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A PRACTICAL PRAYER.

There are certain phases of truth which are nothing if not practical. It may not be very material in the life we now live whether or not the saints in heaven know each other and are able to converse on mundane experiences. It has not very much to do with present necessities whether or not the evil ones shall ever be released from the duration of hell. We may speculate in regard to these as kindred questions, but when we have gone the whole length we are no better off than before. There are certain other phases however which we cannot touch with sincere inquiry without getting into the region of that which was intended to be presently helpful.

The beauty of the Lord for which the psalmist prayed has very much more to do upon the life of God's children than furnishing a theme for delightful meditation. The beauty of the Lord is no mystic sentiment; it is the possible characteristic of every Christian—the practical test of the virtue of godliness.

The manifest characteristic of sin is ugliness. The world with all it contains was created beautiful and good, and any defect, physical, mental or moral, which now appears must be attributed to the bad impress of sin. Sin has to do with decay and distortion as surely as it has to do with death. It has to do with all mental weakness and aberration, and certainly it alone is responsible for all acts of profanity and debauchery, for all crookedness of manner and discourtesy; in short for all in man which is manifestly unlovely. Ugliness of body, mind and heart is the work of sin.

The gospel of God's grace was intended not only to convert the soul, but also to beautify all that sin has corrupted. Being con-