

On Being a Superintendent

By a Sunday School Worker

III. THE SUPERINTENDENT IN THE CLOSET

If a man is not a Sunday School superintendent in the closet, he is not one in the desk. The Sunday School superintendent is at the head of an institution by which the claims of religion are presented to scores of young people. Realization of this should send the superintendent often and earnestly to his knees. The eternal welfare of many boys and girls is in his hands.

The superintendent must maintain himself flawless in the eyes of the community. His tact, his faith, his perseverance, his good cheer, must all be kept at a high level. He must not be trapped into a snarl, or a sneer, or an explosion of anger. A single exhibition of passion is likely to spoil the work of months, and ruin or greatly injure his influence. The superintendent, if any man, needs the constant presence of the Holy Spirit, to keep him humble, sweet, friendly, wise and strong. And the Holy Spirit enters a life only by the doorway of prayer.

Besides these reasons, the superintendent is urged to prayer by the many difficulties of his work. He will meet unreasonable teachers, complaining parents, shirking assistants. He will be assailed by unjust criticisms and cruel misrepresentations. He will be tempted constantly to give up his post, deciding that it is not worth while. Children will be impudent, irreverent, disobedient.

No sporadic and haphazard praying will meet this threefold need of prayer. The superintendent must plan for his prayers. He must plan a place, and a time, and a method. The place for prayer is important, as is the place for Bible study. It may be the same place, if it is secure against interruption. It should be unchanged from day to day, that the spirit of prayer may spring from the customary surroundings of prayer. The time for this prayer is equally important. It must be when the superintendent is unfretted by impending cares, and free to devote his mind to the one theme. The evening is a good time, perhaps just before retiring; and for the Bible study, in most cases, the morning is the best time, soon after rising.

The superintendent will not be too methodical if he forms for himself a definite schedule of prayer, not always the same, changed with the changing needs of himself and the School, but written down in a businesslike way, that prayer may be a definite business with him, which it should be with all Christians.

Would you like to have my idea of such a schedule, merely as a suggestion? I should begin with adoration, seeking to realize the glory and majesty, the graciousness and loving kindness of the infinite being I was approaching. I should then pass to thanksgiving, remembering gratefully the many blessings bestowed on me and on the School, especially the latest tokens of God's favor. Next I should bring before the Almighty the definite interests of the School, particularly those for which for any reason I was most anxious:—it might be the singing, or the collections, or the Home Department, or the teachers' meeting. Then I should pass to individuals, and, while imploring the divine blessing upon the entire School and the church, and all other Schools and churches, I should particularly name in my prayer the members of the School who were sick or were in other trouble, and those who had recently given me cause for anxiety in any way. Finally, I should ask for God's presence and blessing to go with me, illuminating my mind, strengthening my will, and giving me good success. All of this I should ask with confidence, trusting in the mediation and the grace of my blessed redeemer, in whose name I should present the prayer.

More than that, this regular and systematic waiting upon God in prayer will be of chief value as it leads to the prayer life, a life every moment of which is radiant with the spirit, if not vocal with the words, of prayer. We go to God in accustomed places that we may find Him in unaccustomed places. We set apart definite times for prayer, that we may pray instinctively at all times.

Sunday School Field Work in Alberta

By J. B. Ritchie, Esq.

In the year 1910, on one of those bright May mornings for which Sunny Alberta is