

new life would soon be infused into our lukewarm churches! A praying congregation is the best commentary upon a minister's usefulness, and a praying people are the best prepared to hear faithful and earnest preaching. It can never be too much insisted on that the hearer should come to the house of God *prepared*. Preparation is as necessary for the hearer as for the preacher, and nothing is better fitted for this purpose than regular attendance at well-conducted Prayer-Meetings. Under the influence of devotional feelings the heart is purified and softened, and the soil thus prepared for the reception of the seed of the Word. Hence the great importance to ministers of having such meetings in connection with their respective charges.

There is an objection sometimes brought against Prayer Meetings, which may be here adverted to by way of *caution*. Such meetings as are got up for prayer alone, it is said, manifest more ostentation than anything else, and tend to beget spiritual pride. Members therefore should keep in view that attendance at such meetings is not to be considered as a *work of supererogation*. We can never pray enough. The exhortation is, *Pray without ceasing.*" Being dead in trespasses and sins, in the sight of God all our good works are but as "filthy rags," still we are not to withhold ourselves from meeting together for devotional purposes if our hearts tell us that the offering of our prayers will be acceptable to the Lord.

Let us now consider a few of the principal objects and advantages of small Fellowship or Prayer Meetings.

1. In addition to mutual improvement they tend to promote a *spirit of sympathy and union* among Christians of different denominations. Every other body of men, holding similar views, and professing the same great objects, seem to understand better than Christians the great advantages of union. Why should not they, who are called by the same name, worship the same God, are redeemed by the same Saviour and baptized with the same baptism, be also fellow-workers together for the advancement of the same great objects—the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-men. The points on which many denominations of Christians differ, as compared with those upon which they agree, are often very trifling and insignificant, and yet, instead of a desire for union and co-operation, there too often exist feelings altogether repugnant to the Christian character. Now, why is this? Plainly, because Christians do not love each other, and pray for each other as they ought. **CHRISTIANITY**, it has been truly said, is **THE RELIGION OF THE HEART**; and, before Christians can be made to feel in common, and act in concert, their hearts must be united in holy prayer for each other. This is the firmest and strongest bond of union, without which all attempts at Evangelical alliance must ever fail. Fellowship Meetings, therefore, by uniting individuals by the holiest and loftiest ties, contribute greatly to this grand object by laying the foundation of a more general and extensive union among the different denominations of Christians.

2. Such meetings exhibit a *good example* to other Christians. At a time when so great a number of professing Christians content themselves with simply attending upon the outward ceremonies of Religion, without troubling themselves farther about the matter, thinking they do enough if they present

themselves at Church regularly every Sunday, it becomes the duty of those who have higher views of the nature of the Christian profession to endeavour to set before such formal pretenders an example of what the Christian's life ought to be. The power of example is great, and many may be thus led to more serious thoughts of the duty of Christians, more especially if members do all they can to extend the usefulness of the unions with which they are severally connected.

3. Prayer Meetings also promote the *growth in grace* of the individual members. All union has for its object the advancement of the individual, and it is one of the first and main objects of Fellowship Meetings to send members to their closets. The feelings of a man's heart as well as the faculties of his mind, can never be fully developed unless by frequent contact with others. So in like manner the spiritual part of man is strengthened and invigorated only by frequent communion with those who are of the same spirit with himself. Frequent intercourse with the pious and holy tends to communicate the same devout views and aspirations.

At present we need a *very great extension* of our unions for prayer, and surely a few individuals—men that fear the Lord—will be found scattered throughout the Churches of Christ in these colonies, who will be willing to lead the way in this holiest of enterprises. The organization of small Fellowship Meetings would not be a very difficult matter, and we are persuaded that many would most cordially join them, were they once begun. We are cast upon times whose utter deadness to all religious impulse calls for the *most vigorous efforts* in all possible ways for arousing the sleepers from the sleep of death. Everywhere around us do we behold evidence of life and vigour but in Religion; there is much that is rotten, corrupt and dead, at once strikes the intelligent mind. The signs of the times, too, are ominous. The Church is rent into fragments, emblem of the broken body of Christ, the world, weary and helpless under the constantly accumulating load of misery and wretchedness, is imploring assistance from the saints—and Satan, that arch enemy of souls, who ever goes about like a roaring lion, is in these days more rampant than ever. Everywhere do we behold significant signs of coming change; whether that change shall be for the better or for the worse depends, under Providence, on the exertions of individual Christians. Every one, however humble his station, can do something to promote the interests of pure and undefiled religion. Private supplications could accomplish much, Prayer Meetings could accomplish more. If there were *only one* stated Prayer Meeting in connection with *every Church* of Christ in these colonies, what enlargement would there soon be for Zion, what hope for the country, and for the World!

