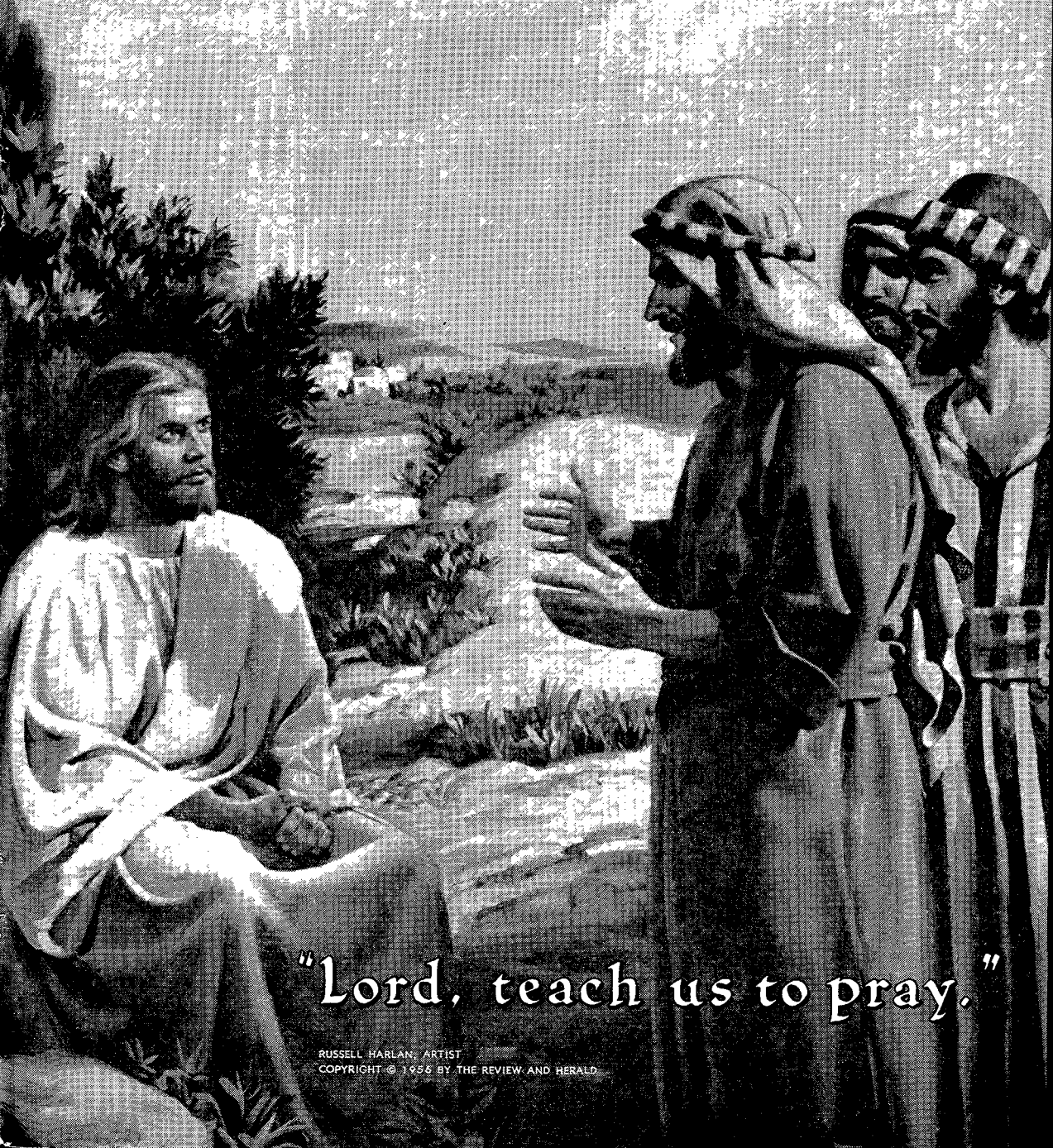


The

MINISTRY

OCTOBER

1964



"Lord, teach us to pray."

RUSSELL HARLAN, ARTIST
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Thoughts on Prayer

This morning my prayer to the Lord is for His rich grace. I never choose to begin a day without receiving special evidence that the Lord Jesus is my Helper, and that I have the rich grace that it is my privilege to receive.

In my morning devotions I have regarded it my privilege to close my petition with the prayer that Christ taught to His disciples. There is so much that I really must have to meet the needs of my own case that I sometimes fear that I shall ask amiss; but when in sincerity I offer the model prayer that Christ gave to His disciples I cannot but feel that in these few words all my needs are comprehended. This I offer after I have presented my special private prayer. If with heart and mind and soul I repeat the Lord's prayer, then I can go forth in peace to my work, knowing that I have not asked amiss. . . .

The scribes and the Pharisees often offered their prayers in the market places and in the streets of the cities. Christ called them hypocrites. In every age men have prayed "that they may be seen of men." . . . When Christ sees in His disciples errors that are liable to lead them astray, He always instructs them in the right way. He does not give an admonition without also giving an instructive lesson showing how to remedy the error. After instructing His disciples not to use "vain repetitions" in their prayers, in kindness and mercy He gave them a short sample prayer in order that they might know how to avoid imitating the prayers of the Pharisees. In giving this prayer, He knew that He was helping human infirmity by framing into words that which comprehends every human need. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought," but Christ's instruction to us is clear and definite.

[These paragraphs from Ellen G. White's diary, August 2, 1902, are taken from the 1965 Morning Watch book *That I May Know Him*, page 261.]

FEATURING

The School of Prayer

THIS issue emphasizes the recent plan known as the "School of Prayer." Those who developed this excellent program have been leaders in the work for years. What these faithful servants have done is to bring the art of praying within the grasp of everyone. There are no gimmicks, no tricks, just a simple organization of ideas and methods that brings prayer into tangible focus. The following concrete suggestions should be studied very carefully before trying them in your own churches.

The founding faculty of this plan—C. M. Mellor, A. L. Ham, T. G. Bunch, Mrs. Bunch, and Miss M. E. Dauphinee—developed a mimeographed book entitled *Communion With God*. It is composed mainly of Spirit of Prophecy statements. The Ministerial Association, in cooperation with the Ellen G. White Estate and with the permission of the above-named group, is sponsoring this inexpensive book, printed by the Pacific Press. *Communion With God* is on the press now and will be available soon through your local Book and Bible House. All who enroll in the School of Prayer should possess a copy. This will prove a wonderful blessing.

To make religion tangible and realistic is the difficult duty of every minister. This never has been an easy task. The scientific advance of the twentieth century has made it even more immense. Our world today is so visible, so touchable, so perceptible. An unwanted by-product of this materialistic age is the reduction of religion from the real to the fictitious.

As an illustration of this point, consider the act of praying. In the past, men like Lincoln fell to their knees imploring God

for guidance and strength if for no other reason than that there was no alternative. Today, man believes *he* can do something about impossible situations. With world leaders, the ultimate is not prayer, but orders that unleash rockets and armies. To stand still and know there is a God who still rules in the universe is too unrealistic. Furthermore, many who pray today do it in such a formal fashion that it means little or nothing. In fact, we heard that one minister, whose duties required much letter dictation, climaxed a public petition to God with the words, "Very sincerely yours"!

When the disciples came to our Lord with the plea, "Lord, teach us to pray," they felt a need. That need is evident today. Many of our precious members just don't know how to lay hold of the arm of God. This plan will certainly help them—and you too!

J. R. S.

Textbook used for School of Prayer

Communion With God

Available at
Your Book and Bible House

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The First School of Prayer

Early in September, 1962, C. M. Mellor, pastor of the Sanitarium church, St. Helena, California, made the unusual announcement that beginning October 3 and continuing for six consecutive Wednesday evenings a School of Prayer would be held in the sanctuary. After stating the purpose of this special school, with deep earnestness he urged all who could possibly do so to enroll as students. He invited them to submit in writing any questions on the subject of prayer that they wished answered.

That the announcement aroused an intense interest was indicated by the readiness with which a large number enrolled and by their faithful attendance at the meetings even when the weather was unfavorable. The attendance ranged from three hundred to four hundred and fifty.

The questions turned in revealed the same desire that I believe is in the hearts of God's people everywhere—the desire to learn to pray more

effectually. Many admit that they pray daily; they ask for many things, yet know little of direct, definite answers to their prayers.

The questions were answered from week to week in panel discussions or group meetings. However, the faculty did not trust to their own wisdom for the answers, but studied anew the instruction given by Him who taught the disciples to pray. Later, many of the references used in answering the questions were included in a devotional guide, *Communion With God*. Having obtained the answers this way, it is not strange, then, that one reader, after studying and meditating upon them, should say, "This is truly the wisdom of God." The words of the wise man came to her mind: "Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it."

What is accomplished by a School of Prayer, or any spiritual effort, can be determined best by



Faculty of School of Prayer, St. Helena, California. Left to right: Taylor G. Bunch, Mrs. Taylor G. Bunch, Charles M. Mellor, Miss Minnie Dauphinee, and Alan L. Ham.

the answer to the question "Was its influence lasting?"

Nearly two years have passed since the first School of Prayer was held, yet the mention of it to any who attended regularly always brings an appreciative response. "One of the important benefits I received from the School of Prayer," a friend wrote recently, "was the strengthening of my personal prayer life. Now I know the blessing that comes from kneeling in prayer, regardless of how rushed I am. I know, too, what it is to pray when I do not *feel* like praying." Another benefit mentioned was the renewed knowledge that the members of the church are praying men and women, and that the Holy Spirit can work through a praying church.

Many are continuing to make use of the devotional guide. This experience is typical of the experience of many others: "I cannot express how great a spiritual benefit the study of the book *Communion With God* has been to me. I have not only studied it, but I have marked it, and almost daily I go to it for some treasured thought to meditate upon."

Another evidence that the influence of the first School of Prayer is lasting is the fact that some of the voluntary prayer bands formed at that time continue to meet regularly. One band member said recently, "A great blessing awaits me each Monday morning as our little group of five meet. Each time I feel the presence of God as we study and pray together."

Surely the idea that prompted the conducting of the first School of Prayer was inspired of God. By what other method could so many aspects of prayer be made more plain, more impressive, and more interesting? In what better way could young people, as well as those older in years, be taught that the greatest of all needs is to know God, and to know that this need can be met by communing with Him in quietness? "The life of the soul, is God."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 441. "Prayer is the breath of the soul."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 254.

Since the Sanitarium church School of Prayer, many, myself included, have enjoyed a fellowship with Christ in prayer unknown before.

MINNIE E. DAUPHINEE

What Others Have Said

A pastor of one of our large churches writes: "One of the finest spiritual experiences of my life" was the essence of many comments made at the close of the six-day session of the School of Prayer conducted for our church. . . . The spirit of revival occasioned by this series will be felt among us for a long time to come."

A doctor writes: "I wish to express my appreciation for the service you have done me. I feel that I have been enriched, and through practicing what I have learned, will be better fitted to use my profession in the Lord's service."

A lady says: "It helped me to be more careful in secret prayer and to feel a greater nearness to the Lord."

One who attended our first School of Prayer says: "The good attendance at the School of Prayer is proof that God's people are longing for a closer walk with Him and that they have a desire to learn how to pray more effectively. This has impressed me and given me new courage."

A woman writes: "Prayer has a fuller meaning now. I never fully realized before, the many aspects of prayer and how much it can mean in our lives if we really give more time to it."

An elderly woman writes from central California: "My aunt sent me the book *Communion With God*. Our pastor has seen it and thinks it a very fine, carefully prepared series of studies. He would like very much to get a hold of some of them. He

thinks when the church members see one, they will want one also. . . . I am an old lady seventy years old. I have been an Adventist all my life. I have read all of these things, but somehow, having them grouped together makes them much more pointed. I am sure this book was dedicated to God. I can feel His Holy Spirit speaking to me personally as I read."

"During the School of Prayer I learned from experience what it means to have fellowship with Christ through communion with God," was stated by a respected church member.

Someone anticipating the latter rain wrote: "It has given me a deeper desire to be in a position that I may be ready to receive the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit when it is poured out."

A young person said: "I feel a greater urgency to pray. Prayer has become more of a joy and satisfaction. It has helped me to spend more time in prayer."

Others have made the following statements: "It has helped me to start having a quiet time, which I pray may be a habit and a real blessing to me." "It has satisfactorily met a real need in my experience. It was just what I had been longing for recently." "It has helped me to get back to the habit of regular private prayer and daily reading, aside from lesson study." "I've received many blessings. I've learned how to pray." "It has drawn me closer to my Saviour."

The Need of a Spiritual Revival

T. G. BUNCH

It is very appropriate that we begin this School of Prayer with a message on "The Need of a Spiritual Revival," because this is the greatest of all our needs and without it the gospel work can never be finished.

The spirit of revival has often visited individuals and the church down through the history of the reign of sin, but the Scriptures describe only two spiritual revivals accompanied by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in unlimited power. These are called the early and latter rains. The first began on the day of Pentecost when Christ entered upon His priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, and the second will be just before the close of probation and the finishing of His mediatorial work, when under the visitation of the Holy Spirit the work will be finished and cut short in righteousness.

Since the early rain visitation of power was typical of the latter rain, we will first briefly discuss that experience and its marvelous results. The revival and reformation in the lives of the 120 in the upper room prepared the way for the work of Pentecost. In only ten days their lives were completely changed and they experienced the promises of Christ which He made just before He ascended to heaven, as recorded in Acts 1:4-8. This had been the chief burden of Christ for His disciples: "Christ, the Great Teacher, had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of the Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment. Yet what subject is less dwelt upon now? What promise is less fulfilled? An occasional discourse is given upon the Holy



Retired Minister
Lodi, California

Spirit, and then the subject is left for after consideration."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 156, 157. The time has come when this latter situation must be changed.

What wonderful things happened during the early rain. "More were converted by one sermon on the day of Pentecost than were converted during all the years of Christ's ministry. So mightily will God work when men give themselves to the control of the Spirit."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Acts 2:1-4, 14, 41, p. 1055. Only about five hundred became Christians during these three and one-half years, but three thousand were baptized as the result of Peter's first sermon, and we are told that as the result of his second sermon "many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). This number doubtless means besides women and children, which could mean from ten to twelve thousand in all. In this sermon Peter made the wonderful statement recorded in Acts 3:19-21. Verse 19 reads in the Weymouth translation: "Repent, therefore, and reform your lives, so that the record of your sins may be cancelled, and that there may come seasons of refreshment from the Lord."

