

Pastor must chiefly care? To the old, the poor and the sorrowful, earth has not many joys to give. Whilst the busy, the happy and the wealthy are satisfied with earthly consolations, let them not lock the doors of the churches during the week, but permit them to be opened daily for the few who set their affections on heavenly things, and seek a peace and a comfort which the outside world cannot give. Let these also have the great comfort of Daily Morning and Evening Prayer in the holy "stillness and seclusion" of the house of their Father and their best Friend. Among these few there may be some who at home are, like Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, and others who in their single room, occupied by a whole family, can find no place for retirement and meditation.

III — For the few who may attend, it is not worth while to spend the Church's money or the Pastor's time."

As for the Pastor's time, he is already bound by the rule of the Church to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayers, "either privately or openly,"—and further, "if he be not reasonably hindered, he shall say the same in the Parish church, and shall cause a bell to be tolled, that the people may come and hear God's Word, and pray with him."\* His saying the Daily Service, therefore, does not depend on the presence of a congregation at all. And let those who object to the smallness of the congregation, tell us the value of even one immortal soul. What trifling or even considerable expense shall weigh against it, seeing the Judge Himself hath said that there is nothing which can be taken in exchange for it? Besides, prayer is not a matter of pounds, shillings and pence, but the loving instinct of the soul, drawing it to its Creator, and belongs as much to the congregation as to the private individual.

The benefit of Daily Prayer is not confined to the actual congregation. Our Lord will most certainly be present with the two or three who are gathered together in His Name, to bless, not only them, but those also for whom they pray. "The sick, who lie on beds of suffering, the wanderers away from home, the labourer with hand or head, the little children and the poor, who—as they hear the daily bell 'sprinkling the air with holy sounds'—know that for them the Church prayers are going up to God, for the country, for the whole Church, for all conditions of men."† We know not how far the blessings given to, or the harm averted from our times, is due to the fulfilment of the precious promise that the Father will grant whatsoever even two or three shall agree together on earth to ask in the Son's name.

Instead, therefore, of shutting the church doors against two or three, or even one solitary worshipper, we should be thankful that there are some who can and will pray for the rest, and—so far from being discouraged by the smallness of the congregation—can, by faith, behold the "Angel presences and the multitudinous presence of God, filling up the spaces that men count empty, in the courts of the Lord's house."†

One of the principal reasons of the long neglect of Daily Prayer is, that many people look upon Public Worship as a thing consisting mainly of a sermon, preceded and followed by prayers—the fewer and shorter the better. The great privilege of common or united Prayer they are willing to give up for the prayer of one man.

The Church is but awakening from a long lethargy, upon which—when we look back—we cannot wonder that whilst the service of the Lord's Day was so often stripped of its chief attraction—the Blessed Eucharist—and so became as a mere daily service, the week days, in their turn, should be denuded of their Morning and Evening Prayer.

\* Rev. William Croswell Doane. † Prayer Book.