

be those of one's ordinary life. The soul in proportion as prayer becomes a reality, will instinctively adapt its prayers to special circumstances, not lightly indeed, changing that form of prayer, but having that liberty of spirit which makes rule not a hindrance, but a help; not the destroyer, but the developer of life.

## II. The supernatural.

But there is also the supernatural element in prayer. We must indeed, discipline and train our minds, and fulfil our part; but prayer is not a mere straining of our mind towards God; we must pray as members of Christ; "He that hath made us accepted in the Beloved." We pray not as those who have nothing to depend upon but their own efforts, but as those whose acceptance is already assured if they have faith to realize their great privileges. We Christians speak, as it were with the lips of Christ. We know that in proportion as we believe in and use our great privilege God cannot reject us. Our own powers may be very limited, the sense of our sins may dismay us, but we draw near with the life of our Lord within us, "Members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones," and we know that God will hear the voice of His own Son.

Yet this sense of membership in Christ must be developed not merely at the time of prayer; it must be the effort of our daily life, the aim of our self-discipline. For it is on this that our Lord's promise depends. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." And as members of Christ we have the assistance of the Holy Spirit, "who helpeth our infirmities." We kneel down, but, notwithstanding all our watchfulness and care, our hearts are cold, and our words come falteringly, but we persevere, and then, at times—not always consciously, but at times—we feel the breath of the Spirit breathing through us, and kindling our devotion, and words come to our lips and longings too great for words well up within our hearts, and reach to God. We feel in one way that what we say and long for is our own, it has the color and temper of our minds; but, again, we feel that it is not our own; it is greater and stronger than we are; and then we know that it is partly ourselves, partly the Spirit of God, that the music that thrills us is the breath of the Spirit breathing through the instrument which we have striven to prepare.