In Colossians 1:23, which was written in A.D. 64, we are told that at that time the gospel had been "preached to every creature which is under heaven." It thus took them only thirty-one years to fulfill the gospel commission. This was possible only because of the gift of the Holy Spirit in the showers of early rain. Bible students estimate that from six to ten million became Christians during this brief period. This, of course, was a "little flock" compared with

the inhabitants of the world. But we must remember that at that time there were no steamships, railroad trains, automobiles, airplanes, printing presses, radios, television, and other modern means of travel and communication which contribute so much to the proclamation of the gospel.

We are assured that the latter rain will be greater and far more productive than the early rain. The following are samples of the many statements that could be quoted: "The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 611, 612.

As with the early rain, the latter rain will come only in answer to earnest and persevering prayer. This is stated in Zechariah 10:1, and in the following quotations: "A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. . . . There should be earnest searching of heart. There should be united, persevering prayer, and through faith a claiming of the promises of God."—Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 22, 1887, p. 178. "The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it."—*Ibid.*, March 19, 1895, p. 178. "Meetings should be held in every church for solemn prayer. . . . Take the promises of God, and ask God in living faith for the outpouring of his Holy Spirit. . . . The Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere request. . . . Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain."—*Ibid.*, Feb. 25, 1890, p. 113.

Doubtless the greatest appeal for earnest prayer for the needed revival of spiritual power is found in *Selected Messages*, book 1, page 121. Here are a few of the appeals: "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our

work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer."

In *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 392, we are told that the latter rain will "come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power." Also, on pages 174, 175, we are told that "this promised blessing, if claimed by faith, would bring all other blessings in its train," and that this power awaits our demand and reception. On page 300 it is stated that "when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard" and "when light goes forth to lighten the earth" "God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands," and that "the workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness."

In Revelation 18:1-5 is a description of the loud cry which calls all of God's true people out of spiritual Babylon. On page 390 in *The Great Controversy* we read: "Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion. . . . The time will come when those who love God supremely can no longer remain in connection with such as are 'lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.' . . . Then the light of truth will shine upon all whose hearts are open to receive it, and all the children of the Lord that remain in Babylon will heed the call, 'Come out of her My people.'" And again we are assured that "every truly honest soul will come to the light of truth" (*ibid.*, p. 522). In the same volume we read: "In the issue of the contest, all Christendom will be divided into two great classes,—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark."—Page 450. During the latter rain "many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time, to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming" (*ibid.*, p. 464).

In the book *Evangelism*, page 700, we read: "The Spirit is poured out upon all who will yield to its promptings, and . . .

they will declare the truth with the might of the Spirit's power. Multitudes will receive the faith and join the armies of the Lord." The messenger of the Lord states that during the final crisis "as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe," "tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God" (*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 41). "God has His agents, even among the rulers and some of them will yet be converted to the truth" who "are now acting the part that God would have them."—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 203.

"Some who are numbered among merchants and princes will take their position to obey the truth. God's eye has been upon such as they have acted according to the light they have had, maintaining their integrity."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Acts 10:1-6, p. 1060. "When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 401.

"Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 638.

"Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, . . . God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. . . . The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine. What strange work Elijah would have done in numbering Israel at the time when God's judgments were falling upon the backsliding people! He could

count only one on the Lord's side. But when he said, 'I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life,' the word of the Lord surprised him, 'Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal.' Then let no man attempt to number Israel to-day, but let every one have a heart of flesh, a heart of tender sympathy, a heart that, like the heart of Christ, reaches out for the salvation of a lost world."—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 188, 189.

The above divinely inspired counsel constitutes a rebuke to those who attempt to limit the number to be saved at any time, and especially in the last days. We must not forget the statement previously quoted that in the final crisis "as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe . . . tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God." Tribes are larger than companies. In *Early Writings*, page 271, we read: "My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. . . . The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their places were immediately filled by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks." The Lord will work so that the disaffected ones will be separated from the true and loyal ones. Those who, like Cornelius, fear God and glorify Him will take their places.

That God's love cannot permit a limit to the number to be saved when the gospel is proclaimed is evident from the following scriptures: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:3, 4). "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

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If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

—*Thoreau*.

How the School of Prayer Is Conducted

CHARLES M. MELLOR

In planning a School of Prayer first it must be decided how many meetings should make up the series. Our experience has demonstrated that it takes at least six one-and-a-half hour sessions to present the various aspects of prayer.

It must be kept in mind that the School of Prayer is not a preaching mission but rather a teaching process where time is given for audience and panel participation. The presentation of the main topic takes thirty-five minutes, while forty minutes are devoted either to group discussions, the answering of questions by a panel, or some type of audience participation. Ten minutes are allowed for the opening exercises—the singing of a hymn, public prayer, announcements, and when necessary, the taking of an expense offering.

Ideally, there should be three to five persons who make up the leadership or faculty of the school. In the larger churches it should be rather easy to find capable personnel. Of course, it is understood that the pastor or district leader is the director. He might choose others to help him, such as an intern, an assistant minister, a retired minister, a Bible instructor, a church school or academy teacher, a dedicated doctor, or some talented layman. It is important that the very best help possible be selected.

In isolated areas where there are two leaders in adjoining districts, with the permission of the conference president they might combine their resources and unite in conducting Schools of Prayer in the various churches in both districts. It is apparent that any idea must be adapted to the area in which a School of Prayer is conducted, and to the personnel available.

When the members of the faculty have



Pastor
Sanitarium Church
St. Helena, California

been selected, it is imperative that they meet together. After an earnest season of prayer petitioning the Lord for His guidance and for an outpouring of His Holy Spirit, careful plans must be formulated, topics assigned, and material distributed. Also, a plan of advertising and promotion to attract all the members of the church or churches involved must be made.

The faculties of the Schools of Prayer have discovered that one of the choice blessings of the whole project is received from a weekly meeting together for an hour or two when a careful planning of the next meeting is made and a season of prayer is offered. By sharing ideas and materials together, many practical and spiritual insights are found. The weekly meetings of the leaders bring a spirit of unity and preparedness that is a real asset to the total project.

The ideal time to conduct the School of Prayer is once a week. This can be done at the regular midweek service or might even make a profitable Sabbath afternoon project.

Conducting it once a week gives each person days in between sessions to grow in his prayer life. This growth takes place when he daily puts into practice the science of prayer.

The School of Prayer idea has also proved successful in a week of meetings. In Mountain View, California, the school was started on a Sabbath afternoon and continued each evening thereafter, Sunday through Thursday. It also has been found a most spiritual project to be given at a camp meeting where six meetings are scheduled. It is thrilling to see how the people rally to such a presentation, for it is the

yearning of everyone to learn to pray more effectually.

The question is often asked our group, "Would you give an outline of each session of the School of Prayer?" Let us remember that we are trying to learn the larger meaning and scope of prayer. A brief outline of our six meetings is as follows:

The first meeting. The subject presented is "The Need of a Spiritual Revival." The speaker emphasizes the dire need of the Holy Spirit in the church and the promises of the latter rain. Also a definition of prayer is given. There is an avalanche of material both in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy writings telling us what the Holy Spirit will do for those who become open channels of His grace. The only way to receive is to ask. Thus prayer is an important link in receiving power. But how can the church have this power when the largest percentage has not a vital and living connection with God? The last forty-five minutes are spent in a discussion of "What I want from the School of Prayer." First the panel discusses this question and then it is given to the congregation for consideration. The meeting is closed with a short season of prayer.

The second meeting. The presentation is entitled, "The Preparation and Discipline for Prayer." In this talk some of the barriers of prayer are enumerated. Then some of the "musts" of prayer are presented, such as finding a time and place to pray, the necessity of reading the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy for enrichment, and the importance of self-examination and heart searching. The last forty-five minutes of the session are spent in discussion groups. The congregation is divided into several groups and each discusses an important question on prayer. The last fifteen minutes of the evening are given over to the receiving of a two- or three-minute report from each section as to the conclusions each group reached.

The third meeting. The subject is "Types of Prayer." Many prayers are limited to asking for things and favors. But prayer is much larger in scope. All prayer must begin with God—the prayer of reverence and adoration. Then there is the prayer of thanksgiving, confession, intercession, petition, and commitment. The second half of the service is devoted to the answering of questions on prayer. This is

done by a panel made up of the faculty of the School of Prayer. These questions come from the Question Box or from a list of questions the faculty feels should be considered. The panel members are given the questions they are to answer beforehand, so they can give thought and preparation to their presentations. The moderator must not allow any panel member to go over five minutes lest the interest lag. There ought to be an exchange in the discussion of the questions by the various members of the panel.

The fourth meeting. The subject is "Conditions of Prayer and Prayer for Healing." This is a most important presentation as it involves the conditions of answered prayer. Some of these conditions are outlined in the book *Steps to Christ*. There is much valuable material in *The Ministry of Healing* and *Communion With God* under Lessons 22 to 27. The last half of the evening is given over to group discussions similar to the second meeting. Reports of the conclusions reached by each group are given during the last fifteen minutes.

The fifth meeting. One session is devoted to a practical presentation of "Public and Family Worship." Instruction is given as to the manner and length of public prayer. This will be a most profitable subject to discuss with our members, for much improvement needs to be made in our churches along these lines. Then, too, family worship is considered. Who should be in charge and how it should be conducted are discussed. During the last forty-five minutes a motion picture film is shown entitled *Faith of Our Families*, which is one of the most graphic presentations of the various ways family worship may be conducted. You can obtain this either from the Pacific Union Supply Company, P.O. Box 146, Glendale 5, California, or from any other recognized religious film distributor. If a motion picture projector is not available, then the last section could be profitably used in a panel and congregational discussion on "How I Conduct Family Worship." You will be amazed at the valuable suggestions made by the audience.

The sixth meeting. The last subject presented is "Power Through Prayer Groups." By this time everyone who has attended the School of Prayer has received a great spiritual blessing and many express how much they wish that it could continue. The technique and advantage of praying in

groups are presented in *Testimonies*, volume 7, pages 21, 22: "Why do not believers feel a deeper, more earnest concern for those who are out of Christ? Why do not two or three meet together and plead with God for the salvation of some special one, and then for still another? . . . The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err." These groups come together for the purpose of study, sharing, and prayer. The last forty-five minutes is spent in answering questions on prayer by the faculty panel. Usually at the final service a questionnaire is distributed to the congregation asking each person to make a statement on "What the School of Prayer has meant to me, and what impressed me most."



How to Conduct a Discussion Period

IN THE past few decades church leaders have learned the value of group discussion. It is a scientific fact that the process of learning is greatly increased by a democratic discussion of a problem of general concern. By frank and free discussion the subject under consideration can be personalized in a practical manner when often the best prepared discourse may fail to reach the heart.

In our experience with several Schools of Prayer the discussion groups have proved to be one of the most popular features. Practical insights are gained and good conclusions are reached when ear-

nest seekers discuss some of the real issues of Christianity.

The congregation is divided into four or five sections, depending upon how many are in attendance. Usually each group has from twenty to seventy members. However, the group dynamics are better when the number is small. Care must be exercised in making up the groups to be sure there are several persons in each section who are able to speak on a given topic and who will tend to encourage others to enter into the discussion. It is best to group persons according to their interests as far as possible. We have discovered, for example, that young people like to have their own group, as they tend to communicate more readily if among their peers. The elderly who find it rather difficult to walk or go up and down stairs are placed in the section meeting in the sanctuary.

The main reason for asking all to register for the School of Prayer is so that their names will be available when the groups are formed. Each group must have a leader, preferably one of the faculty, and a secretary who will make a two-minute report to the whole congregation when all reassemble to hear the conclusions each group has reached.

It has been our plan to mimeograph the name of each person alphabetically under the group he is to attend. Also the place where the section will meet is listed. The leader and subject is not mentioned before the whole congregation, thus preventing people moving from group to group because of special interests. The mimeographed list is handed to each person attending the school, which saves precious time that would be consumed in trying to organize from the pulpit. Those not listed are invited to attend any group they wish.

It is the task of the leader of the group to announce the topic to be discussed and give a few statements to act as thought provokers to encourage discussion. He is not to give an authoritative presentation on the subject. He is to encourage the group to discuss the topic. Ask questions that cannot be answered by Yes or No. Encourage people to talk. No one person should be allowed to dominate the group. Keep communication and discussion going. At the end it is wise for the leader to summarize and add any comment he thinks should be made. Be sure to appoint a secretary at the beginning of the discussion to give the re-

port of the conclusions reached when the whole congregation reassembles.

Ten discussion questions we have used in our Schools of Prayer, plus some seed thoughts suggesting possible answers, are:

1. *Why pray if God already knows our needs?* Some excellent quotations and thoughts from the Spirit of Prophecy writings are to be found in the devotional guide *Communion With God*, Lesson 20.

2. *How can one pray when he doesn't feel like praying?* *The Index to the Writings of E. G. White*, volume 1, pages 793, 794, lists a number of causes for despondency, such as idleness, lack of appreciation, jealousy, overwork, reviewing past failure, too much leisure time, Satan's accusations, diseases and sickness, et cetera. We are all subject to depression, discouragement, and gloom as is illustrated in the experience of Elijah. We are counseled not to be ruled by feeling but by principle. Some choice quotations on "Feeling Not a Criterion" are to be found in *Communion With God*, Lesson 21.

3. *When we pray how may we know what is or is not God's will?* *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 512, suggests "three ways in which the Lord reveals His will to us." Other quotations are to be found in *Communion With God*, Lesson 39, under the subject "How May We Know God's Will?"

4. *What is meant by agonizing in prayer?* Two lessons, 34 and 35, are given in the devotional guide *Communion With God* on this subject. This should give excellent background material for a lively discussion.

5. *Why does God delay answers to prayer?* Turn to *Communion With God*, Lesson 27. Another excellent statement is the last paragraph in *The Desire of Ages*, page 200.

6. *Does God change as a result of our prayers?* See Hebrews 13:8, Ecclesiastes 3:14, and James 1:17. "Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 417. "Prayer is not primarily to get from God what a man wants, but rather to make man satisfied with what he has. It is not necessarily to relieve him from pain, but to give him grace to bear it; it is not to attempt to have God change His mind, but to have man ac-

cept God's mind. Prayer is not an endeavor to outline some plan of action for God to follow, but to ascertain what God's plan is and acquiesce in it; it is not to ask that God's will be *changed*, but that God's will be *done*. The chief aim of prayer is for the supplicant to come so completely into harmony with God that God's will becomes his."—M. L. ANDREASEN, *Prayer*, p. 49. (Read the whole chapter "Does God Change?" pages 47-52.)

