly rose up and flew out of the State of Minnesota. A few lingered on, but they, too, eventually disappeared, and the crops were saved. There has never been a grasshopper plague in Minnesota from that day to this, though there have been plagues in other States.”

THE FOG LIFTED

Charles Inglis, while making the voyage to America a number of years ago, learned from the devout and godly Captain an experience which he had had but recently with George Mueller of Bristol. It seems they had encountered a very dense fog. Because of it the Captain had remained on the bridge continuously for twenty-four hours, when Mr. Mueller came to him and said, “Captain, I have come to tell you that I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon.”

When informed that it was impossible, he replied, “Very well, if your ship cannot take me, God will find some other way—I have never broken an engagement for fifty-seven years—let us go down into the Chart Room, and pray.”

The Captain continues the story thus: “I looked at that man of God, and thought to myself, What lunatic asylum can that man have come from—I never heard of such a thing as this. ‘Mr. Mueller,’ I said, ‘do you know how dense this fog is?’

“‘No,’ he replied, ‘my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God, who controls every circumstance of my life.’ He knelt down, and he prayed one of the most simple prayers, and when he had finished, I was going to pray, but he put his hand on my shoulder, and told me not to pray. ‘Firstly,’ he said, ‘because you do not believe God will, and secondly, because I believe God has, and there is no need whatever for you to pray about it.’ I looked at him, and George Mueller said, ‘Captain, I have known my Lord for fifty-seven years, and there has never been a single day that I have failed to get an audience with the King—get up, and open the door, and you will find the fog is gone.’ I got up, and the fog was indeed gone. On Saturday afternoon George Mueller was in Quebec for his engagement.”

SAVED FROM CANNIBALS

Hudson Taylor made his first trip to China on a sailing vessel. When off the shore of a cannibal island, the wind failed and they were drifting helplessly toward the dangerous shoals. The natives, naked, were gathering by the hundreds on the shore, greatly excited by the prospect of the wreck. Hudson Taylor writes in his report:

“After standing together on the deck for some time in silence, the Captain said to me, ‘Well, we have done everything that can be done; we can only await the result.’ A thought occurred to me, and I replied, ‘No, there is one thing we have not done yet.’ ‘What is it?’ he queried. I answered, ‘Four of us on board are Christians, let us each retire to his own cabin, and in agreed prayer ask the Lord to give us immediately a breeze. He can as easily send it now as at sunset.’

“The Captain, an earnest Christian, complied with this proposal. I went and spoke to the other two men, and after prayer with the carpenter we all four retired to wait upon God. I had a good but brief season in prayer, and then felt so satisfied that our request was granted that I could not continue asking, and very soon went up on deck again.”

Immediately after he got there he felt a puff of wind. Mr. Taylor took it upon himself to ask that the mainsail be let down, though an unbelieving sailor mocked at it.

“This an officer was not slow to do. In another minute the heavy tread of the men on deck brought up the captain from his cabin to see what was the matter, and he saw that the breeze indeed had come. In a few minutes we were ploughing our way at six or seven knots an hour through the water, and the multitude of naked savages on the beach had no wreckage that night. We were soon out of danger.”

II—In Sickness—Needing Restoration to Health

“NOT ONE CHANCE IN A THOUSAND”

In May, 1914, my wife returned home from a surgical operation in a local sanitarium. Nine days afterward she developed fever. The physician said at the beginning that her health being already in a weakened condition, it would be very difficult for her to recover.

The third or fourth day the physician said he thought it was typhoid, and asked for another physician to be called for consultation. The two agreed on the diagnosis of typhoid. The physician suggested an additional nurse and warned me that there was not one chance in a thousand for recovery.

I went to the Great Physician, and laid before Him the five children and His own cause, which I believed was at stake. It was my first all-night in prayer, I pleaded the Lord's promises. About daylight I received assurance of definite intervention, and a short while afterward I went into the sick room in confident hope and faith.

The nurse met me with an astonished expression, and said that a most wonderful thing had happened,—“The fever is gone, and your wife is resting quietly for the first time.”

A slight temperature came that afternoon, but it did not shake our faith. There was no more temperature after that, however, and in three days she was sitting up, and she is still well and strong.

There is not the slightest shadow of a doubt as to Divine intervention in this case.

