

pure formality without meaning or life, and we must sedulously guard against that.

The true function of family worship is to habituate ourselves, and to train our children, to acknowledge God in all things and to order the life in accordance with His will. It behoves us, therefore, to be genuine in our prayers, and then to do all in our power to live in the spirit of our prayers all the day—to try at least to do those things which we have asked that we may have strength to do, that so our lives and our prayers may be “all of a piece,” and not two separate and contrary things. It is easily possible to draw the inference that prayer is useless where there is a great gulf fixed between the manner of the prayer and the manner of the life; and what is needed is to give the impression that religion and life are inseparably bound up the one with the other, that our prayers help our living, and our living is a part of our prayer. With this spirit cultivated in the home, family worship will become not only profitable, but a real and great delight.

#### The Prayer.

The prayer is the chief difficulty with many people. They are incapable, they think, of offering their own prayers in the presence of their families. At the same time they are averse to read prayers. I am a firm believer in “free” prayer, both in public and family worship. It is far preferable, in my judgment, to a liturgy; but I would far rather see in use one of the many books prepared for family worship than see the custom drop into disuse. But more is possible to us than we think. “The Spirit helpeth our infirmities,” and a few words of our own might be more effective in leading others to pray with us than a most elaborate printed page of petitions. When the prayer is read, and the head of the household feels himself incapable of spoken prayer, would it not be well to write out a few lines of thanksgiving or petition for special mercies, and to insert them in the prayer for that particular day? We are not to seek to avoid trouble. In this, as in other things, we may truly say: “No pains, no gains.” Prayer with and for others, without any previous thought, can rarely be profitable. We have a right, and we have need, to consider well the words we are going to speak to God.

One or two hints may not be out of place. Let the prayer be brief. Let it be simple. Do not pray at any member of the household. The family altar is *not* the place for dealing with the specific faults of any member. That should be done in private. Let the needs and mercies of all present and absent members of the family be lovingly remembered. Let there be a thought for the Church of God and for the poor and suffering. Let there be some variety in the prayer. It is a good plan to pray against one form of temptation to-day and another to-morrow, and so with the strengthening of the various virtues. There should be lowly confession of sin in every prayer, and thanksgiving for daily mercies. It might be well that another member of the household besides the father—the mother, the son or daughter—should occasionally read the passage or offer the prayer, and at the close all should join in the pattern prayer which our Lord taught to His disciples.

A man who lives right and is right has more power in his silence than another has by his words. Character is like bells which ring out sweet music, and which when touched, accidentally even, resound with sweet music.—Phillips Brooks.

## Our Young People

### Sun, Aug. 9.—Lessons from Paul: How We May Get His Passion for Souls.

Worth the Winning.

A good man, who had established a reformatory school for wayward boys, was showing a visitor over it, who asked him rather sneeringly how many lads he hoped to reform. “If I spend all my life here, and reform only one boy, I shall not feel that the time and effort are wasted,” was the reply. “That is ridiculous,” said the other, sharply. “All this for only one boy?” “But suppose it was your boy?” was the answer.

We must feel that each man is the brother for whom Christ died. The straightest path to any soul is found by loving it. We cannot touch men, in any sense, until we come close to them individually, and count them worth the winning.

The moment we assume that we are better than others, that their sins are too black for us to help them, or that they are too degraded to be helped at all, that moment we lose power for soul-winning. We must have

“The hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love.”

before we reach the craving souls that long for better things, even in their sins. Paul, like His Master, loved sinners, despised no lowest slave, became all things to all men, and won countless souls to Christ.

#### The Universal Message.

The gospel is for all men. Peter tried to keep it within Jewish limits, and Paul, at first, spoke only in the synagogues; but they soon learned that the message they bore was not narrow, but universal. Whosoever will, may come. All nations, all ages, all conditions, are one in Christ, who died, not for a few, but for all.

