

INTRODUCTION

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by their power in the same way—by prayer and by a study of prayer.

In the Scriptures prayer-power is regarded as the universal inheritance of believers, the promised possession of saints, available to all and always available. It is not mentioned in the Decalogue, nor named among the New Testament gifts, but it is rather represented as an ideal condition to which the children of the King should aspire, an unceasing exercise which makes men the effective instruments of God. In fine, prayer as a spiritual power is possible to all, but for the office of teacher and leader, the minister requires, by spiritual endowment, natural gifts, and unusual culture, to become what is termed in other lines "a specialist" in his subject. May we, therefore, like His disciples of old, sit lowly at the Master's feet in loving filial reverence. May His Holy Spirit guide us—heart and mind and will—into all truth, and sanctify us unto all service. To that end may our study be a true "waiting on the Lord" in the hunger of expectant prayer. And may we tarry "until we be clothed with power from on high."

But on the very threshold of our study we are confronted by objections to the use of extemporaneous prayer in public worship, and though it may seem like a digression to refer to these here, it will not be fruitless to do so, inasmuch as we need, for an intelligent consideration of the subject, to have the whole field before us.