—M. E. D., in *“I Cried, He Answered.”*

A HOME MISSIONARY SAVED TO LABOR

A missionary in Kansas writes of his personal experience, to this effect. He had just begun to preach somewhat, as a young Christian, under the direction of his pastor, and in a fit of deep depression was returning from what he meant should be his last appointment, when he took a severe cold in a storm. In a few days he was so low, that the physician pronounced his case hopeless, and he put his affairs in order, arranged for his funeral, and calmly awaited his end.

The pastor was away, at the first, but coming home, called and found him speechless, and received answers about his spiritual condition only by signs. He then called on two church members present to pray, and when they had finished, began himself. With the greatest simplicity he spoke of the Lord's goodness, and of the chastening which he had sent, and then turned to the world's need of laborers, and quoted Matthew 9:37, 38, from which two years before he had preached a powerful sermon, which had led several young men to devote themselves to the Gospel ministry.

“And now,” said he, “Lord, wilt Thou take them away again?”

And he pleaded as did Jacob, when wrestling with the angel. Then he quoted the text in James 5:14, 15, as to the prayer of faith healing the sick, and cried out, “Lord, I do believe.” At that moment the young man seemed to hear a voice saying, “You must preach the Gospel,” and at once began to convalesce. For nearly forty years he has now been obeying that command, and receiving souls for his hire.

—*“Prayer and Its Remarkable Answers.”*

“MY FATHER’S CHILD”

One year at the Mildmay Conference Mr. Spurgeon made the following references to himself:—

“After a period of continued pain, with little sleep, I sat up as best I could one morning in my bed in an agony of pain, and cried to the Lord for deliverance. I believed fully that He could deliver me there and then, and I pleaded my sonship and His Fatherhood. I went the length of pleading that He was my Father, and I said, ‘If it were my child that suffered so, I would not let him suffer any longer if I could help him. Thou canst help, and by Thy Fatherly love I plead with Thee to give me rest.’ I felt that I could add, ‘Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.’ But I did the first thing first. I pleaded with my Father, and went first where Christ went first, saying, ‘Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me.’ I shall never forget my success in my appeal. In real earnest I believed God to be my Father, and threw myself upon Him, and within a few moments I dropped back upon the pillow, the pain subsided, and very soon I slept most peacefully.”

SOULS SAVED; EPIDEMIC ENDED

(This incident exemplifies the power of united prayer, both for the salvation of men and for the healing of the body when the soul is right).

In response to a request from an invalid lady in Scotland, a missionary in India sent her the names of twelve stalwart non-caste Telugus, the two agreeing to pray for their salvation in accordance with the promise for united prayer (Matthew 18:19).

These twelve men, long steeped in heathenism, soon bore evidence of the Spirit’s convicting, converting power. They became transformed men, clean in life and constant in prayer. After a time they disappeared; but the missionary, going the following summer to the hill country for rest, found them there in the employ of a Scottish coffee planter to whom they had proved a double blessing.

A severe epidemic was sweeping the plantations of the district, carrying off many of the workers and causing operations to almost cease.

One noon-day these twelve Telugus came to the planter’s office, and said, “Mister, we want you to hold a prayer-meeting with us. We believe our God will stop this scourge, if we come to Him.”

He dismissed them, inviting them to return in ten minutes. Then ensued a terrific struggle within himself. Evidently these men thought him a Christian and he knew he was not. He thought of his parents’ prayers, long unanswered. There and then he decided, opening his heart and life to the Saviour.

Gladly he welcomed the Telugus upon their return, and a wonderful prayer-meeting followed in which all, including the planter and his operators, took part. That very day and hour the epidemic ceased. There were no more cases, either for the hospital or for the pyre.

III—In Adversity—Needing Financial Relief

RAILROAD FARE PROVIDED

I was invited to conduct a series of meetings. When the day for my departure arrived I found myself without enough money to pay the fare. Between my room and the station there were twenty men from whom I could, upon the merest suggestion, secure all that I needed. But I was learning to trust God, and my prayer was that if He wanted me to go to D_____ He would have the money for me at the station.

With confidence I packed my bag, and walked to the train. Stepping up to the ticket office, I asked what the fare was to D_____. “Two dollars,” was the answer, and as the words were spoken, a man reached over my shoulder and laid two silver dollars down upon the counter in front of me.

—G. C. G., in *“I Cried, He Answered.”*

SIX THOUSAND DOLLARS

During the World’s Fair in Chicago Mr. Moody secured speakers from various parts of America and Europe. The expense incurred was very great. One noon, in the usual gathering of intimate advisers, Mr. Moody said, “I needed \$7,000 for the work today. I have already received \$1,000. I propose that before we eat we kneel down and ask God to send us the other \$6,000.”