7. *I have prayed for many years without results. Why continue?* Read Lesson 17 in *Communion With God*. A thrilling statement is to be found in *Steps to Christ*, page 96, second paragraph.

8. *What is the real meaning of praying without ceasing?* "Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 98. "The Christian can not always be in the position of prayer, but his thoughts and desires can always be upward."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Prov. 4:23, p. 1157. How explicit are the Lord's instructions as to certain times to pray? In the night (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1026); before we rise in the morning (*My Life Today*, p. 15); when we rise (*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 109); hourly (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 48); in every difficulty (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 667); when discouraged (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 513); about our work (*Gospel Workers*, p. 258); when tempted (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1155).

9. *How can one get into the spirit of prayer?* Some most practical suggestions are given in *Communion With God*, Lesson 41, "Getting Into the Spirit of Prayer." This would be a good topic for young people to discuss.

10. *How may we be certain it is God who answers prayer?* First, you will want to read the material in *Communion With God*, Lesson 50, "Counterfeit Answers to Prayer." We must remember that Satan can answer prayer. He gives impressions to those who pray according to their own inclinations regardless of God's will (*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 72). Our only safeguards against Satan: (1) Build ourselves in the faith (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 297); (2) the presence of Jesus (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 341); (3) a correct understanding of the Scriptures vital (*Evangelism*, p. 249).

C. M. M.

Cultivating the "Quiet Time"

THE School of Prayer is exactly what the name implies—a systematic study of the science of prayer with a confrontation of the larger aspects and dimensions of prayer. The theme "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1) is uppermost in the hearts of all who attend. Learning the larger meaning of prayer is emphasized from the pulpit, in round-table discussions, in group meetings, and in answering the many written questions.

The chief burden of the School of Prayer is not public worship or family devotions, but for the individual Christian to set a "quiet time" when he alone communes with God. The importance of daily private devotions is emphasized by the pen of inspiration: "We should pray in the family circle; and above all we must not neglect secret prayer; for this is the life of the soul. It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is neglected. Family or public prayer alone is not sufficient. In solitude let the soul be laid open to the inspecting eye of God. Secret prayer is to be heard only by the prayer-hearing God."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 98.

Some of the finest statements in the English language on the subject of prayer are to be found in the writings of Ellen G. White. Many of these choice quotations have been compiled into fifty-three devotional readings in a book entitled *Communion With God*. Each church member is invited to carefully schedule a period in the day when he can spend some time alone with God in reading, meditation, and prayer. To enrich his quiet time it is suggested that he read one lesson in the book *Communion With God* meditatively and thoughtfully each day. Next, the reader is to ponder the gems presented, asking him-

self, "Lord, how can I apply this to my own life?" Then reverently, upon his knees, the Christian is to enter one of the most thrilling experiences permitted to man—talking to God as to a friend.

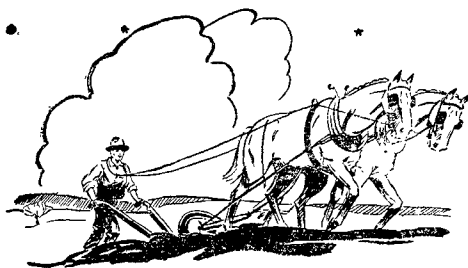
The School of Prayer receives immediate momentum by every member of the church beginning to read the book *Communion With God* on a specified day. This is helpful to any who may have a tendency to procrastinate.

The heart of the program is to encourage all to spend some time each day in reading, meditation, and prayer. This gives the School of Prayer its greatest spiritual thrust. Even those who find it impossible to attend the regular meeting, but who will use the devotional guide to enrich their quiet time, will receive a blessing. Good results are sure to follow when a large percentage of the church is united in a systematic plan of study and prayer.

Along with the initial advertising of a School of Prayer it is imperative that each church member be encouraged to purchase a copy of the devotional guide, *Communion With God*. The home missionary secretary of the church should order an ample supply so that every family in the church can purchase a copy for use during the School of Prayer. It would be disastrous to the program if the necessary books were not available. Experience in conducting several Schools of Prayer has shown that many of the church members will want to purchase extra copies for friends and relatives.

It is not what people hear and see at the regular meetings of the School that is so significant, but what they experience when kneeling during their "quiet time." "Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. . . . Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God."—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 254, 255.

C. M. M.





How to Promote the School of Prayer

THE School of Prayer may be an excellent idea with possibilities to begin a spiritual revival, but unless it is promoted wisely, many earnest seekers for truth may never realize its significance. Such a project should be planned far enough ahead so as to give time for adequate publicity.

First, six weeks prior to the time the School of Prayer is scheduled, frequent mention should be made from the pulpit and during the announcement period that such a venture is to take place. Talk it up as something important.

Every member should receive an invitation to attend. This can be done either through a mimeographed pastoral letter or by means of the regular parish paper. It can be headlined in such a way as to give adequate information so all will understand what is to take place. An active congregation is one that is informed.

In the several Schools of Prayer conducted by our group we have had printed a three-paneled announcement, the cover of which features the "praying hands of Christ" and announcing the date and the place of the school. On the first two panels on the inside an announcement of the six meetings listing the topics to be featured is given. The final panel is an application to attend the School of Prayer. Knowing the names of those planning to attend the School of Prayer, it is an easy task to divide the congregation into groups for discussion. On the back of the application is space to write a question on prayer. The middle panel on the back of the card features the book *Communion With God*. This three-paneled card is placed in the church bulle-

tin the week before the School of Prayer starts. It can also be included in the pastoral letter.

On the Sabbath preceding the first meeting of the School of Prayer a special announcement is featured in the church bulletin. Two items are emphasized: First, every family is urged to purchase a copy *Communion With God*. Second, all are asked to be sure to turn in the application card expressing their intention of attending the meetings.

On this Sabbath the worship sermon is on the topic of prayer. This sermon is to create a desire in the mind of every church member to pray the prayer of the disciples of old, "Lord, teach us to pray," and to create a desire in the people to want to attend the sessions in order to study the science of prayer. This is an important sermon, for it will do more than anything else to sell the congregation on the necessity of attending the special series of meetings to be held in the church.

C. M. M.



Prayer at Eventide

Heavenly Father . . .

Humbly I come to Thee tonight,
Seeking compassion in Thy sight;
This day has seemed so long, somehow;
Give me strength I pray, just now.

Forgive me, Lord, for being weak;
Help me always to be meek;
Teach me patiently to wait, and
Give me grace to understand.

Though I am weary, yet I know
From Thy hand great blessings flow;
Thou dost lead this path I trod—
This my peace and comfort, God!

Look well within my inmost heart
And cleanse the sin from every part;
Banish thoughts that should not be;
Impart Thy holy purity.

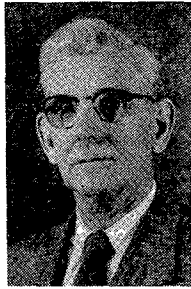
When the day seems dreary, long,
Give me courage and a song;
Guide me all along the way
Till I shall see Thy face one day.

ELIZABETH LOCKE



Conditions of Answered Prayer

A. L. HAM



Retired Leader
Angwin, California

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9).

How does God fulfill this promise? Do the answers to our requests depend upon us? Do the answers depend wholly upon God? Must we convince Him of our needs? If He does not agree with us as to the importance of our needs, can our prayers change His mind? We are told that God is more eager to give than we are to receive. Then do we need to change God's mind, or change our approach to Him?

Does prayer in any real sense bring us into possession of the power of God? From personal experience we can answer confidently, Yes, it certainly does! "Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary, in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 93.

There is no uncertainty about God's desire to have us come to Him with all our needs. He admonishes us, "'Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith.'"—*Early Writings*, p. 73. There are four important fundamental principles that govern the prayer of petition: (1) A sense of our great need, (2) a strong, unwavering faith, (3) a full and complete surrender, (4) submission to God's will concerning what is best for us when He does not give what we request.

God's Promises Never Fail

"Every prayer which is sent up in faith . . . will be . . . answered."—*Testimonies*,

vol. 1, p. 121. "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Could any words be plainer than these? "When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 96.

God Gives What Is Best

When we say that God answers every true prayer we do not claim that He always answers in the very way and for the particular thing that we request. To make such a claim would be presumption (see *Steps to Christ*, p. 96).

"God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly."—*Ibid.* "Man is erring, and although his petitions are sent up from an honest heart, he does not always ask for the things that are good for himself, or that will glorify God. When this is so, our wise and good Father hears our prayers, and will answer, sometimes immediately; but He gives us the things that are for our best good and His own glory. . . . Nothing hurtful is given, but the blessing we need, in the place of something we asked for that would not be good for us, but to our hurt."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 120, 121.

What a comfort it is to know that our heavenly Father always gives what is for our highest good—"that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened we could see all things as they really are" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 96).

Every Promise Conditional

"There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers."—*Ibid.*, p. 95. We are accountable for knowing these conditions. Among the conditions are these:

1. Faith is essential. Jesus says, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt. 9:29). "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). The story is told of a drought in England. A few Christian farmers who believed in prayer asked their minister to call for a special meeting to pray for rain. The day set for prayer was bright and cloudless. Among those who attended the meeting was little Mary who carried with her an umbrella. When asked why she brought an umbrella on such a lovely day, she said: "I thought since we were going to pray for rain I would be sure to need an umbrella." Mary and the minister went home together under the umbrella, while the rest of the congregation got well drenched. Our instruction from the Lord is: "Talk and act as if your faith was invincible" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147).

2. Obedience required. "And whatever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22). "Only as we live in obedience to His word can we claim . . . His promises."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 227.

3. Confession necessary. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps. 66:18). "He [the Lord] waits with unwearied love to hear the confessions of the wayward and to accept their penitence."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 84.

4. Deep earnestness needed. "When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer 'exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.'"—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147.

5. We must cooperate with God by answering our own prayers as far as possible. This admonition, while addressed to youth, is for all ages: "While you pray, dear youth, that you may not be led into temptation, remember that your work does not end with the prayer. You must then answer your own prayer as far as possible by resist-

ing temptation, and leave that which you cannot do for yourselves for Jesus to do for you."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 378. Our prayers must be stamped with our own efforts. For instance, if one prays for health, he should cooperate with the Lord by observing the laws of health.

How God Answers Prayer

Prayer opens the channel through which the Holy Spirit can operate to bring to pass the answer to our requests. Illustrations of this in the Lord's work and in the experience of individuals are seen daily. For instance, there is great need for a worker in a certain field. The Holy Spirit impresses just the right individual to offer his services. Another example—a student has a pressing financial need in order to remain in college. He tells no one of his need. One who lives many miles away is impressed to send him just the amount needed. Thus God often answers prayer through the cooperation of others—perhaps a minister, a doctor, a parent, a friend; or through a revival service, or a rescue from physical danger.

God answers prayer by various methods. He does not limit His ways to miraculous or spectacular means. Sometimes He uses angels. We read in *Testimonies*, volume 3, pages 363, 364, this impressive statement: "When you rise in the morning, do you feel your helplessness and your need of strength from God? and do you humbly, heartily make known your wants to your heavenly Father? If so, angels mark your prayers, and if these prayers have not gone forth out of feigned lips, when you are in danger of unconsciously doing wrong and exerting an influence which will lead others to do wrong, your guardian angel will be by your side, prompting you to a better course, choosing your words for you, and influencing your actions."

Prayer for the Sick "A Most Solemn Act"

During Christ's earthly ministry "He was just as ready to lay His hands in healing on the sick and afflicted as He was to preach the gospel" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 238). "The disciples in this time are to pray for the sick as verily as the disciples of old prayed. And recoveries will follow; for 'the prayer of faith shall save the sick.'"—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 226. "But the offering of such prayer is a most solemn act, and should not be entered upon without

careful consideration.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 215.

How to Pray

“In prayer for the sick it should be remembered that ‘we know not what we should pray for as we ought.’ . . . We do not know whether the blessing we desire will be best or not. Therefore our prayers should include this thought: ‘Lord, Thou knowest every secret of the soul. Thou art acquainted with these persons. Jesus, their Advocate, gave His life for them. His love for them is greater than ours can possibly be. If, therefore, it is for Thy glory and the good of the afflicted ones, we ask, in the name of Jesus, that they may be restored to health. If it be not Thy will that they may be restored, we ask that Thy grace may comfort and Thy presence sustain them in their sufferings.’ . . .

“(God) knows whether those for whom prayer is offered would or would not be able to endure the trials that would come upon them should they live. He knows whether their lives would be a blessing or a curse to themselves and to the world. This is one reason why, while presenting our petitions with earnestness, we should say, ‘Nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done.’ . . . Jesus added these words of submission to the wisdom and will of God when in the Garden of Gethsemane He pleaded, ‘O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.’ . . . And if they were appropriate for Him, the Son of God, how much more are they becoming on the lips of finite, erring mortals!”—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 229, 230. “Our petitions must not take the form of a command.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 379.

Not All to Be Healed

“Not all the sick are healed. Many are laid away to sleep in Jesus.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 218. “The Lord has often instructed me that many little ones are to be laid away before the time of trouble.”—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 259.

Satan Will Work Miracles

“Men under the influence of evil spirits will work miracles. They will make people sick by casting their spell upon them, and will then remove the spell, leading others to say that those who were sick have

been miraculously healed. This Satan has done again and again. We need not be deceived. Wonderful scenes, with which Satan will be closely connected, will soon take place.”—*Ibid.*, p. 53. “These [men under the influence of evil spirits] may profess to be followers of Christ, but they have lost sight of their Leader. They may say, ‘Lord, Lord’; they may point to the sick who are healed through them, and to other marvelous works, and claim that they have more of the Spirit and power of God than is manifested by those who keep His law. But their works are done under the supervision of the enemy of righteousness, whose aim it is to deceive souls, and are designed to lead away from obedience, truth, and duty.”—*The S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Rev. 13:13, 14, pp. 975, 976.

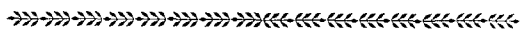
A Question Answered

Some people ask, “Why do other denominations seem to have more power in healing the sick than do Seventh-day Adventists?”

Our reply is that the gift of healing through faith, prayer, and anointing, has been manifested throughout our church history. The sick have been healed according to the promise of James 5:14, 15. But the glory has been given to God alone. No man has been publicized or glorified as a “faith healer.” We have the assurance that the gift of healing will continue to be manifested in the remnant church till the work on earth is finished (see *Great Controversy*, p. 612).

