

Pastor and People.

PREVAILING PRAYER.

Prevailing prayer is that which secures an answer. Saying prayers is not offering prevailing prayer. The prevalence of prayer does not depend so much on quantity as on quality.

I do not recollect having ever attended a prayer-meeting until after I began the study of law. Then, for the first time, I lived in a neighborhood where there was a prayer-meeting weekly.

Seeing me so frequently in their prayer-meeting, the leader, on one occasion, asked me if I did not wish them to pray for me. I replied, "No," I said, "I suppose that I need to be prayed for, but your prayers are not answered."

I became convinced that they were under a delusion; that they did not prevail because they had no right to prevail.

In reading my Bible I noticed such revealed conditions as the following:— (a.) Faith in God as the answer of prayer.

(b.) Another revealed condition is the asking according to the revealed will of God. This plainly implies asking not only for such things as God is willing to grant, but also asking in such a state of mind as God can accept.

For example: In offering the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come," it is plain that sincerity is a condition of prevailing with God.

So in the next petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," God has not promised to hear this petition unless it be sincerely offered.

Sincerity in offering this petition implies a state of entire and universal consecration to God.

What is true of offering these two petitions is true of all prayer. Do Christians lay this to heart? Do they consider that all professed prayer is an abomination, if it be not offered in a state of entire consecration of all that we have and are to God?

(c.) Usefulness is a condition of prevailing prayer. "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

(d.) Another condition of prevailing prayer is a conscience void of offence to-

ward God and man.—1 John iii. 20, 22; "If our heart (conscience) condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things; if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God, and whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight."

(e.) A pure heart is also a condition of prevailing prayer.—Psalm lxxi. 18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

(f.) All due confession and restitution to God and man is another condition of prevailing prayer.—Prov. xxviii. 13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper. Whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy."

(g.) Clean hands is another condition.—Psalm xxvi. 6: "I will wash mine hands in innocency, so will I compass mine altar, O Lord." 1 Timothy vi. 8: "I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

(h.) The settling of disputes and animosities among brethren is a condition.—Matt. v. 23, 24: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way. First be reconciled to thy brother, then come and offer thy gift."

(i.) Humility is another condition of prevailing prayer.—James iv. 6: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."

(j.) Taking up the stumbling-blocks is another condition.—Ezek. xiv. 3: "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face. Should I be enquired of at all by them?"

(k.) A forgiving spirit is a condition.—Matt. vi. 12: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;" 16: "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."

(l.) The exercise of a truthful spirit is a condition.—Psalm li. 6: "Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts." If the heart be not in a truthful state, if it be not entirely sincere and unselfish, we regard iniquity in our hearts; and, therefore, the Lord will not hear us.

(m.) Praying in the name of Christ is a condition of prevailing prayer.

(n.) The inspiration of the Holy Spirit is another condition. All truly prevailing prayer is inspired by the Holy Ghost.—Romans viii. 26, 27: "For we know not what we should pray for, as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

(o.) Fervency is a condition. A prayer, to be prevailing, must be fervent.—James v. 16: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

(p.) Perseverance or persistence in prayer is often a condition of prevailing. See the case of Jacob, of Daniel, of Elijah, of the Syrophenician woman, of the unjust judge, and the teaching of the Bible generally.

(q.) Travail of soul is often a condition of prevailing prayer. "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." "My little children," said Paul, "for whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you." This implies that he had travailed in birth for them before they were converted.

(r.) Another condition of prevailing prayer is the consistent use of means to secure the object prayed for, if means are within our reach, and are known by us to be necessary to the securing of the end.

(s.) Another condition of prevailing prayer is the consistent use of means to secure the object prayed for, if means are within our reach, and are known by us to be necessary to the securing of the end.

(t.) Another condition of prevailing prayer is the consistent use of means to secure the object prayed for, if means are within our reach, and are known by us to be necessary to the securing of the end.

something. They mean reformation and restitution. They mean work. They mean the use of means. They mean the opening of their pockets, their hearts and hands, and the devotion of all their powers to the promotion of the work.

(s.) Prevailing prayer is specific. It is offered for a definite object. We cannot prevail for everything at once. In all the cases recorded in the Bible in which prayer was answered, it is noteworthy that the petitioner prayed for a definite object.

(t.) Another condition of prevailing prayer is that we mean what we say in prayer; that we make no false pretences; in short, that we are entirely childlike and sincere, speaking out of the heart nothing more or less than what we mean, feel, and believe.

(u.) Another condition of prevailing prayer is a state of mind that assumes the good faith of God in all His promises.