When we had all prayed, Mr. Moody closed, telling the Father in childlike simplicity of the need and asking that it be sent to him at once. Before they rose to leave a telegram was handed in, which read:

“Your friends at Northfield at the close of the morning session had a feeling that you needed money for your work in Chicago. We have just taken up a collection. There are \$6,000 in the baskets, and more to follow.”

Later the sender of the message, learning of the prayer meeting, told how Dr. Gordon, while presiding over the Northfield gathering, was impressed with the feeling that Mr. Moody needed some money for his work in Chicago and proposed taking an offering. It resulted in \$6,000 being placed in the baskets. As nearly as could be judged the prompting came into Dr. Gordon’s heart at the very time the prayer was being offered in Chicago.

HALF-A-CROWN FOUND IN THE SAND

An evangelist tells that when he was a boy he often read the Bible to his aged great-grandmother. She was a godly woman, and taught him to love and trust the Lord. His parents were very poor, and one morning there was not anything for breakfast. His mother with a sad heart dressed the children, and sent them down to play by the seashore till help came.

He watched the seabirds as they wheeled around him, and he remembered Christ's words, "**Your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?**"

He thought if God provided for the birds He could as easily feed him. He knelt down and prayed that the Lord would send food. After wandering along the shore he began to build sand-houses with the other children. On lifting a handful of sand he saw something bright, and found it was half-a-crown. With great delight he hastened home with it to his mother, and soon they had a good breakfast.

—J. A., in "*Our Faithful God.*"

"TAKE THIS AS FROM HIM"

When in London I had only just enough money to take me back by rail to Glasgow. Wishing to have a few shillings in my pocket by which to obtain lodgings, I wanted to go by steamer, that being the cheaper way. Friends tried to dissuade me, not knowing my reason.

The expenses were figured up, and I found I would save but 4s. 6d., and they urged it was not worth taking so long a journey for that sum. I had been asked to visit a young lady on that day, and was about to write a note to say that, leaving by steamer, I could not keep my engagement, when the thought came to me, Could I not give up that 4s. 6d. for the Lord's sake? Perhaps He had some service for me to do, or I might interest her in China, so I decided to go by the night train and to keep my engagement.

We had a time of sweet fellowship together, and, when leaving, she pressed a small packet into my hand, saying, "Take this as from Him." When I opened it there was exactly 4s. 6d. inside.

Oh, how strengthened and helped I was by that simple act! It seemed as if God had said, "Do not doubt; I will care for you."

—Mrs. Stott, in "*Our Faithful God.*"

IV—In Peril—Needing Protection

SAVED FROM THE FLAMES

A remarkable instance occurred at Saiong, China, of the way God honors faith. There was a terrible fire in the town, and a large number of houses were burned to the ground, leaving the poor families homeless. The people were greatly terrified, seeing the flames advancing and no means apparently of arresting their progress. In one house, right in their path, was an old Christian woman. She climbed on the roof, and, stretching her arm out to the sky, she cried aloud to Jesus to save her. Next day it was discovered that, though the houses all around were burned, hers was untouched. This event has much impressed even the heathen, and has led the Christians to have more simple faith in God.

—From the Life of Robert and Louisa Stewart.

BURDENED TO PRAY

A young man left a New England city to go as a missionary. Time passed. One night his pastor in the homeland was awakened in the dead of night, beset with the fear that his young parishioner was in peril. A great burden of prayer was rolled upon him. He arose and gave himself for hours to earnest intercession for the safety of his friend.

At that very time this was happening in the heart of Africa: The missionary, accompanied by a native, had started out to hunt. As they journeyed they ran upon two lions and a lioness. The missionary fired, killing one of the lions, and wounding the other. The lioness seemingly fled. In fact she had only hidden in the jungle. The missionary now advanced and fired again upon the wounded lion. The rifle had scarcely cracked when the great brute lioness leaped upon him from her ambush. With one blow she struck him to the ground. In an instant her teeth were sunk in his arm and her claws tearing fiercely at his shoulder. He cried out to the native to shoot, but the latter could not, as the missionary was between him and the lioness. In his panic however, the native fired his rifle in the air.