Not only has God healed many through faith, prayer, and anointing, but “His presence in our institutions has been a savor of life unto life. . . . Wonderful has been the working out of God’s plan [for healing] in the establishment of so many health institutions.”—*Medical Ministry*, p. 25.

Truly God has done great things for His people through the gift of healing!



“Among the first to catch Nehemiah’s spirit of zeal and earnestness were the priests of Israel. . . . Thus should it be in every holy enterprise. . . . If they move reluctantly, others will not move at all. . . . When their light burns brightly, a thousand torches will be kindled at the flame.”—*Christian Service*, p. 175.

Objectives of the School of Prayer

RECENTLY there has come into the hearts of a great many of our church members a significant urgency concerning the need of a deeper experience in the things of the Spirit, a preparation for the trials and perils of the last days and for the soon coming of our Saviour. It is recognized that this preparation must come through prayer and complete dedication, study of the Bible and the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. There is a soul hunger and deep desire for a greater awareness of the presence of our Saviour with us. Yes, a new realization of the very necessity of prayer in personal, family, and church life.

It is to meet these needs of our people as well as ourselves that we conduct the Schools of Prayer. We realize that there must come a new power and dedication to enable us to live victoriously and witness convincingly to the power of the gospel. We cry out in our spiritual needs today as did the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray." We are instructed, "Let your heart break for the longing it has for God, for the living God. The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive with the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 149.

It is possible that even though we have been church members for months or years yet we may not have really become acquainted with God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We may not fully understand the angels' ministry in our

prayer life. Perhaps the Master would say to us as He did to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" (John 14:9). One of the greatest objectives of the School of Prayer is to help us become really acquainted with God. This acquaintance is essential to our salvation. Said Jesus in His memorable prayer, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

Many who have attended the Schools of Prayer have experienced a new vision and spiritual enlightenment from their fellowship in communion with God such as Job experienced after his direct communion with God: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee" (Job 42:5). Following the readings in the book *Communion With God* and observing the personal prayer season daily will bring to each person an intimate experience and joy in fellowship with the Master. One who has attended a School of Prayer has testified, "It has helped me to have a more vivid sense of the nearness of God when I pray." To attain to this experience is an important objective in conducting these important and profitable Schools of Prayer.

Other contributing objectives are the following: (a) to understand in a larger measure the science of prayer; (b) to recognize more fully the essentials of intelligent praying; (c) to lead to the establishment (or re-establishment) of a pattern or program of personal devotion; (d) to have regular prayer and study of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy; (e) to see the importance of family devotions and learn how best to conduct them.

The School of Prayer endeavors to answer many questions in the minds of our people regarding how prayer is answered, the conditions of answered prayer, and what is presumptuous prayer. Many other kindred questions are dealt with in panel and group discussions. It is well to keep in mind always this wonderful statement, "Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 94, 95. Let us learn how to use the "key" properly and successfully. These are the objectives of the School of Prayer.

A. L. H.

THE MINISTRY

Types and Moods of Prayer

MRS. T. G. BUNCH

A School of Prayer for Seventh-day Adventists? Do we need a renewed and deeper comprehension of communion with God? Have we analyzed our motives in prayer? Why should we pray? Why do we pray? What is prayer?

The Bible tells us that sin has separated us from God and robbed us of the knowledge and understanding of His character. The Master sought to reveal the extent and tragedy of this gulf as He focused our attention on times when the separation reached its limits (during the reign of sin). (See Matthew 24:12, 37-39.)

"There was but one hope for the human race— . . . that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world. Christ came to restore this knowledge. . . . He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness. Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity."—*Education*, p. 76.

Reverence and Adoration

How earnestly the Master prayed, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Our first need, then, is personally to know God. Immediately comes to mind the text, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" (Job 11:7). This was spoken, not by Job but by one of his so-called "comforters." Job thought that he knew his Creator, but what blessings came when he really received a vision of God (Job 13:1-3; 23:3-5; 42:1-6)!

What is our concept of God? How do we approach Him in prayer? We read, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). The word "God" is an Anglo-Saxon word



Lodi, California

meaning wholeness, perfection, or completeness in goodness. We derive our word "good" from the same source. The Scriptures present many names and titles, given to lead us to know our Creator and Redeemer. Ancient Israel used the word "Jehovah," the existing One, and "Elohim," the living One. It is most rewarding to "be still" and recall, in quietness, the many titles in the Bible through which He seeks to reveal

Himself. Take a pencil and paper; write down and meditate on each name. Review and seek to share the effect a vision of God had on Moses, Isaiah, Paul, and many others.

"When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Luke 11:2). This name—Father—is perhaps the dearest and most revealing to man. There is, however, this to consider, that today some, yes many, are unimpressed. False standards, laxness in discipline, lack of respect for elders, overindulgence by many, and the busyness of life have robbed too many of what God intended to reveal about Himself in this name.

What is our concept of prayer? How do we approach Him in our prayers? While it is true that He invites us to come to Him as to a father, we must come in holy awe and reverence lest He cannot honor us with His presence. "Because of the irreverence in attitude, dress, and deportment, and lack of a worshipful frame of mind, God has often turned His face away from those assembled for His worship."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 499. Is this the reason so many prayers seem to go unanswered?

Praise and Thanksgiving

"Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and

give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness" (Ps. 97:12). "We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. We are the constant recipients of God's mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us. . . . The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. . . . Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with 'thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.'"—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 103, 104.

When we catch this vision of our God—His love, His gracious goodness, His majestic greatness—all our prayers will be cast into new and wonderful experiences. We will know what Paul experienced when he wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).

Repentance and Confession

Precious to every seeker after peace and righteousness is the promise, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). But how many fail to receive the fullness of the promise! True repentance and confession go much deeper than the sorrow and regrets over errors and faults committed. This would be merely the picking off of some leaves while the tree would bring forth more leaves. "Repentance, as well as forgiveness, is the gift of God through Christ."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 353. "We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 26. "True repentance is more than sorrow for sin. It is a resolute turning away from evil."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 557.

A knowledge of God, the privilege of heavenly citizenship and membership in the royal family of the universe, will make us "hate every false way" (Ps. 119:104). Our repentance and confession will be heart sorrow that we have denied our citizenship and royal heritage. Let us keep in mind that we are not asked merely to imitate the life of Christ. "The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

How do we approach God in prayer? Do we come in gladsome anticipation to be alone with Him? Are we the type of worshiper the Father is seeking? Many are puzzled over the statement of Christ in John 4:23, 24. While it is true that we can-

not fully know "how great is our God," we can understand His spirit and so participate in true worship. To worship in spirit means to choose God's way of life, emptied of all selfishness, to accept our rightful place in the family of heaven.

Petition and Intercession

Let us meditate on the word *petition*. Too often we assume this to mean intense, mournful pleading. The thought of "formal request" too seldom enters our meditations. True, "It is part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 525. Let us not think of this as a denial of blessings but rather that we may be made more conscious of our dependence and need. How often a loving parent conceals himself from the child to share the delight of the little one when he is discovered. God may deny Himself to us that we may have the greater joy in finding Him. "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37:4).

We must ever remember that "prayer is not intended to work any change in God; it brings us into harmony with God" (*Messages to Young People*, p. 248). God knows our every need and has promised to "do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). We are urged, "press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith."—*Early Writings*, p. 73. Little children are to be taught to "ask the Lord to help them in the little things of life" (*Child Guidance*, p. 31).

"If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'"—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 173. Such personal preparation and consecration prepare us for effective intercession.

Marvelous beyond our comprehension, "it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of

(Continued on page 28)

Prayer Preparation and Discipline

MINNIE E. DAUPHINEE

In His farewell address to His followers on the eve of His death, Jesus impressed upon them the importance of praying and believing that their prayers would be answered. "Whatever you ask the Father in My name," He said, "I will do—that the Son may bring glory to the Father. And if you ask Me anything in My name, I will grant it" (John 14:13, 14, Phillips).* To leave no room for misunderstanding or misinterpreting His meaning, six times in almost the same words He urged them to pray, and each time He assured them that their prayers would be answered.

Does this promise of Jesus still hold good? The answer is given in this message to the remnant church: "The same compassionate Saviour lives to-day, and He is as willing to listen to the prayer of faith as when He walked visibly among men. . . . It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 525.

God's promise to answer the prayer of faith does not mean that He will always answer in the way we expect, and give us exactly what we ask. But we can be certain that He will always answer in the way that is best, and give what will more than fulfill our "highest expectations."

God's promise to answer the prayer of faith holds good for little children as well as for those older in years. An eight-year-old girl had often been beaten by her Mohammedan grandfather for praying to Jesus. One day while walking on the city wall, he saw a company of bandits coming. In great fear he rushed home and said to the little girl, "You say that your God hears



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prayer." Pushing her into a room, he continued, "Go in there and pray that the soldiers won't come to our house." "Dear Jesus," she began, "thank You for making grandfather want me to pray that the soldiers won't come to our house. Now is the time, dear Lord, for You to show him that You do answer prayer. Thank You for keeping those soldiers away." The Lord answered her prayer of faith.

The soldiers came, but the leader could not make his horse enter the gate of that house.

A Place to Be Alone With God

God wants us to pray in family worship and in prayer meeting and in other public meetings. Such praying is important. But "above all we must not neglect secret prayer."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 98. No instruction which Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount is more important than this—everyone must have a place where he can be alone with God.

"When you pray, go into a room by yourself, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is there in the secret place; and your Father who sees what is secret will reward you" (Matt. 6:6, N.E.B.). †

This, of course, does not exclude our lifting our hearts in prayer as we go about our daily work, or wherever we are. But Jesus would have us follow His example by getting away from the sound of human voices to some place where we can be alone with God. His place of secret prayer was sometimes in the desert and sometimes on the mountain. God longs to speak to our hearts by His Holy Spirit. As we wait before Him in some secluded place, the

silence makes His voice more distinct. That is why He bids us, "*Be still, and know that I am God*" (Ps. 46:10).

"Know That I Am God"

We are invited to come to the "mercy seat" that we may "receive wisdom . . . to know God" (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 210). In no other place can this wisdom be found. "To know God" does not mean merely to have an educated mind but the knowledge that He abides in our hearts, "which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57). "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). A knowledge of the Father and Son are coupled together, for "it is only by knowing Christ that we can know God. . . . To know Christ savingly is to be vitalized by spiritual knowledge, to practice His words. Without this, all else is valueless" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on John 17:3, pp. 1145, 1146).

God sometimes permits trial to come to us that we may recognize our need of knowing Him. Many of our afflictions have been visited upon us "in the wisdom of God," to bring us "closer to the throne of grace" (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 143). Clarence Hawkes, the blind naturalist and poet, said, "God took away my eyes that my soul might see."

Unfortunately, among God's people are those who think that the main purpose of prayer is to receive the blessings they need. While God "is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668), yet He wants them to "desire not merely His blessing, but Himself" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 131).

Communing With God

The craving in our hearts to know God as Enoch knew Him has been placed there by the Holy Spirit. This craving is satisfied when we consecrate ourselves wholly to God and follow the example of Jesus by daily communing with Him. Early morning often found Him in some secret place where He had gone to meditate, to search the Scriptures, and to pray.

Meditation Influences Prayer

"The very first step in approaching God is to know and believe the love that He has

to us."—*Ibid.*, pp. 104, 105. What a thought for meditation on God's love is found in these words! "God loves those who are redeemed through Christ, even as He loves His son. . . . Can God love the sinner as He loves His own Son?—Yes; Christ has said it, and He means just what He says. He will honor all our drafts if we will grasp His promise by living faith, and put our trust in Him."—*Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 300.

If we will meditate upon Christ's life, upon His "infinite mercy and love," in the light of what they mean to us personally, "our faith and love will grow stronger, and our prayers will be more . . . acceptable to God" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 89).

Search the Scriptures

"We should come with reverence to the study of the Bible, feeling that we are in the presence of God."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 107. "The Bible is God's voice speaking to us, just as surely as though we could hear it with our ears."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 393. God's will for us personally is revealed in its promises, its commands, and its warnings. His will is also revealed in the Spirit of Prophecy writings, for we know that they are filled with "precious rays of light shining from the throne" (*ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 67).

As we earnestly study and listen to God's voice speaking to our hearts, we shall know how to pray according to His will and "answers will come."

Secret Prayer

What greater privilege could be ours than to have a never-failing Friend in whom we can confide the most hidden desires and longings of our hearts! Those experiences that cannot be shared with our closest earthly friends, He understands, and He assures us of grace to help in good time for every need. "Never does our merciful God turn from the soul that in sincerity seeks Him for help."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 225.

Secret prayer cannot be ineffectual or powerless, for Jesus said, "Thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward you openly." "Men may never know of the work going on secretly between the soul and God, but the result of the Spirit's work upon the heart will be manifest to all."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 88. How is the result of the Spirit's

work manifested to all? In our conversation, our conduct, our dress, and in all our affairs, it is revealed that Jesus is ruling our lives. (See *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 248.)

The knowledge that Jesus is now before the throne of God to receive our prayers and present them to the Father and that the Holy Spirit is constantly interceding in our behalf should make us determined to let nothing, however important, keep us from spending time daily in communion with God.

Unanswered Prayer

If our prayers are not answered, the fault is with us, and not with God. He promises to answer if we comply with the conditions upon which the promises are based. The prophet Isaiah makes very plain the reason why the prayers of some are not answered. He says, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59: 1, 2).

How earnestly we should search our hearts before God as David did. Sin is subtle. It is often hidden in some habit, or feeling, or motive. God would have us know that even one cherished sin or one wrong habit mars the character and separates the soul from God. He would have us know, too, that while He will not excuse sin in us, He will forgive if we sincerely ask Him. "He waits with unwearied love to hear the confessions of the wayward and to accept their penitence."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 84.

We should not delay coming to Him in the secret place of prayer. "The One . . . who hears all penitential prayers and confessions . . . is soon to cease His work in the heavenly sanctuary. Grace and mercy will then descend from the throne."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Rev. 22:10-12, p. 989.

We should rejoice not only that He has made provision through the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, but "He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall

be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 311).

Confession, repentance, turning away from sin—this is the essential preparation for receiving answers to our prayers.

Our First Duty

"An intensity such as never before was seen is taking possession of the world. . . . In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking. He bids us come apart and commune with Him. . . . Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine Teacher."—*Education*, p. 260.