(v.) Another condition is "watching unto prayer," as well as "praying in the Holy Ghost." By this I mean guarding against everything that can quench or grieve the Spirit of God in our hearts.

When the fallow ground is thoroughly broken up in the hearts of Christians, when they have confessed and made restitution—if the work be thorough and honest—they will naturally and inevitably fulfil the conditions, and will prevail in prayer. But it cannot be too distinctly understood that none others will.

(w.) Another condition is "watching unto prayer," as well as "praying in the Holy Ghost." By this I mean guarding against everything that can quench or grieve the Spirit of God in our hearts.

A Trained Ministry.

Wonderful blessings at home and abroad have attended, and are still following, the labours of evangelists who have not been trained in the ordinary course through which most ministers pass. Their success has led many who do not look below the surface, or beyond the present, to the opinion that untrained ministers, "preachers fresh from the people," "unspoiled by systematic theology," "live men from among the masses," are the crying need of the time.

We need a trained ministry to prepare the community for just such work as the evangelists are doing. To teach the people, to set the great truths of the plain salvation before them, "line upon line, precept upon precept," in such a way that when the fiery tongue of the prophet sounds the call of God, men shall know what it means, and what their duty is.

We need a trained ministry to counteract the very evils which are sure to grow up under the state of things that attend an evangelist's work. If the evangelist be wise and discreet, and God crown his labours with large rewards, the great enemy of souls is the more earnest and active in sowing tares that may ruin the harvest.

Of course no word of ours is to be construed into an excuse for those who take a training, as they call it, as a cover for dullness. There is no reason why learning should quench the fires of zeal. It should rather kindle and make them effective; there is no place for dullards anywhere, above all, no place for them in the church. We need men fervent as well as full. A good rule for Christian teachers is that famous rule for preaching, "FIRST HEAVY, THEN HOT!"

No man can answer his own valor or courage till he has been in danger.

The Angel of Patience.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

To weary hearts, to mourning homes, God's meekest angel gently comes, No power has he to banish pain, Or give us back our lost again,

There's quiet in that angel's glance, There's rest in his still conscience: He mokes no grief with idle cheer, Nor wounds with words the mourner's ear;

Angel of Patience! sent to calm Our feverish brows with cooling palm, To lay the storm of hope and fear, And reconcile life's smile and tear;

O thou who mournest on thy way, With longings for the close of day, He walks with thee, that angel kind, And gently whispers, "Be resigned, bear up, bear on, the end shall toll The dear Lord ordereth all things well!"

The Fresh Hour.

The morning is father of the day. The freshest hour is nearest to the sunrise. A day well begun is commonly a day well done. The brightest thoughts, the best books, the wisest plans have usually been born when the mind has been invigorated by refreshing sleep.

Every day should be commenced with God. The busiest and best man in Jerusalem was wont to say, "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee and will look up!" "I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning." Daniel too saluted his God with prayer and praise at early dawn.

Morning is the golden hour for prayer and praise. The mind is fresh. The mercedes of the night and the new resurrection of the dawn both prompt a devout soul to thankfulness. The buoyant heart takes its earliest flight—like the lark—towards the gate of heaven.

A portion of God's Word should no more be omitted every morning than the early meal. Family prayer, too, will put a stout stem around the day to keep it from ravelling out into idleness and ill-temper, and besetting sins.

When the early devotion has been performed, and the day's work laid out, then we should shoulder up the load with cheerfulness. A day begun with ill-temper and sulky speech is very apt to be a day of irritations, and beatings of our fingers with the hammer clear on until bedtime.

As we write these words for the morning, the dew yet sparkles on the grass. Let this fresh hour be made a prelude for a whole day for Him who unbarred its golden gates in yonder eastern sky!

"Begin the morn with God! He is thy sun and day; He is the radiance of thy dawn, To Him address thy lay."

Thy first transactions be With God Himself above; So shall thy business prosper well, And all the day be love."

—Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, in *Evangelist*.

THE Rev. J. G. Bidwell declares in the *Zion's Herald* (Methodist) that "every public Sabbath camp meeting is a crime against public morality."

In Italy the Jews are coming to the front in politics. Two of the twenty-four Senators just created are Jews, and eleven members of the Chamber of Deputies are of the same faith.

The library of the late Dr. Wilson, the missionary, is to be reserved intact in Bombay. The Government have intimated their willingness to mark the quite exceptional position which Dr. Wilson held in the estimation of those who have to guide the affairs of the State, by contributing largely towards the expense of purchasing the library, and it is said that the University will co-operate in the purchase by a vote from their own funds.

Random Readings.