This fact affects our duty as Christians. We owe a debt to all around us, until the gospel is brought home to them, so far as we can do it. Paul felt this so strongly that not until he had done his utmost for three years, exhorting night and day, did he call the people of Ephesus to witness that he was “pure from the blood of all men.” Wherever he went he witnessed for God. Even when chained between two soldiers at Rome, he pressed the gospel upon them.

#### A Little Digger of Weeds.

“Niney-five, ninety-six, ninety-seven,” counted Marian, with a long sigh. “Three more to make a hundred!”

Little Marian in her gingham slip gown, armed with a strong kitchen knife, was digging out dandelions for two cents a hundred. It was in the little green plot between the walk and the curbing. She had it free from weeds now, and she was to dig nowhere else. She had dug out some with the knife, and some with her sturdy little fingers, lying flat on the ground. The little strip had been kept so well mowed that the dandelions grew very low and close in among the short grass and were not easy to take out. She would have liked to go over and dig in the school-yard across the way, for there the dandelions were big and strong, each one crowned with fluffy blossoms; but she had been told to do her digging in that small green plot, so there she stayed.

“Oh, ninety-eight,” cried Marian, spying out a stunted bit of a plant that fairly hugged

the ground. “But, dear me! I don’t believe there’s another one.”

Still, after a long search, she did discover another tiny nife growing almost under the edge of the sidewalk.

“Ninety-nine! Now, if I could get just one more!” sighed Marian, examining the grass with an anxious eye. “Who’d ever s’pose that dandelions would go and sow just ninety-nine of themselves, and then stop short?”

“Hello!” said Johnny Briggs, stopping short at sight of the little figure lying on the ground. “What’s the matter with you?”

Johnny Briggs was a new boy just moved into their block.

Marian told him. “And I don’t s’pose I’ll ever get that two cents,” she said, “though I lack only one; but there isn’t a single one more!”

“Does your mother always count things?” asked Johnny.

“No,” said the little girl. “She just asks how many, and I tell her.”

“Then it’s easy enough,” said Johnny. “She’d be sure, just looking at them, that there must be as many as a hundred!”

“Johnny Briggs!”

“Anyway,” suggested Johnny, red spots coming into his cheeks, “how do you know you didn’t make a mistake when you counted?”

“I know I didn’t,” said Marian. “I counted ‘em nine times.”

“See here, wait a minute!” said Johnny; and away he darted across the street.

“There!” cried he, returning with a dandelion plant and tossing it into Marian’s basket. “Now you are all right.”

“No, I’m not,” said Marian, shaking her curly head. “Johnny Briggs, I think you’re a kind boy; but I guess you’re not honest! If you’re going to live in our block, I hope you’ll be honest. You see we’re trying to make our block the nicest block in this street. That’s why mamma and I are digging out our weeds.”

“I’m pretty honest,” said Johnny, who was also pretty red. “And say,” he called back at the gate, “I s’pose, maybe, every time I see a dandelion I’ll think about keeping the block nice!”

When Marian carried her pan of weeds to her mother, she said, “Mamma, there’s only ninety-nine in this hundred; but there isn’t one left to dig. Couldn’t I do something else to make up for that other dandelion?”

“Yes,” said her mother, smiling. “You may run and wash my only little girl’s hands for me, and then bring me my purse.”—Carroll Watson Rankin, in Little Folks.

#### Daily Readings.

Mon. Aug. 3	—A great vision.	Acts 22 : 6-11.
Tues. “ 4	—A great calling.	Tit. 1 : 1-4.
Wed. “ 5	—A great Saviour.	11-b. 7 : 22-25.
Thurs. “ 6	—A great responsibility.	1 Cor. 9 : 13-16.
Fri. “ 7	—A great gospel.	1 Cor. 1 : 18-24.
Sat. “ 8	—A great faith.	Gal. 2 : 16-20.
Sun. “ 9	—Topic. Lessons from Paul: how we may get his passion for souls.	Rom. 1 : 1-17.

As God glorifies Christ in Heaven, so the Spirit glorifies Him on earth in the hearts of believers.