A great controversy is going on between Christ and Satan over our souls—a battle as real as any battle between the nations of earth. Satan does not object to our taking part in public or family prayer, but he trembles when he sees us in secret prayer. He hears our earnest prayers, and doubles his efforts to keep us too busy to pray. He "well knows that all whom he can lead to neglect prayer and the searching of the Scriptures will be overcome by his attacks" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 519).

The Lord's admonition to us personally is: "If you expect salvation, you must pray. Take time."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 159. "Pray much. . . . Without it you cannot maintain a Christian walk."—*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 313.

Shall we not heed God's admonition and discipline ourselves so that we may make prayer our first duty? "Those who will be translated at the close of time, will be those who commune with God on earth."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Gen. 5:22-24, p. 1087.

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CONCISE SPEAKING

Every man should study conciseness in speaking; it is a sign of ignorance not to know that long speeches, though they may please the speaker, are the torture of the hearer.

—FELTHAM

25 ? ? ? ? ?

The answering of questions on prayer always produces interest. Certain areas relating to prayer in the personal life of Christians have been of concern to most people. Our members usually appreciate a frank discussion of these problems. We do not have all the answers, but a careful study of these problems in the light of the instruction of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy writings usually reveals a solution.

After the forty-minute presentation the leaders of the School of Prayer gather around a table with the director in the center. If a microphone is used, be sure that it is a portable type. This is placed in front of the person speaking so every person can hear distinctly what is being said.

Six to nine questions are answered in each session. The entire list of questions is typed, with enough carbon copies so each member on the panel can know beforehand what is being discussed. Each knows the specific questions he will be called upon to discuss. In this way he has opportunity for study and research and thus will be able to present concise answers in the time allotted to him—usually two or three minutes. The interest increases as other members of the panel contribute to the discussion. Occasionally, there is a question of such import that extra time is allowed, but this ought to be the exception rather than the rule.

Perhaps the following twenty-five questions with their partial answers may prove helpful to those who plan to conduct a School of Prayer. Our answers must be brief because of limited space. Much additional material can be discovered in the *Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*, vol. 2, pages 2103-2129. Here are fifty-one columns listing thousands of quotations on the general topic of prayer.

1. *In private devotions is it Biblical or more effectual to pray aloud than to pray silently?* The answer must be Yes, but only when others are not within hearing distance. *Testimonies*, volume 2, page 190, states that secret prayer should not be loud, but in low and humble tones. Jesus prayed aloud in His private devotions (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 102). It was at the close of His prayer that

the disciples exclaimed, "Lord, teach us to pray," and He gave them what is known as the Lord's Prayer.

2. *Why do we not see more demonstrations of the gift of healing in the Seventh-day Adventist Church today?* See *Communion With God*, Lesson 26; also *Medical Ministry*, pages 12-15.

3. *Why does united prayer exert a stronger influence upon a soul than when one prays alone?* Two references will help us to understand the why of this question: "In unity there is strength; in division there is weakness. . . . In unity there is a life, a power, that can be obtained in no other way."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 286. "Our Saviour follows His lessons of instruction with a promise that if two or three should be united in asking anything of God it should be given them. Christ here shows that there must be union with others, even in our desires for a given object. Great importance is attached to the united prayer, the union of purpose. God hears the prayers of individuals, but on this occasion Jesus was giving special and important lessons that were to have a special bearing upon His newly organized church on the earth. There must be an agreement in the things which they desire and for which they pray. It was not merely the thoughts and exercises of one mind, liable to deception; but the petition was to be the earnest desire of several minds centered on the same point."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 429.

4. *When the Lord admonishes us to "watch and pray" what is meant by the word "watch"?* See *Communion With God*, Lessons 36 and 37.

5. *Should not Seventh-day Adventists fast and pray more than they do?* Matthew 6:16-18. Instruction on the importance of fasting and how to fast is given in *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pages 185-191. Many feel that to fast always means total abstinence from food as Jesus did in the wilderness of temptation. That this is not true is illustrated in the experience of Daniel when he said, "I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, . . . till three whole weeks were fulfilled" (Daniel 10:3). "The true fasting which should be recommended to all, is abstinence from every stim-

ulating kind of food, and the proper use of wholesome, simple food, which God has provided in abundance. . . . All the fasting in the world will not take the place of simple trust in the word of God. 'Ask,' He says, 'and ye shall receive.' . . . You are not called upon to fast forty days. The Lord bore that fast for you in

ject Lessons, p. 154. "Self is the enemy we most need to fear. . . . No other victory we can gain will be so precious as the victory gained over self."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 485.

11. *Could a soul be lost because no one persevered in prayer for his salvation?* "The Lord will hear our prayers for the conversion of

People Ask About Prayer

the wilderness of temptation. There would be no virtue in such a fast; but there is virtue in the blood of Christ."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 188, 189.

6. *Is it safe to ask for a sign in answer to prayer? For example, when a change in position is contemplated, may one pray for a sign? How can one know what is God's will?* Ellen G. White has much to say concerning chance praying, impressions, and feeling. See *Communion With God*, Lesson 40. Prayer is no substitute for a "thus saith the Lord." Self must be subjugated and true principle exalted. See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 200 (last two paragraphs).

7. *What can we do to enable us to hear God's voice or to know God's will?* Read *Communion With God*, Lesson 43.

8. *What is presumption? How may I guard against the sin of presumption when praying?* "Presumption is Satan's counterfeit of faith."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 126. See *Communion With God*, Lesson 30.

9. *How can one keep his mind from wandering while praying?* Every person who prays is confronted with this problem. When this question is announced, the attention of the whole congregation will be aroused. Some useful suggestions are to be found in *Communion With God*, Lesson 29. One religious writer says that when the mind wanders to some person, object, or concern, include it in your prayer, for it must be important to you!

10. *Is it possible for our prayers to be self-centered?* Self-centeredness is caring unduly for one's own interest and desires without regard for others. Selfish praying is illustrated in the Pharisee's prayer offered in the Temple (see Luke 18:10-14). "The evil that led to Peter's fall and that shut out the Pharisee from communion with God is proving the ruin of thousands today. There is nothing so offensive to God or so dangerous to the human soul as pride and self-sufficiency. Of all sins it is the most hopeless, the most incurable."—*Christ's Ob-*

ject Lessons, p. 315. "And the redeemed will be sharers in His joy, as they behold, among the blessed, those who have been won to Christ through their prayers, their labors, and their loving sacrifice."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 647. However, it must be remembered that the loss of a soul may not be wholly the result of lack of persevering prayer; the final decision is upon the will of the one being prayed for. God desires that all be saved but He does not force the will of anyone.

12. *Several years ago my children were told by a teacher that if they started a prayer, "Dear Jesus," instead of addressing the Father, it would go no higher than the roof. Shall small children be taught to pray to the Father or to Jesus? All their songs emphasize Jesus.* "Jesus should be the honored Guest in the family circle. We should talk with Him, bring all our burdens to Him, and converse of His love, His grace, and His perfection of character. . . . The minds of the little ones may be taught to turn to Jesus as the flower turns its opening petals to the sun."—*Child Guidance*, p. 487. "Jesus would have the children and the youth come to Him with the same confidence with which they go to their parents. . . . Jesus knows the needs of children, and He loves to listen to their prayers."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 299. Also see *Communion With God*, Lesson 44.

13. *Some people seem naturally good. They seem faithful to the church and know its doctrines, yet they do not feel the necessity of personal prayer. Do you think that such are not Christians even though they do not seem to do wrong?* Not to feel a spiritual need is to be in the lukewarm condition of the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:14-20). "It is not given to any human being to judge between the different servants of God. The Lord alone is the judge of man's work, and He will give to each his just reward."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 276. "Prayer is a necessity; for it is the life of the soul. Family prayer, public prayer, have their place; but it



is secret communion with God that sustains the soul life.”—*Education*, p. 258.

14. *When God promises to give wisdom to those who ask, does it include wisdom in temporal as well as in spiritual things?* The prayer for wisdom would naturally embrace temporal matters. God is interested in our total life. A fine list of that for which we should pray is given in *Communion With God*, Lesson 5.

15. *When there are so many pressing duties, how does one find time for meditation and prayer?* It is significant that every person living has the same amount of time—exactly twenty-four hours a day. To learn how to master our schedule so we do not become victims of impulse or pressure but rather make room for life’s vital concerns is our basic problem. When a person says he is too busy to find time to pray, he is saying in reality that he regards everything else in his day of more value than prayer. To begin with, it is well to pray by the clock. Set a definite time for your private devotions and let nothing interfere. See *Communion With God*, Lesson 3.

16. *Is the chief benefit of prayer the reaction upon the one who prays?* The reaction upon one who prays is always manifested in Christlike attributes of character. However, if prayer is intended for nothing more than its reflex influence, what did Jesus mean when He said, “All things, whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matt. 21:22)? Or “Ask, and ye shall receive” (John 16:24)? The Lord wants us to pray for definite things that are in accord with His promises and to expect an answer.

17. *Since God hears every prayer, why is it necessary to repeat the same request over and over?* “God does not say, Ask once, and you shall receive. He bids us ask. Unwearingly persist in prayer. The persistent asking brings the petitioner into a more earnest attitude, and gives him an increased desire to receive the things for which he asks. . . . The more earnestly and steadfastly we ask, the closer will be our spiritual union with Christ.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 145, 146. “When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come,

and we shall receive the blessing we need most. But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire, is presumption.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 96. Also read *Counsels on Health*, pp. 380, 381; *Early Writings*, p. 73.

18. *Is it possible for Satan to counterfeit God’s work by assuming to answer prayer?* Many earnest Christians do not realize this, but it is an important fact that the devil can answer prayer. Wherever there is the genuine, there is the counterfeit. See *Communion With God*, Lesson 50.

19. *Why does God against His own will sometimes grant the desires of His people and give them what is not for their best good, such as when He permitted Israel to have a king?* We are told in *My Life Today*, page 291, “Nothing can happen without His [God’s] permission.” There is a difference between God’s will and His permission. It was not His will that Israel have a king, but He permitted it. By giving human beings freedom of will, God chose to limit His own power. He gives us the freedom of making good or bad decisions, and He will not take away that freedom even though tragedy is the result. We must always remember the inexorable law of life as stated by Paul, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 6:7). “Nothing can touch him [the Christian] except by the Lord’s permission. All our sufferings and sorrows, all our temptations and trials, all our sadness and griefs, all our persecutions and privations, in short, all things work together for our good. All experiences and circumstances are God’s workmen whereby good is brought to us.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 489.

20. *Why do things seem to go worse when I pray than when I don’t?* Read James 1:12 and 1 Peter 4:12, 13. “We must be transformed by the grace of God or we shall fail of heaven, and through our influence others will fail with us. Let me assure you that the struggles and conflicts which must be endured in the discharge of duty, the self-denials and sacrifices which must be made if we are faithful to Christ, are not created by Him. They are not imposed

by arbitrary or unnecessary command; they do not come from the severity of the life which He requires us to lead in His service. Trials would exist in greater power and number were we to refuse obedience to Christ and become the servants of Satan and the slaves of sin."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 557, 558. "In Christian experience, the Lord permits trials of various kinds to call men and women to a higher order of living and to a more sanctified service. Without these trials there would be a continual falling away from the likeness of Christ, and men would become imbued with a spirit of scientific, fanciful, human philosophy, which would lead them to unite with Satan's followers."—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 160. Read *Communion With God*, Lesson 28.

21. *How can I develop a strong faith in prayer? My husband died after he had been anointed and I had all faith that he would live. He was a good Christian with every desire to live for God. Since then, when something important comes up I am always conscious of the fact that God might say No! We are finite; God is infinite. Since this is true, then we must trust God and have faith that His ways are best. "There are cases where God works decidedly by His divine power in the restoration of health. But not all the sick are healed. Many are laid away to sleep in Jesus. . . . We all desire immediate and direct answers to our prayers, and are tempted to become discouraged when the answer is delayed or comes in an unlooked-for form. But God is too wise and good to answer our prayers always at just the time and in just the manner we desire. . . . Our desires and interests should be lost in His will. These experiences that test faith are for our benefit. By them it is made manifest whether our faith is true and sincere, resting on the word of God alone, or whether depending on circumstances, it is uncertain and changeable. Faith is strengthened by exercise. We must let patience have its perfect work, remembering that there are precious promises in the Scriptures for those who wait upon the Lord."*—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 230, 231.

22. *What is the meaning of the word "Amen" with which we close our prayers?* Webster says,

"May it be so; used after a prayer, to express approval." But the word "Amen" has a more important meaning. It is one of the names of Christ (Rev. 3:14). It is as if we closed the prayer by saying, "for Christ's sake," or "in Christ's name."

23. *In many of our churches, the majority of the membership absent themselves from the prayer meeting. Is it God's plan that the midweek service become obsolete?* The answer is an emphatic No! When a large percentage of the church fails to attend the midweek service, either there is a low spiritual condition existing or the prayer meeting is very uninteresting. Read the suggestions made by Ellen G. White about the prayer meeting as found in *Communion With God*, Lesson 33.

24. *What can be done to make family worship interesting to the children and youth?* "Let the services be brief and full of life, adapted to the occasion, and varied from time to time. Let all join in the Bible reading and learn and often repeat God's law. It will add to the interest of the children if they are sometimes permitted to select the reading. Question them upon it, and let them ask questions. Mention anything that will serve to illustrate its meaning. When the service is not thus made too lengthy, let the little ones take part in prayer, and let them join in song, if it be but a single verse. To make such a service what it should be, thought should be given to preparation."—*Education*, p. 186. Also read *Communion With God*, Lesson 32.

25. *What is the real meaning of "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17)?* "Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life; and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 98. "The Christian can not always be in the position of prayer, but his thoughts and desires can always be upward."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Prov. 4:23, p. 1157. We have been given explicit instruction when to pray: *Before we rise in the morning*—"The very first outbreathing of the soul in the morning should be for the presence of Jesus."—*My Life Today*, p. 15. *When we rise*—"When you rise in



the morning, kneel at your bedside."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 199. *Hourly*—"It is only by personal union with Christ, by communion with Him daily, hourly, that we can bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 48. *In every difficulty*—"In every difficulty we are to see a call to prayer."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 667. *When discouraged*—"When you are desponding, close the lips firmly to men; do not shadow the path of others; but tell everything to Jesus."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 513. *About our work*—"When engaged in our daily labor, we may breathe out our heart's desire."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 258. *When tempted*—"When the first suggestion of wrong is heard, dart a prayer to heaven."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Prov. 1:10, p. 1155. How true is the statement, "The soul that loves God, loves to draw strength from Him by constant communion with Him."—*Ibid.*, on James 4:7, p. 937.

