

so we had the whole Bible gone over in a week. It was one of the most extraordinary meetings I ever attended. I tell you it waked me up. I'd no idea before there were so many promises in the Bible. We heard from the patriarchs, the psalmists, the apostles; it was a most extraordinary meeting. The prayer-meeting can be made the most interesting of the whole work. It is my privilege to belong to a church in which the prayer meeting is larger than the church membership and has been for twenty years. Every Friday night the church officers used to meet before prayer meeting, take tea together, and have prayer and go to the prayer meeting together. We were all agreed, and we used to keep back and let the young people take part or strangers, but, if there was a pause we were ready. There was no need to urge the people to rise. There were often three or four trying for the floor at once. No saying, "Now, brethren, lose no time, let not a moment be wasted," and that sort of nudging at the people.

I would suggest as a good idea that the minister and the church officers should have tea together. It keeps those in the church united and prevents the forming of any little cliques. You keep fifteen or twenty of the leading men united and you have a united church.

Dr. Gordon has a successful meeting in Boston. If any of his people are absent from prayer meeting he sends postal cards asking them to meet him half an hour before the next meeting. He meets these and speaks about their absence and they go into the meeting together, and in that way he keeps the whole church at the prayer meeting. That strikes me as a good idea, and I don't see why it can't be carried out everywhere.

Another thing we want to guard against is long prayers. All Christ's prayers are short. The longest one is in the 17th of John, and it only takes about four minutes to read that carefully and prayerfully. I don't know where the church got this idea of long prayers. Not from the Bible, unless from the prayer at the dedicating of the temple. You might have a long prayer at the dedication of a great church like this, but to have long prayers every Sabbath is a mistake. Few people can follow a man in a prayer for more than ten or fifteen minutes. Minister and all, you know your mind will wander and you can't help it. You long to have him stop and when half the congregation is that way, the minister isn't doing much good.

If a man wants to, let him rise and pray two or three times, but let him not pray too long. If you have a man who makes fifteen minute prayers, you should go and speak to him in the spirit of Christ, and tell him that he should be brief. You say you will offend him? better offend him than spoil the meeting. If there is only an hour it is not right that one man should take a quarter of the time. You can't have a profitable meeting if three or four men take all the time.

If a man gets offended because he is talked to in the spirit of Christ about the mistake he is making, better let him go. If he won't stand that it is a good sign that his heart is not in the right place.

Short prayers in scriptures have brought their answers. "Lord help me." That was what the Syro-Phoenician woman said. Three words "Lord remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom." That was what the penitent thief said. If he had known the Lord was in his Kingdom he might have shortened it to "Lord remember me." The publican said, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner," and that brought the answer right there. Peter said, "Lord save me or I perish." Somebody says that if Peter had had as long a preamble to his prayer as some he would have been forty feet under water before he could have let the Lord know what he wanted. My experience is, those who pray longest in public are those who pray least at home.

If a man hasn't a good record in the community, don't let him take part. Young people find it out if such men take part, and the thing does harm. It seems to me we have to be loyal to Christ, and we won't be loyal to him if we don't go to such a man as that and persuade him to give up whatever it may be that gives offence, and if he won't then it is our duty to insist that he shall not take part in the prayer meeting.

POWER IN THE MINISTRY.

Of all men, a minister of Christ is especially called to work with God. Everything depends on this. his own future reward at the coming of the Lord. This is the grand secret of ministerial success. One who walks with God reflects the light of his countenance upon a benighted world; and the closer he walks the more of this light does he reflect. One who walks with God carries in his very air and countenance a sweet serenity and holy joy that diffuse tranquility around. One who walks with God receives