

worship where there is no family religion. As an outgrowth of household piety, prayer becomes a means of grace—its direct influence is to secure a blessing. God hears and answers prayer. It is however more in accordance with his plans and purposes to answer prayer when it is offered in concurrence with others. We do not stop to offer reasons for this, we only know it is so. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them." If two shall be prevalent, how much more ten or a hundred. Without entrenching the least on the sacred duty of secret prayer, which all should observe, it is plainly a promising act to unite in prayer where there are only the man and his wife and no children. When there are children in the household who have been recognized and sealed as children of the covenant and heirs of promised blessings, and when in such a household there is agreement in prayer, we have a condition of things yet more auspicious.

We do not mean that there is any special benefit to be derived from the act of praying before the household by its head, unless to some extent there be harmony and agreement in the members of the household in the presenting of these spiritual sacrifices. If it be not the conjoint action of the several members of the household, its power as united prayer will be lost. A friend of the writer, some time ago, being at the house of a professed follower of Christ during the hour of morning worship, expressed his surprise that while both father and mother seemed to be engaged earnestly in devotion, the son, a young man, sat in his chair mending his horse's harness, while the daughter was stationed at the table washing up the breakfast things. If this was prayer in the family, it was scarcely family prayer.

Things are but little better when the younger members are never taught to join in the solemn service of the household. If family prayer is what it should be there will be concert, it will be prevalent because it will be the expression of united adorations, thanksgivings, confessions and petitions.

The members of every household are more or less implicated in each others sins, hence they should be confessed together. They are sharers in each others blessings, hence they should be acknowledged together.

The wants of one must be very much the wants of all, in the family all are members one of another. "If one member suffers all the members suffer with it, if one be made glad all rejoice with it." How fitting that united petitions should ascend like incense to God.

If the daily offering up of concurrent prayer in a family is becoming and beautiful to the view of men, it is much more so to the great God who has followed family delinquencies with judgments, and declared "them that honour me I will honour, while they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

God does surely answer fervent prayer, especially when that prayer is offered by a united household, through its head. Soon will it be found that the promised blessing has come. Parental instruction will fall into hearts prepared for it. Little hearts, with all their native stubbornness, will yield to the force of truth. The sweet story of the cross will be cordially believed as soon as understood; the forgiveness of sins will be early enjoyed because sincerely sought; an indwelling Spirit will soon manifest himself by the struggle in young hearts to conquer what is wrong, by improved tempers, and growing love to what is pure and holy. Are the children taught to avow themselves Christ's? The concurrent testimony of the Spirit will be that they are his. We regard these as the direct fruits of family religion as manifested in domestic worship.