Types and Moods of Prayer

(Continued from page 20)

God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34). "The intercession of Christ is as a golden chain fastened to the throne of God. He has turned the merit of His sacrifice into prayer. Jesus prays, and by prayer succeeds."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on 1 Tim. 2:5, p. 914. "His offering is complete, and as our Intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, these ascend to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression. Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 156, 157.

For whom are we to intercede?

"It were well for parents to learn from the man of Uz a lesson of steadfastness and devotion. Job did not neglect his duty to those outside of his household; he was benevolent, kind, thoughtful of the interest of others; and at the same time he labored earnestly for the salvation of his own family. Amid the festivities of his sons and daughters, he trembled lest his children

should displease God. As a faithful priest of the household, he offered sacrifices for them individually. He knew the offensive character of sin, and the thought that his children might forget the divine claims, led him to God as an intercessor in their behalf."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Job 1:5, p. 1140. (See also *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 701; *Child Guidance*, p. 494.)

For work at this time "they should make mighty intercession with God for help now" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 454). (For missionaries and leaders see *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 22.)

Prayer of Commitment

We sing, "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus." Do we really believe that? We are burdened for ourselves, long to pray effectually for loved ones, for those who request our prayers. Yet how inadequate seems our prayer life. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5). "The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 173.

"Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was."—*Ibid.*, p. 664.

"Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection."—*Ibid.*, p. 667.

"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (John 14:14).

THE MINISTER

The proud he tam'd, the penitent he cheer'd.
Nor to rebuke the rich offender fear'd.
His preaching much, but more his practice wrought;
A living sermon of the truths he taught.—DRYDEN.

Continuing the Spirit of the School of Prayer Through Prayer Groups

CHARLES M. MELLOR

BY THE time of the fifth and sixth sessions of the school several are expressing their desire that the study of prayer might continue for many more weeks. How thrilling it is to tell the good news that the blessings received can increase through the formation of prayer groups.

Jesus said, "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:19, 20). Group praying is one of the privileges of Christian fellowship, and how important it is for believers to gather together for prayer and study!

The Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the result of the disciples' meeting "with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1). If the church in our day were to take this teaching of our Lord about group praying as seriously as did the first Christians, it would mean a new era of power and transformation.

The Spirit of Prophecy writings speak about fervent and agonizing prayer during the time of shaking. Read carefully *Early Writings*, pages 269, 270. In *Testimonies*, volume 7, page 195, we read: "Let small companies assemble in the evening, at noon, or in the early morning to study the Bible. Let them have a season of prayer, that they may be strengthened, enlightened, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. This work Christ wants to have done in the heart of every worker. If you yourselves will open the door to receive it, a great blessing will come to you. . . . Let each tell his experience in simple words.

This will bring more comfort and joy to the soul than all the pleasant instruments of music that could be brought into the churches. Christ will come into your hearts."

How do these prayer groups get started? They are not the result of some careful organization or because of a deliberate program of the church. Rather, they are born because of the hunger, faith, and determination of concerned people, prompted by the leading of the Holy Spirit. They are spontaneous. It is surprising how much can be done through the concern of just one person. One woman felt a burning burden for the other Seventh-day Adventists in her neighborhood, so several women meet in a home at 10:30 A.M. on Wednesday after the children are sent to school. They are studying *The Adventist Home*. A dedicated doctor invited several other professional men to meet in the minister's study at the church each Tuesday from 7:00 to 8:00 A.M. An enthusiastic senior Missionary Volunteer asked a dozen other young people to meet in one of the rooms of the church on Tuesday evenings. The minister or church council did not organize these groups; they came into existence because of the concern of dedicated people.

What is the basic purpose and nature of the prayer and study groups? It might be summed up in the New Testament admonition to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). This growth takes place by: (1) Self-understanding and self-acceptance, (2) an understanding and accepting of other people, (3) a knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith as given in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy writ-

ings, (4) knowing how to pray and communicate with God, and (5) dedicating ourselves in love to the service of God and to our fellow men.

What is the make-up of the groups, and what do they do when they meet? Experience has demonstrated that from twelve to fourteen persons should be the maximum number for each group. As a minimum, four individuals could make a productive group. A certain amount of common interest, background, experience, and need will be necessary if the group is to find bonds to unite in fellowship and prayer.

The length of meeting varies with time available—forty-five minutes at a breakfast hour to an hour and a half in the evening is suggested. Regularity and punctuality are of great importance. Faithfulness in attendance is the first commitment each member is asked to make.

It is important to keep the agenda simple. The three areas of concern are: study, sharing, and prayer.

1. **STUDY.** Usually some portion of the Bible or a book of the Spirit of Prophecy, or some book of a practical devotional nature, is selected by the group. One of the finest books to use first is *Steps to Christ*. By taking one chapter a week, spiritual nourishment and inspiration may be experienced for three months. It is imperative that all members of the group read and meditate upon the assigned chapter previous to each meeting. It is suggested that the materials be read slowly and carefully, and that statements having particular significance be underscored. It must be remembered that the learning and preparation are done between the meetings.

2. **SHARING.** At the regular meetings of the prayer group the inspiration and insights received by the member during the daily quiet time of each day are shared by all. The vitality of the group's life together depends upon the freedom, honesty, and depth with which members come to share their questions, problems, insights, and faith with one another. If the sharing is to be genuinely vital and creative, it must necessitate the members' speaking together of their own personal concerns, needs, and experiences. Everyone should participate but no one should dominate the group. It is important that all stay on the subject and that no one argue.

3. **PRAYER.** Prayer is an important part

of each group. The meeting begins and ends with prayer. The more often the group meets together, the freer will be the prayer seasons. After the group has had its sharing session, then it ends with a season of prayer. The real source of spiritual growth is to be found in the daily habit of prayer on the part of each member. A prayer list is kept of specific requests. It is also a rule that every member remember each member of the group by name every day in his private devotions.

The function of the leader. Proper leadership is vital to the life of the group. The leader is to act as an overseer and handle the mechanical features of the meeting place. He is not to dominate the group by lecturing and preaching. He must not teach. This is the temptation of many who are accustomed to teaching a Sabbath school class. The successful leader asks questions to stimulate the thinking and to encourage participation in the group.

The leader will guide the group's participation so it is really a shared leadership. He should encourage each member to be a participant. He must avoid answering questions. He will direct all questions to the group and let them answer or give opinions. It is better to have some poor opinions from ten, with discussion, than answers handed down with finality by a leader. However, at the end of the group meeting the leader will give a statement of summation and conclusion.

The leader should keep the discussion on the track. It should not stray too far afield. If the leader does not draw them back from tangent remarks, the group will often end up discussing peripheral matters, abstract ideas, and personal differences. Beware of those who wish to propagate theological hobbies!

The discipline of members. The life of the group meetings is dependent upon the personal discipline of each member. There must be some ground rules. Those we have used in our groups are:

1. Give priority to the daily devotions and to the weekly meetings of the group—give it priority, or give it up!

2. Spend not less than twenty minutes each day in reading, meditation, and prayer. This is best done alone and not with someone else.

3. Read the material assigned for the group so you and the group may have common ground for discussion.

4. Read slowly. Reread as often as necessary. Stop when you find a thought-provoking idea. Think it through and then pray about it.

5. Instead of applying to others what you read, apply it only to yourself. During the period, surrender your will and resentments to Christ.

6. Do not be discouraged by mood swings, periods when you seem to lose interest or have "dry spells." Even some of the finest Christians are faced with such periods.

In our group work each person is asked to sign his name in the presence of the other members to the following commitment: "I agree to make it my goal to (1) devote twenty minutes or more daily to devotional reading, meditation, and prayer; (2) give priority to the daily devotional periods and the weekly meetings; (3) pray daily for each member of the group by name."

Great spiritual thrills are in store for

those who humbly seek God in prayer. "Why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit, since this is the means by which we are to receive power? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to us than parents are to give good gifts to their children. . . . Companies should be gathered together to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely." —*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 22.

Those interested in continuing the blessings of the School of Prayer are asked to think seriously about forming a prayer and study group. They are invited to tell the minister about their desire and then talk to others about forming such a group. They may be surprised to find that their friends are already interested in such a fellowship. The life of the church could be revitalized by many groups meeting in study and prayer. Prayer is power! It will strengthen the weak.

The School of Prayer in Mountain View, California

In the welter of promotion and church projects we are apt to feel that here is just one more idea to be studied if we have the time. This was my first impression when I heard of the School of Prayer as conducted at the St. Helena Sanitarium church. But when I took a second look and discovered that an unusually large number of people praised its value, it began to appear that here indeed was something refreshingly different and of real spiritual worth. It was then that I requested conference permission to invite the original School of Prayer faculty, consisting of Elders Charles M. Mellor, Allan L. Ham, Taylor G. Bunch, and Mrs. Bunch, to spend a week with the Mountain View church and bring us the full course of study in January of this year.

They pointed out that the ideal situation is a seven-week series with just one teaching session a week. However, this being impractical in our case, the group agreed to present the series in six days, beginning with the Sabbath morning service, a Sab-

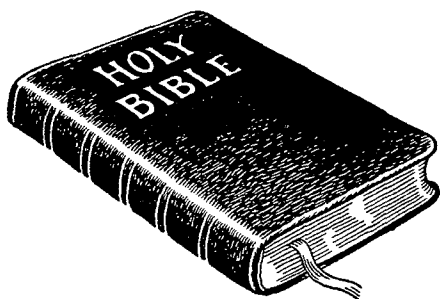
bath afternoon session, and five evening meetings, ending Thursday.

The leaders had been duly warned that the Mountain View church, while a devoted congregation, is an unusually busy institutional group, and most members find it difficult to attend nightly sessions, especially five consecutive ones. It was, therefore, amazing to find, not a faithful few, but between three and four hundred out every evening, most of them not missing a session.

We sold nearly four hundred copies of the book *Communion With God*, and now after six months, inquiries for it are still coming in. We have never experienced such a sustained interest from any previous series.

The School of Prayer brought lasting results to many of our members, and a spiritual uplift to the whole church. Eternity alone will unveil the total results. I recommend the School of Prayer wholeheartedly to my fellow ministers.

REUBEN ENGSTROM, *Pastor*



The Bible Only

G. E. HUTCHES

Once upon a time Adventists seemed to be familiar with every doctrine and teaching of the church. The Bible and the Bible only was used as backing and proof for all our positions. A famous evangelist of another denomination said in the early 1900's, "Every Seventh-day Adventist you meet is a preacher, even if he is a boy only seventeen years of age." This was indeed an enviable reputation and inspired me as a youth to want to be a minister or a Bible teacher.

Prophets and Kings, page 626, states that "the words of the Bible, and the Bible alone, should be heard from the pulpit," and this was taken very literally. Seldom was a minister seen in the pulpit with anything other than the Bible and a few notes. Statements from popular speakers, magazines, articles, and newspaper clippings were not recognized as necessary to bolster thoughts and inspire audiences.

Many key Bible texts were memorized in church school and in the home. Our youth were able, from the training in the home and in the school, to give Bible studies on key topics from memory with the use of the Bible only. This was my own experience by the time I was fourteen years of age, and I now bow my head in thanksgiving for parents who recognized the importance of Bible study, family worship in the home, and the importance of the influence of the church school.

Each succeeding day brings to us again an opportunity to take stock of where we are going and resolve to make the Bible our first Book for study and reading. If



Educational Secretary
Lake Union
Conference

reverence for the Bible is taught in early childhood, children will grow up to respect and love it throughout their lives.

A wealthy, elderly white-haired Jew was once the object of my interest while Ingathering. After several days' delay we received an appointment with him. During our conversation he asked me if we had respect for the Old Testament Scriptures. I answered, "Oh, yes, we do," and explained

that in childhood I had been taught to memorize many Old Testament passages. He commented that no Gentile could love and respect the Old Testament like the Orthodox Jew, for they were not only taught to read and memorize but before they could even handle the Scriptures they must go to a basin of water and with soap thoroughly wash their hands, and if they were to hold the Bible on their laps they must wear clean clothes.

There can be no better preparation for further study in depth and doctrine than a loving reverence for the Word of God and its Author. Fortunate indeed are all who have early learned to trust the Word. But, unfortunately, in nearly all of our churches there are young people who do not know the Bible in such a way as to love it. These young people, who have not had the privilege of learning to know the Bible as a precious book, probably could best be served through organized study or baptismal classes. Then Bibles could be presented at the beginning of the class to those who do not have their own. Where the home program has missed in developing knowledge and love of the Bible the

church and school must take over. In trying to help people it is well to keep in mind that results rarely, if ever, just happen. There must be a plan and method.

In all churches there are groups that need to be sought out and encouraged to join baptismal or Bible study classes. The very young, on the other hand, may request baptism. I have long believed that children who desire baptism should have that interest nurtured immediately in a special class. In such a group each child should have his own Bible. It isn't enough merely to have access to one. Surely a child of nine is not too young to have a Bible with his name in it in full.

A meaningful line or two beneath his name might say, "Presented for your ninth birthday by . . ." (a parent, another relative, or teacher) and the date.

Children's reading ability at this age may vary considerably, of course, but all are pleased when they are able to find their favorite texts—those that have been earlier committed to memory. They love to mark them in their own new Bibles.

For friends outside the church it is fitting and a good thing that evangelistic teams present Bibles to interested visitors who have been faithful in attendance throughout a series of meetings. That such a presentation is possible is especially significant in two ways. No project for the support of an effort warms the hearts of our people more than to have Bibles presented to those they have so long wanted to reach. Beyond this, those who have earned the gift Bibles, through faithfulness in attendance, have already learned much of our message to start them well on their way to becoming seekers after more truth from the Word of God.

In my file I have a message to parents. I do not know the author, but the words ring true and familiar like a passage from *Education*. Here it is:

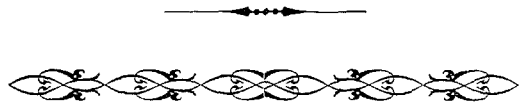
Parents, I urge you to make the Bible the sweetest, the dearest Book to your children; not by compelling them to read so many chapters each day, which will have the effect of making them hate the Bible, but by reading its pages with them, and by your tender parental love so showing them the beauty of its wondrous incidents. From the story of Adam and Eve to the story of Bethlehem and Calvary, no book in the home will be so dear to your children as the Bible; and thus you will be strengthening their minds with the sublimest truths, storing their hearts with the purest love,

and sinking deep in their souls solid principles of righteousness.

