

APPLICATION

They sent unto them Peter and John, v. 14. For long it had been said, "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans". But the love of Christ makes those who were once enemies helpers one of another. Two brothers had quarreled, and for twenty years never spoke to each other. One of them had prospered, the other had suffered reverses, so that their homes were very unlike. Coming from the market, the poor brother had to pass the fine home of the other one, and often he felt he was being scorned and despised by the owner of that home. One winter day he was taking home a load, and his team stuck in the drift close to his brother's house. After he had tried in vain to get them out, he saw his brother coming with his team. "Will you allow me to help you now, and as long as I live?" said he. "I am a changed man, and I want to be a real brother to you. Will you allow me?" "Oh, my brother", was the answer, "I, too, have been changed, and I have been praying for this hour to come." And there in the storm they became brethren indeed.

Simon . . . offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, vs. 18, 19. There are some who think that money can procure every advantage. Carlyle said, "To a shower of gold most things are penetrable". Most things, but not the best things. A man cannot buy with money a trained mind. Gold can buy libraries, but libraries unread are like mummy wheat in the tombs of Pharaoh. Gold can go far to giving success, but there comes a point where its helping power fails. Esteem and love are obtained by goodness and honesty and kindness. When the last dread hour cometh, money is miserably weak. On his death bed, Cardinal Beaufort, eighty-five years old, exclaimed, "Why should I die, having so much riches? If the whole realm would save my life, I am able by policy to get it, or by riches to buy it. Fie, will not death be hired, or will money do nothing?"

Pray the Lord (Rev. Ver.), v. 22. A man who denied that there was a God and tried to win his friends over to his belief, was brought one day face to face with death.

There seemed no escape for him. No human hand could help. In an agony of earnestness he lifted his eyes to heaven and cried aloud in the hearing of many who stood about him, "My God, help me". The danger passed, and the man became an earnest Christian, praying to God every day. We are ready enough to pray, when some great need of help presses in upon us. But, though we often forget it, every hour is with us an hour of need. Without God's help we could not draw the next breath or lift our hand to the next task. We shall always be weak unless we lay hold on His strength, poor unless we receive of His riches, ignorant unless filled with His wisdom.

In the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, v. 23. The story is told of a tyrant who ordered one of his subjects into his presence and commanded him to go and make a chain. He gave him no money to purchase the material, but ordered him to make the chain. The man toiled and worked, and, at last, came with the chain. The tyrant told him to go and make it as long again. The man obeyed, and was told the third time to go and add to the chain. So he worked hard and after some months came with it. Then the tyrant called his slaves, and told them to bind the man in the chain he had made and cast him into prison. The sinner serves a tyrant, who makes his servants forge chains of habits and then imprisons them.

Pray ye for me (Rev. Ver.), v. 24. God is very attentive to our prayers for others. A father learned this truth for himself from his children. When his boy came asking him some favor, his father love disposed him to grant his child's request, and send the lad away happy with the thing he wanted. One day, however, the same boy came with the story of another child's need and misery, and asked his father to help that other one. The pleading was sincere, and, as the father listened, his heart swelled with pleasure, while with a liberal hand he answered his boy's prayer for another. So it is with our prayers. When we come to God, He hears with special delight prayer which rises for another's good.

Keep the
Channel Open

After Twenty
Years

Forging His
Own Chain

Things Money
Cannot Buy

For Another