

and yet no reference, even remote, has been made to them! We recognize with shame our unfaithfulness as under-shepherds when we have not claimed the help and the guardian care of the Chief Shepherd for the defenceless ones, nor asked the balm of comfort and healing for the torn.

The public prayer is not the expression of the minister's own need, except in so far as he can rise to the lofty height of the Syro-Phœnician mother pleading for her daughter, when she cried, "Lord, help me!" It is intended to express that of the whole congregation. The minister gathers into comprehensive statement their requirements, so that every heart there should be able, in some degree, to express its need before God through his words.

In private prayer we express our own heart's desires, not only in words—it may be in groanings which cannot be uttered, or in gladness unspeakable, or in peace, whose thanksgiving calm words would only break. We may go aside and commune with God, and be still. We may, like David, go and sit before the Lord, and let Him, in His loving kindness and tender mercy, interpret our heart's longings for us, and do what seemeth to Him good. The prayers of the believer in private may be all adoration, or all thanksgiving, or all petition, supplication, intercession, or he may lie low at the feet of God, pouring forth his humble confession of sin, or he may simply wait on God.

The most precious moments of communion between friends are sometimes those when no words are spoken—heart meeting heart in silence.

But public prayer in the sanctuary is very different. The prayers there should, in some reasonably comprehensive degree, compass the need of the congregation. In churches which recognize the ministry as a priesthood praying for the people, appearing before God as the substitute of the people, it is not deemed a necessary thing either that the people be present or that the prayer be offered in the common tongue of the people. The priest is the intercessor. In the Protestant church the minister is not a priest. He simply gives expression to the need of the people, and all hearts unite intelligently in the prayer (why not voices, too, sometimes?), each for all others. Now, keeping these primary principles of sanctuary prayer in view, these elements should be found in prayer offered by the congregation through