

The Christian.

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A WORD TO OUR READERS.

Our friends throughout the Maritime Provinces have taken hold of THE CHRISTIAN in a manner that is truly gratifying to all, especially to those who have undertaken its management. Let it be understood that this unity and heartiness of co-operation is not confined to any one Province, that while we have in Nova Scotia a few more subscribers than in New Brunswick, yet, P. E. I. follows so closely in the wake of the others, that opinion is rife that she may yet pass one and even both of her "sister Provinces." We want our readers to feel that they have an interest in this paper beyond the mere reading of it; that THE CHRISTIAN is really *theirs*; that its success in the future, as in the past, will be but the natural outgrowth of their untiring and persistent efforts. We would like at our next Annual Meeting to be able to report to the Brotherhood that we have a thousand subscribers; we have met all our liabilities and that every subscriber has paid for his or her paper. Surely this is not asking too much! We feel confident, in view of the past, that if those who have already taken hold of the work are assisted by others whom we might mention, all that we have suggested can be accomplished.

PRAYER.

Prayer is, and will be, a subject of the deepest interest while God's children are on earth and need the aid of their Father in heaven. It is as natural for them to pray as it is for living creatures to breathe, and quite as essential to their spiritual life as is breathing to animal life.

At the beginning of our Christian course we anxiously read all we could on the subject of prayer, and now remember that we learned more from a few words spoken by the Saviour than from all the books we read upon it. Two of his directions were especially valuable. 1st. What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. 2nd. When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses (Mark xi. 24, 25). Elsewhere he taught His disciples what was proper for them to ask; here he showed them *how* to ask and assured them of success. The heart that holds fast the promises of a loving Father, must let go every feeling of enmity to our fellow-men, even to those who have injured us, we must forgive them or He will not forgive us. We will at present dwell on *prevailing* prayer. We notice that in both the Old Testament and the New the prayers of God's children were not answered at once, but often delayed as if they would be refused. In his youth Jacob

had roused the wrath of Esau by taking from him his birth-right and his blessing, and only saved his life by flying from his own country. He was returning now with helpless wives and children, and in the morning must meet his angry and powerful brother. The messengers he sent to Esau returned to assure him that his worst fears were but too well founded. They said, "He cometh to meet thee and four hundred men with him." Jacob made the best arrangements in his power and spent the night in earnest prayer. Hour after hour passed but no success. At last the strong angel, as if to throw him off, exclaimed, "Let me go for the day breaketh." But he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me." The angel changed Jacob's name to Israel—a prince of God. "For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed." He had no more fear of Esau who met him as a loving brother (Gen. xxxii.).

When Moses plead for Israel the Lord said, "Let me alone, that my anger may wax hot against them and consume them." But he did not let him alone. He reasoned and plead and even desired to share their fate if he would not forgive them, till at last he had power as a prince and prevailed. Had the Lord answered Jacob and Moses without a long and persevering struggle it would not be said that they had power as princes and prevailed, nor could they have enjoyed the inestimable blessing of a long and profitable "*audience with Deity*."

Jesus, who knew the mind of God and could not ask amiss, spent all night in prayer to God instead of being answered at once. When the woman of Canaan cried in distress, "O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on me, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil," he said nothing, so that his disciples urged him to send her away. At last he said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." She was not of that house. Still she plead, "Lord, help me." Again he said, "It is not meet to cast the children's bread to dogs." And she said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their Master's table." She prevailed. Jesus extolled her faith and healed her daughter (Matt. xv.). So it was with all who plead with the Son of David. "He delivered the needy when he cried; the poor also, and him that had no helper" (Psalm lxxii. 12).

How many have been long pleading for children, husbands, or wives, without an answer. Be encouraged and faint not ye tired ones. The Son of David is in heaven, and God will not disappoint your hopes. Prevailing prayer involves *faith, delay and discouragement, perseverance and triumph*.

When Jesus spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint, he told of the unjust judge's treatment of the widow who sought of him protection from her cruel oppressor. He would only attend to her case to prevent the trouble her continual coming would give him, but on that account avenged her. He asks, "Will not God avenge his own elect who cry day and night to him, though he bear long with them? I tell you he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" He declares that God will hear the continual prayer of his children, but intimates that few will believe this at his second coming (Luke xviii.). We may here pause and ask—Is that promise of Jesus generally believed? Do I believe it? Do I pray and not faint for what I know to be the will of God? Do I know what prevailing prayer is by experience? If not, how can I claim to be of the Israel of God when that is its meaning? These questions cannot be too earnestly considered by the children of God.

How many to-day are preaching the gospel and enquiring, How, how can I persuade men to be reconciled to God? How can I persuade them to embrace the gospel when so many powerful influences work against their salvation? If we first

prevail with God we may expect to have power with men and prevail. Without Christ and his gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, we may excite and deceive men but cannot turn them to God. Who is sufficient to present the gospel so that the people may believe it with all their hearts and be saved by Christ? It is only those whose sufficiency is of God. This is plainly seen in the lives and labors of the apostles. Prayer preceded every remarkable triumph of the gospel. When Jesus, before he ascended to heaven, told his apostles to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, the waiting days were spent in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brethren, until they received that promise, and began the most glorious work ever known on earth. Afterwards, when they were threatened with death if they preached Christ, they lifted up their voices with one accord to God who heard them and increased their power and success, so that they preached with boldness the Word of God.

Paul and Silas at Philippi met a possessed maid when they went to prayer. She was the only one who seemed to heed their preaching or their prayers. Still they did not faint. When they expelled the spirit, her money-making masters wreaked on them their vengeance. They were falsely accused and unmercifully beaten without a trial. Midnight found them in the inner prison, their stripes unwashed and their feet made fast in the stocks. Did they quail or complain when their allied enemies thus frowned defiance on their efforts to preach the gospel in that city? No! They prayed and sang praises to God who speedily heard their prayers. Before daylight the cruel jailor was saved from all his sins. He and all that were in his house were given as stars to shine forever in the crowns of these princes of God.

THE OHIO RIVER has again overflowed its banks, and the condition of affairs is appalling and beggars all description. From Cincinnati to Maysville, a distance of 60 miles, which but fairly represents many other portions, no bottom lands were to be seen, and the distant hills formed its banks. Whole cities and villages have been entirely swept away by the maddening current, and left thousands upon thousands homeless, penniless, and some mourning over the loss of friends. This, as you will see by the telegrams, has been followed by an awful tornado, carrying death and destruction in every blast, devastating the Ohio valley. While our hearts go out in sympathy for these poor sufferers, how thankful we should be to God that no calamity has been permitted to invade the peacefulness of our homes.

THE SCOTT ACT in Prince County, P. E. I., has gained a grand victory, having over 1600 of a majority. There is considerable excitement all over the Island on the liquor traffic. In Prince County it was intense. Rumrunners claimed grand times under the Scott Act, but professed to deny themselves for the public good in strenuously opposing it. But an *ungrateful* public opposed their benevolent patriotism, and left them to luxuriate in the advantages of the Scott Act.

ARTICLES for THE CHRISTIAN should be short and pithy, and be on hand not later than the 20th of the month to insure publication in the coming issue.

It is with much sorrow that we have learned that our true and beloved Bro. Beattie of Summerside, well-known and highly esteemed by the brethren throughout P. E. I., is suffering with congestion of the brain. We sincerely sympathise with him and his family in this affliction; but trust that soon he may be restored to health.

With varying desires the world is watching the movements of General Gordon who has undertaken to restore peace in the Soudan. With only a companion or two, no arms but a walking cane, he has pushed his way into the very midst of excited and fanatical tribes proclaiming peace!