At once the lioness looked up. She dropped the missionary from her jaws. He rolled over into the bottom of a shallow ditch. And then instead of leaping upon him and finishing her work, the lioness turned and trotted into the jungle. The bleeding missionary was helped into camp. There, after six weeks, he recovered completely from an experience which it is given to but few men to pass through. God had indeed **“stopped the mouths of lions”** for him. The tidings of his wonderful escape went back home to his faithful pastor. And he who had prayed now saw.

—J. H. McConkey.

“COVER MY DEFENSELESS HEAD”

Charles Wesley’s famous hymn, *“Jesus, Lover of My Soul, let me to Thy bosom fly,”* has brought blessing and comfort to untold thousands. Many years ago a soldier in the Confederate army in the Civil War spoke in public of the help this hymn was to him.

He said, “I was a mere boy and had just been drafted to service. One night I was put on outpost duty in an advanced and lonely place. I was informed that the enemy was close by. I knew that my life was in danger; the bright moonlight made me plainly visible. To keep up my spirits and quiet my nerves I began to sing the hymn, ‘Jesus, Lover of My Soul,’ and by the time I came to the words, ‘Cover my defenseless head with the shadow of Thy wing,’ I had recovered myself. It seemed as if all my fears had vanished, and I paced my beat the rest of the time, until relieved, as fearless as if it were daytime. I felt that my prayer was answered.”

This was spoken in public before a number of people who had gathered.

While he was speaking, a man sitting near him gazed at him with evident and increasing astonishment.

When he finished his story, this second man exclaimed: “This is most extraordinary. That very night I was in that very wood on scout duty with a detachment of Federal troops. We knew that we were close to the Confederate lines. As we approached the edge of the woods we heard a clear voice begin to sing ‘*Jesus, Lover of My Soul.*’ We crept softly forward, not knowing what was there. Presently we saw plainly in the moonlight the solitary figure of a Confederate sentry, pacing his beat, and it was he who was singing. Instantly a dozen muskets covered him, waiting for my order to fire. Just then he sang with a feeling of trust and pathos, ‘Cover my defenseless head with the shadow of Thy wing.’ I ordered the guns lowered and said to my men, ‘Don’t touch that boy! We will go back to camp.’”

Then taking the ex-Confederate by the hand, he said, “That hymn saved your life that night. And your trust in God, your invisible protector, reached my soul and saved me.”

V—In Doubt—Needing Guidance

GOD HEARS PRAYER OF BOY

My first recollection of God hearing my prayer goes back to the time when as a barefooted lad I lived with my parents on a farm. A few days before I had been presented with my first jack-knife, in those times quite an event in a boy’s life. That morning while playing in the pasture, I had lost the precious knife and had spent over two hours in a fruitless search for the same. When my mother called me in to dinner my heart was too full of sorrow over my loss to care for any.

It flashed into my mind that the Lord knew where that knife was, then why not ask Him to show me where it was? The only prayer that I knew up to that time was my evening prayer that I always repeated on my knees at my bed before retiring. That was the only place for prayer that I knew, so while the family were at dinner I slipped into my bedroom and kneeling by my bed I poured out to the Lord my trouble and asked Him to lend me to where the lost knife lay. I got up from my knees, dried my tears, and with full confidence that I would find that knife, ran out again into the pasture, and walked straight to where I picked up the knife, about twenty-five yards into the field.

I was too young to understand the theology of prayer, but I well remember that that day I had an overwhelming sense of the fact that God was interested in a boy’s troubles, and my heart was filled with gladness.

—R. L. E., in “*I Cried, He Answered.*”

A POSITION SECURED

While pastor in Seattle I set out one day to locate a job for one of our University students who had tried and failed. Jobs in his line were scarce. I went to the lower end of the city to see a man. He was out to lunch. As I paced up and down while waiting I thought of my prayer-life. This was an opportunity to test it. I would lay down my Gideon’s fleece and ask God to give evidence that He had sent me. Scarcely had I begun upon this communion than my eye was attracted by a man leaving an adjoining place of business to take his auto.

A voice said, "Approach him." I reflected that he was probably a customer. But I yielded to the leading, caught him in the act of starting, discovered him to be the president of the concern, and to my statement and inquiry, he replied, "Yes, I am looking for just such a man." He invited me to ride to the city with him.

At first I declined, saying I wanted to see Mr. _____ but upon reflection I said, "This is the answer to my prayer, my quest ends here." Entering the building I found rows of such machines as my student desired experience with. I walked away with a happy heart, assured that God knew how to secure positions. Next morning my man claimed it and continued happy in it for many years.

