

"Such as a man soweth, such shall he also reap," when we remember that spiritual tastes and habits are not to be formed in an hour or a day, and that all outward professions and ceremonies avail nothing, unless the heart is pure, and the soul is steadfast, and the life is one of integrity, then a new motive will be added for our goodness, then the formation of a truly noble Christian character will be the test of our Christian faith.

PRAYER.

A paper read by Jonathan W. Plummer at the Religious Conference, Chappaqua.

**Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.**

**Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.**

**Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death,
He enters Heaven with prayer.**

JAMES MONTGOMERY, Poet.
Scotland, 1771-1854.

Prayer among men is supposed a means to change the person to whom we pray; but prayer to God doth not change Him, but fits us to receive the things prayed for.

REV. EDWARD STILLINGFLEET.
England, 1635-1699.

We, ignorant of ourselves, beg often our own harm, which the wise powers deny us for our good. So find we profit by losing of our prayer.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.
England, 1564-1616.

Prayer has a right to the word "ineffable," it is an hour of outpouring which words cannot express—of that interior speech which we do not articulate, even when we employ it.

SOPHIA MADAM SWETCHINE.
Russia, 1782-1857.

Is not prayer a study of truth, a sally

of the soul into the unfound infinite? No man ever prayed heartily without learning something

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.
United States, 1803-1882.

Real inward devotion knows no prayer but that arising from the depths of its own feeling.

WILLIAM VON HUMBOLT.
Germany, 1767-1835.

A Christian will find his parenthesis for prayer, even through his busiest hours.

RICHARD CECIL.
England, 1748-1810.

The simple heart that freely asks in love obtains.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Prayer, as an appeal to a superior power, seems inherent in human nature, resting in part, on our sense of inability to care for ourselves, and achieve our wishes without aid. Man from his earliest history seems to have recognized the existence of an unseen infinite power or powers, to which we can appeal.

In the lower stages of our development, prayer is an appeal, generally made in fear, asking protection from threatened injury, or for the possession of some coveted thing or condition, sacrifices are offered to appease wrath or to secure favor. As we advance in intelligence to the degree that we can perceive good and evil apart from our physical needs, we conceive this infinite power as preferring the good, and requiring obedience on our part to His laws that we and others may not be overcome by the power of evil, but may have the Divine favor in our struggle to achieve the good.

Under a sense of God's wisdom we desire to be, or to have, what He wishes, less through fear and more through a conviction of its benefit to us.

When in our progress we conceive God as allwise, allseeing, therefore not needing change in judgment or action,