It now only remains to offer one or two remarks as to the method of conducting small Fellowship Meetings.

1. Care should be taken that they do not degenerate into *formal meetings*. Formality is the greatest enemy of Religion. Remember that it is the homage of the heart which God requires. It is not the mere repetition of sacred words which constitutes devotion. From all formal intercessions the Almighty turns away His ear. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in

spirit and in truth. Remember the high privilege of access to God by prayer, to Him in whose hands are the issues of all things, and use this great privilege, therefore, as true spiritual worshippers, with-humility, fervency, simplicity and faith.

2. The best way to secure spirituality in prayer is to have *some particular object* to pray for. Prayer implies that we stand in need of some particular thing. It is a blessed thing when we know what we should pray for as we ought; and, if we know what we want, we know how to plead for the bestowment of it.

3. It is better to begin prayer meetings by reading a small portion of Scripture and singing a Psalm or Hymn. The riches of God's Word are inexhaustible. For every event that can occur in life—for joy and for sorrow, for prosperity and for adversity—the Bible furnishes a suitable portion for meditation and prayer. Such passages should be well selected.

4. As there is a time for everything, prayer meetings should not be prolonged beyond a reasonable period. When they frequently are so, members begin to gather a distaste or them. This therefore should be guarded against.

In concluding our remarks, we would earnestly exhort and entreat all, who call upon the name of Christ Jesus, to be up and doing, "for the night cometh when no man can work." Be in earnest, we beseech you, for the time is short. Stir up one another with a holy zeal, wrestle with the Lord for Zion. "They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces." Be resolved to say with the holy man of old, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth; till the Gentiles see thy righteousness and the Kings of the earth Thy Glory.—*Halifax Monthly Record.*"

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED SINCE OUR LAST PUBLICATION.

|                                   |         |   |    |   |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---|----|---|
| Jas. Brown, New market,           | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Arch. Fyfe, "                     | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| James Allen, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Peter Nicol, Aurora,              | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Jacob Wells, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| James Greig, Queensville,         | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Samuel Douglas, "                 | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Andrew Dickson, Hol. Landing,     | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Town-Major McDonald, Montreal,    | 1855    | 2 | 6  | 0 |
| A. Skakel, "                      | 1855    | 5 | 0  | 0 |
| J. R. Esdaile, "                  | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Miss Malcom, "                    | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| G. Dempster, "                    | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| G. D. Watson, "                   | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Alex. Gemmill, "                  | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| W. R. Clark, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| E. McLennan, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Geo. Templeton, "                 | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Robt. Cassells, (B. B. N. A.),    | 1851-56 | 0 | 15 | 0 |
| Mr. John England, Lachine,        | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Thos. Davies, "                   | 1855-6  | 0 | 5  | 0 |
| John McLennan, Lancaster,         | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| David Ramsay, "                   | 1855-56 | 0 | 5  | 0 |
| E. Smith, Lachine,                | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| W. McGeoch, St. Eustache,         | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Mrs. Rev. McLaurin, Williamstown, | 1855-56 | 0 | 5  | 0 |
| John Johnson, "                   | 1853-54 | 0 | 5  | 0 |
| Rev. K. MacLennan, Dundas,        | 1855-56 | 0 | 5  | 0 |
| John Wilson, "                    | 1855-56 | 0 | 5  | 0 |
| Mrs. Thos. Bigham, "              | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Mrs. Wm. McGregor, "              | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Samuel Anderson, "                | 1855    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Mrs. Alex. Barrie, "              | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| John Weir, West Flamboro,         | 1855-56 | 0 | 5  | 0 |
| Rev. Robt. Dobie, Aultsville,     | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Samuel Ault, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Isaiah Ault, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| John Dafe, "                      | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Alex. Robertson, "                | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| W. R. Croil, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| John Croil, "                     | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| James Croil, "                    | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |
| Wm. Vallance, "                   | 1856    | 0 | 2  | 6 |