—N. B. H.

AT BREAK OF DAY

A working man was for a considerable time out of employment. He sought work in many directions, but always failed to get it. His faith was sorely tried, but he continued to wait on the Lord, pleading that He would open a place for him.

One morning he awoke early, and became deeply impressed by the thought that he should apply at a certain large works. He told his wife, but she tried to dissuade him from going out so early. He was lying down again, but the impression returned that he must go to the place at once. He rose and left the house.

He went direct towards the works, and on the way met the manager, who engaged him on the spot. He still cherishes feelings of thankfulness for this answer to his prayers in a time of trouble.

—W. F., in "*Our Faithful God.*"

VI—In Sin—Needing Salvation

CONVERTED IN A Box CAR

In a night of prayer at De Leon, Texas, Mr. W. asked if we could join him in Matthew 18:19 to pray that his son, who had been away from home for three years, and from whom he had not heard, might be saved that very hour. Sixteen of us agreed. Five days later he read a letter to 800 people, in which the son told him he was a railway brakeman in Oklahoma, and that, while sitting in a box car at the very hour we prayed, he got to thinking about the possibility of being killed in a wreck. Eternity stared him in the face, and there and then he gave his heart to God.

—L. E. F., in "*I Cried, He Answered.*"

J. HUDSON TAYLOR, when a lad of fifteen, one day took from his father's library a pamphlet, thinking to find some interesting incident to occupy his mind. Anything pertaining to salvation, he purposed to avoid; it did not interest him.

However, as he explains, “Little did I know what was going on in the heart of my dear mother, seventy or eighty miles away. She rose from the dinner table that afternoon with an intense yearning for the conversion of her boy, and feeling that—absent from home, and having more leisure than she could otherwise secure—a special opportunity was afforded her of pleading with God on my behalf. She went to her room and turned the key in the door, resolved not to leave that spot until her prayers were answered. Hour after hour did that dear mother plead for me, until at length she could pray no longer, but was constrained to praise God for that which His Spirit taught her had already been accomplished—the conversion of her only son.”

Meantime, as he read, young Taylor was struck with the phrase, “The finished work of Christ.”

His mind was wondrously illuminated by the Spirit as to its meaning for him. He saw there was nothing for him to do but to fall on his knees, accept it, and praise Him for evermore. This he did. Thus while the mother was praising God on her knees in her chamber, her young son became similarly engaged in the old warehouse to which he had gone to read. His sister’s diary showed that, exactly one month before, she had given herself to definite daily prayer for his conversion.

TWO SONS SAVED

In the South a woman arose before a prayer-meeting of about one hundred and fifty women and said, “Ladies, I do not believe that God hears and answers prayer, but I do wish to believe in it. Please pray just now that I may be given this faith.”

They all knelt in prayer. In a few minutes the lady arose, and said, “How it was done I do not know; but I do believe in it now. Please pray just now that God will save my two wicked sons. They are away from home. I do not know where they are, but God does. Please pray that God will save them just now, this very day, wherever they are.”

Again the women knelt in prayer. At the prayer-meeting the next morning this lady ran into the church, the tears streaming down her cheeks, waving a telegram in each hand, and exclaimed: “Ladies, here they are, a telegram from each of my boys, and they both say they accepted the Saviour yesterday morning!”

—T. T. M., in *“I Cried, He Answered.”*

A GREAT SINNER CONVERTED

During this year I was informed about the conversion of one of the very greatest sinners that I ever heard of in all my service for the Lord. Repeatedly I fell on my knees with his wife, and asked the Lord for his conversion, when she came to me in the deepest distress of soul, on account of the most barbarous and cruel treatment she received from him, in his bitter enmity against her for the Lord’s sake, and because he could not provoke her to be in a passion, and she would not strike him again, and the like. At the time when it was at its worst I pleaded especially on his behalf the promise of Matthew 18:19:

“Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.” And now this awful persecutor is converted.

—*George Mueller’s Narratives.*

VII—In Spiritual Dearth—Needing Revival

DR. LYMAN BEECHER, father of Henry Ward Beecher, was once called to a Connecticut town to conduct special meetings. As they proceeded the response so far exceeded expectation as to cause him to wonder. One day he was asked to call upon a man who was a shut-in. The man evinced such interest in the meetings and the conversions as to cause Dr. Beecher to inquire more particularly. He discovered this man’s prayers to be the key to the revival. It seems that the man, realizing his inability to serve otherwise, had begun to pray for his town. He asked God for the conversion of his fellow-townsmen. In his praying he passed up one street and down the next. Then, taking a street, he turned into a house and prayed for its occupants. And so he went from house to house, over the entire town. To answer his prayers God had sent His messenger and, with him, a mighty spiritual movement.

