

the consideration of "the prayer of faith."

We distinguish between the prayer of faith and the prayer of courtesy or of pity. Our Saviour taught us to pray the general prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." Manifestly, He could not have intended the prayer of faith, for then it would mean that we should ask in faith that all men should at once begin and continue to do God's will on earth as it is done in Heaven, and expect the prayer to be answered forthwith.

It was a prayer of this class which Christ uttered from the cross in behalf of his murderers, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." This prayer was not "the prayer of faith," else Jerusalem would not have been destroyed and its people so terribly punished. Quite different was the definite prayer for Peter, that his faith might not fail. The apostle exhorts all Christians to make prayer and supplication for all men, for kings and governors, etc., but this is evidently not the prayer of faith, but the prayer of courtesy or of sympathy. Such prayers are right and proper in their place, but should never be confounded with the definite prayer we are considering. The power to use the prayer of faith is not distributed to all alike, for St. Paul tells us that to some is given faith by the Spirit, thus making them differ from others in their faith power, or in the use of the prayer of faith. Moreover, we are taught that the ability to use the prayer of faith does not necessarily connect itself with eminent piety, for Christ tells us that many at the last day will be found on the left hand who had been men of faith power—doing many mighty works in the name of Christ—and yet of whom it will be said by the Son of Man, I never knew you. Paul, in the 13th chapter of Corinthians, teaches that one might have this power in its intensest form and yet not be a Christian. From all of which we learn that the prayer of faith is a gift distributed, like the gift of prophesy of old, to men unequally, and not always in proportion to the piety of the recipients.

This is what gives the true significance

to the recommendation, in James, to the sick to call in the elders to pray for them, because the prayer of faith would recover them; and how should the prayer of faith be secured unless by calling in those who were known to have this faith power. *It does not teach that any party praying over the sick could certainly insure their recovery, but gives directions how best to secure the prayer of faith when practicable.*

Now this is just where modern Christians, as compared with those in the early days of Christianity, have largely failed to secure the benefits of this prayer of faith in sickness. It is not the only means within our reach for afflicted humanity. Who would think of depending wholly, or even in part, on the prayer of faith when an artery must be tied, or a broken limb set, or what Protestant would think of discarding vaccination because of James' directions concerning the use of the prayer of faith? But we maintain that, whilst general prayers for the sick are always in order, the prayer of faith in its relation to sickness has its distinctive place amongst God-ordained remedies, and should be sought after with even more eagerness and care than we evince in securing all possible assistance in the hour of deep affliction or threatened death.

And here is where the doctrine of Divine guidance proves itself of great practicable value. For if indwelt by the Spirit, and guided by Him into all truth, we are not only led to use, to the best advantage, the remedies within reach, or the skill of others, but also to use the prayer of faith ourselves when it is the will of God, or obtain the needed help of the faith of others.

The Father cannot be an example of Sonship. Only the Son can show what the son ought to be. In vain do I go to the Vedas or to Judaism to learn Sonship. That I learn at the feet of my sweet Christ, my Father's beloved Son. I go to my God to learn all about the Godhead. I go to my Christ to learn what a son ought to be. God teaches me Divinity. Christ teaches me humanity.

—Selected.