The words of Wycliffe are often quoted, when he stood at the pulpit with a chained Bible in his hands, "If I could but possess one of these volumes, I would ask no other earthly treasure."

Six centuries have passed since his translation of the Bible into English. Many books have had their day and slipped into obsolescence. But the Bible alone still stands the test of time because it is the Book Divine, a record of what God has done and revealed of Himself to man. It is God's Word. There is proof in itself. "The word of our God shall stand forever" (Isa. 40:8). It is the foundation of our faith through truth, fact, history, and prophecy. It is the Sacred Volume that teaches the will of God, adequate for our salvation.

May we as Adventists of this generation follow in the footsteps of the pioneers and increase our knowledge of the Bible and continue to treat it with reverence.



The Preacher's Psalm

The Lord is my Teacher, I shall not want for wisdom. He maketh me to meditate in deep scriptures. He leadeth me into a clear understanding of His Word. He gives peace to my soul.

He leadeth me and my flock into sweet paths of fellowship, and this pleases Him well.

Yea, though the burdens of this work could easily overwhelm me, I will fear no failure, for He is with me. His Word and His Spirit, they comfort me.

He prepares me for success in my work, and overrules those who work against me. He anoints me with His Holy Spirit. My joy runneth over!

Surely sacrifice and labor shall follow me all the days of my ministry, but He shall sustain me and reward me, and someday, . . . I shall lay many precious jewels at His feet in loving adoration, and I shall be with Him in His kingdom forever! Amen.

TED T. JONES, *Pastor-Evangelist*
Central California Conference



“After His Kind”

R. M. RITLAND



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During the early decades of the controversy between evolution and Creation, the concept that the Bible taught absolute fixity of species profoundly influenced the thinking of both theologians and scientists. Today, few scientists give much thought to Scripture and few theologians feel that the early chapters of Genesis are more than an ancient myth. To Adventists the message of Creation, which is not only basic to the Sabbath but also to the central theme of Scripture and the plan of salvation, cannot be dismissed so easily. This truth clearly represents to man his relationship to God, to the universe, and to his fellow man.

The tradition of long standing that the Scriptures teach absolute fixity of species is based on the assumption that the different kinds of species of plants or animals were fixed by the act of creation. According to this view any variation from the original kinds is clearly excluded by the divine decree that each animal shall bring forth “after his kind.” “And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.” “And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:11, 25).

It was commonly echoed from the pulpit that if new species arise, then evolution has been proved to be true. If evolution is true, then the Genesis story, the Scriptures, are false. Therefore, no species have changed since the Creation; no new species have come into being. Thus the traditional interpretation of “after his kind” was set up as a standard by which the verity, the divine origin, of Scripture was tested. The

volume of literature which reflects these attitudes is enormous. A single quotation from a letter Darwin sent to his friend Hooker in 1844 will suffice to illustrate the deep feeling on this issue: “I have read heaps of agricultural and horticultural books and have never ceased collecting facts. At last gleams of light have come, and I am almost convinced (quite contrary to the opinion I started with) that species are not (it is like confessing a murder) immutable.” — Quoted in ERIK NORDENSKIÖRD, *The History of Biology*, pp. 463, 464. Most scientists who still bother to define “special creation” assume it teaches that “each species that exists or ever existed was separately created.”

A comprehensive definition of mechanistic organic evolution must always contain a series of premises including the following elements: Origin of the present complex mosaic of life by (1) changes in species as a result of (2) natural processes so that all (3) complex present-day species could eventually be traced back through a series of predominantly simpler (4) intermediate links to one or several (5) simple primordial types which arose by chance (spontaneously) from nonliving matter. Although every one of the five premises is necessary for mechanistic evolution, in practice it is often felt that when change of species has been demonstrated, the Bible has been shown to be untrustworthy, hence evolution is the only alternative. *Change versus fixity* has thus become the pivotal point in the controversy.

That change is thought to be the crucial element and is reflected in many terse definitions of evolution in common use:

“Descent with modification”—Darwin.

“That existing organisms are the modified but lineal descendants of other species

that lived in former geological times"—Storer.

"In the last analysis evolution is a sequence of changes in genes"—Dobzhansky.

But let it be emphasized that the fabric of the theory requires every one of the other premises. Change alone proves nothing except that variation in species is possible.

What does the Bible teach about change or fixity of species?

The Meaning of "After His Kind"

The surest way to determine accurately the range of meaning of the Hebrew phrase *lemînô*, commonly translated "after his kind," is to study how and in what context it is commonly used by the author (see word study article by Dr. Running in the September issue of this journal). This expression appears thirty times in the books of Moses and once in Ezekiel. In the books of Moses it is used in the Creation record, the Flood account, and the chapters regarding clean and unclean animals—wherever a classification of animals or plants is necessary. Is the expression "after his kind" used in Genesis as a divine decree that organisms produce offspring that are of the same kind as the parents—or in reference to classification only? Let us examine the texts where the phrase occurs to see if any light may be shed on this point.

In the references regarding the classification of clean and unclean animals the phrase is used thirteen times in essentially the same context in each instance (Lev. 11:14-22; Deut. 14:13-18). We quote several typical texts:

"And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray, and the vulture, and the *kite after his kind; every raven after his kind; and the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind, . . . and the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat. . . . Even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind*" (Lev. 11:13-22).

In this context "after his kind" seems obviously to refer only to classification denoting "various species" of each of those

groups for which only a single example or the general name is given. "You must detest the following; . . . the vulture, the eagle, the buzzard, the *kite in its several species*, the *raven in all its species*, the ostrich, the night-hawk, the sea-mew, the *hawk in its several species.*"*

At the time of the Flood, when the animals are being gathered into the ark, the phrase is used in much the same context:

"And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of *fowls after their kind*, and of *cattle after their kind*, of *every creeping thing of the earth after his kind*, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive" (Gen. 6:19, 20).

Here land animals are described under three broad categories, the *various species or kinds of birds* (flying animals; compare Leviticus 11:13-23 where birds, bats, and flying insects are grouped together as fowl), the *various kinds of cattle*, and the *various kinds of creeping things*. That "after his kind" cannot refer to the fowl and their offspring, et cetera, is quite apparent from the explicit statement that "two of every sort," the male and female," shall be taken into the ark. In the next chapter, where their entry into the ark is described, almost the same broad classification is used except that it is slightly more explicit in mentioning "beasts" as well as "cattle," and "birds" as well as "fowl." The meaning is expressed clearly in the *American Translation*:

"Together with all the various kinds of wild beasts, all the various kinds of domestic animals, all the various kinds of land reptiles, and all the various kinds of birds, everything with feathers and wings; of all creatures in which there was the breath of life, a pair of each joined Noah in the ark" (Gen. 7:14).

The broad categories into which land creatures are divided in the texts just examined are the same as those used in Genesis 1. If we compare the original wording in Genesis 1:25 with 7:14 just quoted, we note that the classification is exactly the same except that the fowls created the previous day are not mentioned.

"And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and the cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:25). It is evident

that "after his kind," as in the case in Genesis 7:14, is their way of saying that *the various species* of the major categories enumerated (cattle, beasts, and creeping things) were all created on the sixth day.

Again, concerning the fifth day, in verse 21 the meaning is most reasonable when "after his kind" is understood in the sense in which it is used in chapter 6:20 or 7:14 or where lesser groups are referred to in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. "And so it was. God created the great sea-monster and all the various kinds of living, gliding creatures with which the waters teem, and all the various kinds of winged birds. God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:21).^{*} If either "bring forth" or "after its kind" implies a command for reproduction, then the command in the very next verse, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth," would be somewhat redundant.

It may appear that we are laboring the point, since in each case it is evident that naming the broad category followed by the phrase "after his kind" was their accepted way of referring to the various species of the category or group of animals or plants under consideration. Reproduction is not even implied. But this point is of fundamental importance to the doctrine of Creation and the results of what seems to be a misinterpretation have been of serious consequence to the church of God.

In the remaining texts in Genesis 1 where the idiom "after his kind" is used, it is in reference to the subdivisions or species of the three broad categories of land vegetation: tender grass, herbaceous plants with seeds, and fruit trees with seeds. Here the wording is such that if these were the only texts in which the phrase is used, one might suppose that there is a decree that like shall produce like in the case of land plants.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:11, 12).

Even here, however, with reflection it is apparent that the general usage as a taxonomic term referring to "various species or kinds of," not to reproduction, is the

most reasonable rendering of the text.

"And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: seed-bearing plants, fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: seed-bearing plants of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw how good this was" (Gen. 1:11, 12).[†]

The "herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself" seems to refer to types of plants characterized by the fact that they produce seeds or fruit which has seeds, rather than to reproduction. This is still more evident when one notes the similar phraseology used in verse 29, where the subject is the type of plants which may be used for food, not reproduction.

Ezekiel, the only other Bible writer who uses the phrase *lemînô* employs it in much the same way. "And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be *according to their kinds*, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many" (Eze. 47: 10). Rendered "many kinds" or "various kinds" in other translations, the text would seem difficult to read, let alone to understand, with any other meaning.

It may be suggested that the "kind" of Genesis 1 refers neither to species as they existed in the original creation nor to the general groups mentioned (beasts, fowls, etc.) but to an intermediate category—a cluster of related species. There does not, however, seem to be any textual support for such a view.

Changes Did Occur

If, then, there is in Genesis 1 no statement that species are fixed by divine decree at the time of their creation, is there, on the other hand, any evidence that animals or plants are subject to change? There seems to be.

The curse of Genesis 3:14-19 seems to call for change in living things, modifications of a type which we see abundantly demonstrated in nature. For the serpent, loss of limbs and possibly also change in food habits may be implied. The presence, absence, or nature of the limbs is a fundamental character in delineating major groups of animals. The fact that the serpent is cursed "above all cattle, and every beast of the

field" might be taken to imply a general curse on animals. When their anatomy and embryology are studied, thorns and thistles, which are probably typical of the sort of modifications to be expected in the plant kingdom, are commonly seen to be modified leaves or stems. Changes of this sort could not take place without producing new species in nature.

Ellen G. White in many references portrays marked changes in the living world, changes which became more pronounced through the centuries (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 58-62; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 185, 186). She states that the "confused species which God did not create" were destroyed by the Flood. She goes on to point out that since the Flood change is indicated by the "almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men" (*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 75).

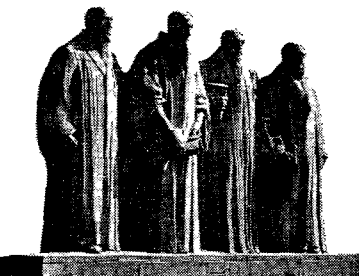
Life as we see it today probably reflects the original state only dimly. Significant modifications in living things have taken place since sin entered the world. This is clearly shown by the fossil record.

What are the implications of this study? Does it open the door for evolution? Does it weaken the basis for the doctrine of Creation? We have seen that within the framework of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy the origin of new species is allowed, even suggested. On the other hand, it is evident to anyone, upon reflection, that regardless of whether or not modifications in living things are allowed, already at the end of the Creation week there is described a world with a great variety of complex animals and plants, a world under the dominion of man created in the image of God. Change subsequent to this time can only result in altering the complex mosaic of life which has been created by God. And this is not evolution. Most of the mass of supposed evidence for evolution is really only evidence for the type of change to be expected since the Creation.

* Smith and Goodspeed. *The Complete Bible: An American Translation*. Used by permission of University of Chicago Press.

† *The Torah. The Five Books of Moses*. A new translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic text. 1962. The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia.

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The Challenge of Absenteeism

G. R. NASH

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." If this axiom is true, and we are sure it is, then the best way to reclaim a backslider is to prevent him from becoming one. One of the most effective ways to prevent backsliding is to watch for absentees from the Sabbath school. When one becomes indifferent with reference to Sabbath school attendance and loses his hunger and thirst for the study of the Holy Scriptures, he is a likely apostate.

It would seem that the secret to our problem of apostasy is to be found in helping the absentees. The best way to help one who is growing cold and becoming a backslider is to visit with him and encourage him spiritually at the very first sign of his losing interest. Is it possible that the Sabbath school leadership has grown indifferent toward absent members? We all live and work under great pressures. Could it be that while the Sabbath school and church go forward to finish the work, endeavoring to search out the lost and bring them in at the front door of the church, that the spiritually weak and the discouraged are slipping out the back door unnoticed?

Needed: a Kindly Word

Perhaps in the hearts of those who are slipping away from us is a longing for a friendly handshake or a kindly word. Perhaps all that is needed is a warm invitation from a burdened heart for them to return to the Sabbath school. However, many times we are too busy to miss the absentees and may actually forget them.

We are reminded of the pastor of a large



Secretary
Sabbath School
Department
General Conference

Western church who in a Sabbath school council responded to the question of a visiting General Conference Sabbath school secretary with the affirmation that there was no absentee problem in his church. The local elder did not want to contradict his pastor, so asked the question, "Are you really sure that there are not a few absentees each week?" "Oh," he replied, "there may be a very few who live too far away to attend, but on the whole they are all present each week." The minister wanted to prove his point, so a survey was made by checking the church membership against the Sabbath school attendance. It was found that 31 per cent of the church membership were absentees as far as Sabbath school and church attendance were concerned. Do you miss the absentees in your Sabbath school?

Are They Just Statistics?

Our consciousness is far too often merely statistical. We miss 13 per cent or 23 per cent or 33 per cent of our church membership from the Sabbath school; we may even be startled by the revelation that in 1963 in the North American Division we added 52,176 new church members, but at the same time dropped 41,346 church members from our records; we may be concerned that the relation of Sabbath school attendance to church membership stands at 81 per cent when we know that the total Sabbath school membership should far exceed the church membership. But our concern is too often simply statistical, and we do not miss the individual absentee.

We miss 33 per cent, but do we miss souls? The story is told of six small children

that were playing in a rowboat tied up on one of the rivers in Maine. Somehow the boat was loosened, and the children drifted down the river. By the time the children were missed, darkness had fallen. The children were swept away to sea. Great anxiety filled the hearts of the members of the entire community. The thought of the children drifting on the cruel sea was horrifying. No one slept during the entire night. Agonizing prayers were heard in many sections of the village. The next day a fisherman discovered and rescued the children. When word reached the people, there was a united cry of rejoicing. Are we as anxious about the missing members in our Sabbath school?