JOHN LIVINGSTON’S FAMOUS SERMON

This saintly man says—“In the parish of Shotts I used to find more liberty in preaching than elsewhere. Yea, the one day in all my life wherein I got most the presence of God in public was on a Monday, after communion preaching, in the churchyard of Shotts, the 21st of June, 1630. The night before I had been with some Christians, who spent the night in conference and prayer. When I was alone in the fields about eight or nine in the morning, before we were to go to sermon, there came such a misgiving of spirit upon me, considering my unworthiness and weakness, and the multitude and expectation of the people, that I was consulting with myself to have stolen away somewhere, and declined that day’s preaching, but that I durst not so far distrust God, and so went to sermon and got good assistance. I had about one hour and a half upon the points I had meditated, on Ezekiel 37:25-26; and, in end, offering to close with some words of exhortation, I was led on about an hour’s time in a strain of exhortation and warning, with such liberty and melting of heart as I never had the like in public all my life.”

Other ministers were there, and as a result of this day’s work, specially John Livingston’s preaching, 500 were converted.

—“*Our Faithful God.*”

MR. MOODY’S GOING TO LONDON

In 1871 D. L. Moody went to London, seeking rest and spiritual refreshment. One day, after he had given a brief word of testimony, a Congregational minister asked him to preach for him. This he consented to do.

His initial message was met with cold unresponsiveness. But at the evening service, when the invitation was given, hundreds responded. He invited those who wished to become Christians into the adjoining room. More came than could be seated. He could not understand it, so he requested those who were in earnest to meet the pastor there on Monday night. Mr. Moody left next day for Dublin, but on Tuesday he received a wire, stating that more had come on Monday than on Sunday, and urging him to return as they had a revival on their hands. In ten days of subsequent ministry hundreds united with the Church.

The secret of all this was the fact that one invalid woman of the congregation, unable to labor for her Lord, had taken upon herself to pray. A copy of an American paper, used as wrapping if we recall correctly, had casually come into her hand. It contained some reference to Mr. Moody. She was led to pray, definitely, that the Lord would send him to London, that He would send him to her Church, so cold and formal, and that He would bring to pass a revival. She had prayed thus for five years when her niece came home from service and reported that Mr. Moody had preached. That afternoon, refusing food, she gave herself to fasting and prayer. She was praying while Mr. Moody preached that night, and the amazing results followed. Thus God was enabled to bring about the great revivals of Moody and Sankey in the British Isles through one woman, an invalid, who prayed.

To the above are added two incidents designed to stimulate prayer for laborers, so greatly needed at home and abroad.

PASTOR-LESS CHURCHES

Some years ago in Iowa there were scores of Baptist churches which were pastor-less. The leaders of the denomination had diligently sought for a supply sufficient to occupy these vacant places, but without success. In a convention at Webster City this critical condition was brought before the annual assembly of the denomination and considerable discussion was engaged in. Finally someone arose and suggested that all business be put aside and that the convention betake itself to prayer, asking the Lord of the harvest for the needed laborers. This was done, and not long afterward in the denominational college at Des Moines, where hitherto not one candidate for the ministry was studying, forty-one men were enrolled who definitely had the ministry at home or mission service abroad in view. Three came forth from one church in the space of a single year, and twenty of the forty-one have contributed up to the present day an aggregate of 378 years in active service! It counts to pray.

—Dr. W. L. Ferguson of India.

JACOB CHAMBERLAIN'S MOTHER is an inspiring example of what one person can do to enlist workers by prayer and personal effort. Four out of five of her own children were led into the missionary purpose by her prayers. On the day her famous son Jacob was to sail for India she sought an interview with him and told him what she had never told him before, that her first act on rising from her bed after his birth was to carry him to her secret place of prayer and lay him on God's altar and consecrate him to God as a foreign missionary. All through his college, seminary, and medical course she had prayed. Each year she had renewed the gift as he grew, but had never told him, because she felt that God alone must make his call clear.

At her funeral the president of Oberlin College said she had led to Christ and put into the ministry forty young men, most of whom became home or foreign missionaries.

—W. E. Doughty, *“The Life of Prayer.”*

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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