THERE is pleasure enough in this life to make us wish to live, and pain enough to reconcile us to death when we can live no longer.

Reflection is a flower of the mind, giving out a wholesome fragrance; but reverie is the same flower, when rank and running to seed.

KINDNESS is the music of good-will to men; and on this harp the smallest fingers may play heaven's sweetest tunes on earth. —*Eliza Burritt*.

A NEW rule on the Vermont Central Railroad requires every employee to take the total abstinence pledge, and dismissal is to follow a violation of it.

"Did she leave anything?" was asked of one of God's poor, just died. "No," was the answer, "she took everything with her." Happy they who can.

SOMETIMES we avoid a stranger for no other reason than because he is unknown to us, though in very many cases we have more reason to shun the society of those who are already known to us.

"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." How many, in consequence of neglect, have exclaimed in a dying hour, "The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

PROFANITY never did any man the least good. No man is richer, or happier, or wiser for it. It commends no one to society, it is disgusting to the refined and abominable to the good.

READER, all is hanging upon a moment. Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.

THE bell-ropes of fervent prayer reaches up to the throne. Let us pull that bell, in our time of need, with a strong hand. When thou hast pulled boldly, wait till the blessing comes.—*Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler*.

WE all need, now and then, and especially now, to be reminded of the fact which Lowell has forcibly expressed in the lines—

For man or race is on the downward path, Whose fibre grows too soft for honest wrath.

A MINISTER, addressing a pious colored woman, said:—"Mary, is not the love of God wonderful?" Mary simply, but we may add sublimely, replied:—"Massa, massa, me do not tink it so wonderful, 'cause it is just like Him."

It is said that when Archbishop Leighton once rebuked his sister for over-anxiety, she replied by saying that it was easy for him to possess a devout frame of mind, because he had no children and no cares. "Nay," said he, "it is possible to have care and calmness too; for it is written, 'Enoch walked with God, and begat sons and daughters.'"

A dewdrop, falling in the wild sea wave Exclaimed in fear, "I perish in this grave!" But, in a shell received that drop of dew Unto a pearl of marvellous beauty grew, And happy now, the grace did magnify Which thrust it forth, as it had feared, to die Until again, "I perish quite," it said, Torn by rude diver from its ocean bed, Unbelieving—so it came to gleam Chief jewel in a monarch's diadem.

How full of meaning is the fact that we have nothing told us of the life of our blessed Lord between the twelfth and thirteenth years. What a testimony against all our striving and snatching at hasty results, our impatience, our desire to glitter before the world, against the plucking the unripe fruit of the mind, and the turning of that into a season of stunted and premature harvest, which should have been a season of patient sowing, of earnest culture, and silent ripening of the powers. —*Trench*.

OF Presbyterianism Mr. Gladstone thus writes:—"It has given Presbyterian communities the advantages which in civil order belong to local self-government and representative institutions—orderly habits of mind, respect for adversaries, and some of the elements of judicial temper; the development of a genuine individuality, together with the discouragement of mere arbitrary will and of all eccentric tendency; the sense of a common life, the disposition energetically to defend it; the love of law combined with a love of freedom; last, not least, the habit of using the faculty of speech with a direct and immediate view to persuasion."

FATHER CHINQUY has a short way of explaining difficulties in theology to his French Canadian hearers. The subject of eternal punishments having been agitated in the churches and press of Canada recently, the preacher thus made the matter plain to his audience. He said, "They tell us that a just God will not inflict eternal punishment for a momentary sin. This is quite true, *mes amis* (my friends). It is only eternal sins that are punished eternally. A momentary sin is one that is repented of and forgiven through Christ; but a sin that is not truly repented of is an eternal sin, and must subject the sinner to eternal punishment. Hence the loud call to repentance continually reiterated in the Gospel."

AMONGST all the pleasant things of life—and the all-bountiful hand of Providence has scattered the path of our days with innumerable blessings, if man would but enjoy them—amongst all the pleasant things of life, there are few more pleasant than a walk in the flower-garden before breakfast on a sunny morning. To see those mute and still, though not motionless, creatures—we mean the blossoms—opening their painted bosoms to the beneficent rays which gives them their color and their loveliness, welcoming the calm blessing of the light, as if with gratitude, and seeking, in their tranquil state of being, for nothing but the good gifts of God, might well afford a monitory lesson; for everything in nature has its homily, to us, the eager hunters after fictitious enjoyment. How calm do they stand in their loveliness, how placid in their limited fruition of the elements that nourish them—how, in their splendid raiment, do they sparkle in the sun, how do they drink up the cup of dew, and gratefully give back honey and perfume in return.—*Eliza Cook's Journal*.