If we were as indifferent to the dangers and loss of physical life as we are at times to the loss of spiritual life, we would be considered barbarians and probably would be ostracized from good society. "Brethren and sisters in the faith, does the question arise in your hearts, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' If you claim to be children of God, you are your brother's keeper. The Lord holds the church responsible for the souls of those whom they might be the means of saving."—ELLEN G. WHITE in *Historical Sketches*, p. 291. We are the family of God, but too often the absentees of the family are treated with unconcern. Some say, "They just don't seem to be interested, so what can we do?" Any mother or father that would disregard the dangers to a drowning child would be charged with legal homicide and sentenced to imprisonment. Can we be less guilty when those about us are losing their spiritual lives and drowning in a miasma of sin?

God calls for an alarm to be sounded in His holy temple. The deep concern of His heart is indicated by His outstretched hands to those who once knew Him, whose love has diminished, and whose ardor has cooled off! Where can one find a more heart-stirring appeal than that voiced through Jeremiah: "Return, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am a lord unto you, and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion; and I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:14, 15, according to the Masoretic text).

The Spirit of Moses Must Possess Us

Sabbath School Advisory Committee res-

olutions on this matter are ineffective. Something more personal is needed. We must respond to the impressions of the Holy Spirit and endeavor to reclaim these absentees and apostates. The spirit of Moses must take possession of us. He was willing to forfeit admittance into the kingdom if God would not redeem His backslidden people.

Some may think that a new program will bring the answer to this perplexing problem. It will not. A passion for the lost is the only possible remedy. We must miss the absentees and feel in their absence a great sense of personal loss. That sense of loss will result in a special Sabbath school council or a special prayer meeting for the missing. There is no substitute for earnest prayer—personal prayer and class prayer bands—in winning the absent members back to fellowship in the Sabbath school. Likewise, there is no substitute for visitation. When the burden of the lost rests upon us as it should, ministers will weep between the porch and the altar, and the laity and leadership will unite in manifesting the spirit of the Master, who left the ninety and nine to search for the one missing sheep.

Labor for the Absentees, One by One

It is because of our failure to miss the absentees that we are led to put forth effort toward corrective measures. These may prove helpful, but often are ineffective. Sometimes they may even become a substitute for the only effective means of reclaiming absentees—namely, a spiritual concern and personal labor for the absentees, one by one.

The absentees cannot be *resolved* back into the Sabbath school or church. They must be rescued by active participation of those who see this danger. They must be found and reclaimed by fellow members whose hearts are aflame with the love of God. Soul saving by proxy has never been very successful.

The first step back into Sabbath school and church fellowship results from the assurance of having been missed. How many there are, even of those backslidden ones we may regard as almost hopeless cases, who in their aloneness sigh as did David: "I look to the right and watch, but there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me, no man cares for me" (Ps. 142:4, R.S.V.).

(Continued on page 41)



SHEPHERDESS

Are They Ready?

BEATRICE STOUT

Washington Sanitarium

AN AUTOMOBILE, out of control, hurtles over a curb, roars across a lawn, and two young children are flung fifteen feet. Innocent children playing in their yard, healthy and laughing one moment, are dead the next, and the hopes and dreams of two young parents come crashing around them.

This senseless, needless waste of human life stuns us and there is impressed upon our consciousness the awful suddenness with which our lives may be snatched away.

Piercing the thick fabric of our complacency there emerges the solemn questions, Am I aware that what I am doing now, at this moment, will affect my child's future? Will he be prepared to handle life's problems or be defeated by them? Am I striving with every fiber of my being to develop in him a character that God will approve? The days and weeks pass swiftly. "It is impossible for us to overestimate the advantages of youthful piety. . . . The instruction of children has been greatly neglected, the righteousness of Christ has not been presented to them as it should have been."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 318.

The counsel given stands out bright and clear. Maybe our energies have been too devoted to the physical needs of our brood. In the oasis of plenty have we been living in a desert of poverty? Can we realize that we too may not have a moment to spare?

There is drama behind the scenes. While "Satan seeks to bind the children to himself as with bands of steel" Christ pleads that "all the talents and gifts . . . belong to God, and should be wholly consecrated to His service." The challenge to motherhood is the age-old challenge of bringing children to a knowledge of God. Most women know how to be socially correct. The grim fact we must accept is that many mothers cannot pass on an experience in Christ because the simple truth is they have nothing

to give. The world needs mothers who know how to establish Christian homes.

Being a parent costs all that we have. We must give and give of ourselves and then give some more. It is a job that has to be worked at continuously. Even animals can be trained to right habits. The family cat presents a problem by sharpening her claws on the upholstery. By persistently taking the animal to a reed basket and putting its paws on it the cat soon learns the lesson—the reed basket is the one place to sharpen claws.

Charles T. Bushnell, Ph.D., a sociologist, observes that when a child is three years old parents have done half they will ever do for his character. No air of mystery surrounds this molding of a life. Through determined personal effort we may see unfold the miracle of human character.

With uncertainty all pervasive, with the lowering clouds of Armageddon hanging over their heads, what youth need today are parents who have found certainties. Samuel Grofton in "The Tense Generation" says, "In a world as complicated as ours, and as filled with stresses, what children need most of all, obviously, is the closest possible kind of continuous communication with their parents. It is here that we are scoring our greatest failures."—*Look*, August 27, 1963.

Mrs. L. B. Johnson has achieved a warm and gentle relationship with her daughters. She has the habit of ending her telephone talks with "I have faith in you." Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them. Discipline, she says, is something children want. They feel cherished because of it and would feel lonely and abandoned if they were not disciplined. She teaches more by example than exhortation and compares her technique to floating messages out to sea and hoping they will come back eventually. "It has been my greatest satisfaction to see the lessons I had

tried to implant—and that had fallen, I thought, on arid fields—later blossom forth in one of my children.”

Peter Marshall made a clear-cut summation in one of his sermons: “The twentieth century challenge to motherhood—when it is all boiled down—is that mothers will have an experience of God . . . a reality which they can pass on to their children. For the newest of the sciences is beginning to realize, after a study of the teachings of Christ from the standpoint of psychology, that only as human beings discover and follow these inexorable spiritual laws, will they find the happiness and contentment we all seek.”—*Mr. Jones, Meet the Master*, p. 156.

It is said that it was of his role as a father that General Douglas MacArthur was proudest. Chosen father of the year in 1942 he wrote: “By profession I am a soldier and take great pride in that fact. But I am prouder to be a father. A soldier destroys in order to build; the father only builds, never destroys. It is my hope that my son, when I am gone, will remember me not from the battle but in the home repeating with him the simple prayer ‘Our Father who art in heaven.’ The world is aware of the imperious commander, but also of the head of the house kneeling humbly before his God.”

This is what parents must strive for; establishing such a loving and trusting family relationship that children will not be afraid to confide in them. How solemn is the thought. These lives are in our hands. “Who keep the thought in mind that all the talents and gifts of their children belong to God, and should be wholly consecrated to His service?”—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 319.

The Challenge of Absenteeism

(Continued from page 39)

Steps That Must Be Taken

Step 1. Each Sabbath school council and every church board should take as an assignment from Heaven the finding of the absentees and the reclaiming of the backslider.

Step 2. The leaders should put forth every effort to make each member in the Sabbath school and church conscious of the personal loss in all absentees.

Step 3. Sabbath school leaders should keep before the Sabbath school and church the spiritual loss of being absent from Sabbath school. This matter should be a subject of continuous prayer by all.

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Step 4. The Sabbath school leaders and members should let all absentees know that they are sincerely loved and missed.

Step 5. Every effort should be put forth to ascertain the cause for absence. The removal of the cause should challenge all. Attendance cannot be forced. Attendance rests upon a voluntary basis and the love of the truth. The appeal to our people for faithfulness in attendance cannot be that of loyalty alone. The Sabbath school programs we conduct must also attract. Surely it is a truism that “A better Sabbath school means an increased attendance.” People will attend if they feel they are getting something worth while.

Step 6. Last, but far from being least, we should take as our over-all goal for each Sabbath school session “to strengthen the personal relationship with Christ Jesus.” This, and this alone, can hold our people in these trying days when it is so easy to lose faith in God and go the way of the world.

Do not respect men merely for their riches, but rather for their philanthropy. We do not value the sun for its height, but for its use.

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BOOKS

Some Books on the Subject of Prayer

(Reviewed by C. M. Mellor)

Spiritual Renewal Through Personal Groups,
John L. Casteel, Association Press, New York,
N.Y., 1957, 220 pages.

John Casteel is professor of practical theology and director of field work at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He is a Congregational minister and is the writer of the well-known Reflection Book *The Promise of Prayer*.

Dr. Casteel's opening paragraph in his first chapter, "The Rise of Personal Groups," states, "The widespread appearance of small personal groups may be seen, in years to come, as one of the most significant religious movements of our time."

Nine ministers who have had personal groups meeting in their churches each write a chapter in this informative book, telling how the groups came into existence, how they are conducted, and the results of their presence on the total ministry of the church. It is always helpful to learn what works in other churches. Not all suggestions would fit into the Seventh-day Adventist way of life, but there are some excellent ideas given.

The last chapter, "Interpretation: The Problems and Possibilities of Personal Groups," is worth the price of the book. Here the author summarizes his observations on what makes a practical and functional group. He deals with a number of basic questions, such as "How Do Personal Groups Get Started?" "What Is the Basic Purpose and Nature of Personal Groups?" "What Is the Make-up of a Personal Group?" "What Do Groups Do When They Meet?" "How Does the Group Serve Others?" "The Minister, the Church, and the Group—How Are They Related?"

Prayer and Personal Religion, John B. Coburn,
The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,
1957, 96 pages (Layman's Theological
Library, Robert McAfee Brown, general editor).

John B. Coburn was graduated from Princeton

University and Union Theological Seminary, and taught English and biology for three years at Robert College, Istanbul, Turkey. He at present is dean of the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Just to read the table of contents would create in the average preacher a desire to have the book. The first chapter is entitled, "Prayer Is Response to God." Two other intriguing chapters are: "Clearing the Ground—When to Pray, Where to Pray, How to Pray" and "The Foundation Stones of Prayer—Adoration, Thanksgiving, Confession, Intercession and Petition."

Dr. Coburn writes, "Not to advance in the spiritual life is to go back. As we grow in age we are meant to grow in grace. But progress in prayer is never automatic. It comes about only as we deliberately pay attention to God and to developing those habits of thought and action which keep him before our minds."

Prayer and the Common Life, Dr. Georgia Harkness,
The Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tennessee,
1947, 224 pages (Apex paperback), \$1.25.

Georgia Harkness is a distinguished Methodist author, teacher, and theologian. For a number of years she was on the faculty of Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, until her recent retirement. She is recognized as an outstanding writer of contemporary Christian literature. This book was the winner of an Abingdon Award. It is acclaimed in the religious world as one of the classics on the subject of prayer.

Some excellent material is given on the types of prayer—adoration, thanksgiving, confession, petition, intercession, commitment, assurance, and ascription to Christ. The section in Dr. Harkness' book, "Methods of Prayer," is both interesting and practical. In this section the author discusses hindrances to prayer, ways of praying, private devotions, and congregational worship. Dr. Harkness writes, "Three questions will be kept in mind throughout this book. What are the foundations of prayer? What are its methods? What are its fruits?"

An excellent definition of prayer is given on page 28: "Prayer is not informing God of something He does not already know, or pleading with Him to change His mind. Prayer is the opening of the soul to God so that He can speak to us. Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; it is laying hold of God's willingness."

This book is a fine combination of knowledge and inspiration. It answers the what's, why's, and how's of prayer. It is one of the most helpful and comprehensive books on this important subject.

Making Prayer Real, Lynn James Radcliffe, The
Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1952, 245
pages (Apex paperback), \$1.25.

The cover of the book states, "Lynn James Radcliffe, pastor of Hyde Park Community Methodist Church in Cincinnati, has organized prayer groups and seminars in each church he has served and has

had the benefit of personal contact with great contemporary Christians on the philosophy and use of prayer."

This book will be the source of many interesting sermons on the subject of prayer. It is filled with many practical and interesting illustrations. It is written in outline form, which makes it an excellent guide for busy preachers.

The author says, "The greatest force in the world is the power of God. When we open the doors through our prayers, God's power will stream in, and results beyond anything we have expected will take place." The idea is stressed that in order to have an effective prayer life one must discipline his time and habits. The author writes, "The total life of prayer is like a climb up a mountain. Many people are content to dwell on the plain or to immerse themselves in the bustle of the city and never to make the effort of really mounting up into the very presence of God. They know that the eternal summit is always there, looming up mysteriously in the distance against the horizon. They believe in its existence; they count upon it as one of the landmarks of their lives. Sometimes they stand in awe and appreciation of its distant beauty. But they never feel impelled to leave the city of man and start out upon the trail that leads to the higher vantage points of prayer."

The reader will gain much from the reading of this book.

***New Life in the Church*, Robert A. Raines, Harper and Brothers, Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1961, 155 pages.**

When Robert A. Raines wrote the book *New Life in the Church* he was pastor of the Aldersgate Methodist church in Cleveland, Ohio. His church was on the west side of this great cosmopolitan and industrial city, and was in a state of spiritual decadence.

"We experience the loss of mission in the routinized life of work and community," writes the author. "We feel ourselves to be cogs in the industrial machine by day, and ciphers in the homogenized neighborhood by night. We feel the overwhelming pressures to conform, to lapse into the crowd, to relinquish responsibility, to lose individuality. . . . The church too has lost her sense of mission. The church has accommodated herself to the cultural climate."

It was through personal prayer groups that life in the Aldersgate church was revitalized. The pastor writes, "It is a main task of the church to provide the conditions and circumstances in which God may awaken people, or reawaken them. Church leaders must learn how to prepare people for conversion. We must lead our people into those places where the wind blows, where the Holy Spirit is working. It is this writer's conviction that the most propitious conditions for awakening prevail in Koinonia groups centering on Bible study."

It is a thrilling story of what happened in this church. Every Seventh-day Adventist minister could profit by this interesting account.

***Power Through Prayer Groups—Their Why and How*, Helen Smith Shoemaker, Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1958, 124 pages.**

Helen Shoemaker was wife of one of the nation's most distinguished Episcopal clergymen, the late Samuel M. Shoemaker, and daughter of former Senator H. Alexander Smith. She has become noted through her numerous magazine articles, many speaking engagements, and wide circulation of her two books on prayer, *Prayer and You* and *The Secret of Effective Prayer*.

The Shoemakers used prayer groups in their churches in New York City, and later in Pittsburgh, to great advantage. In the "Introduction," Everett H. Jones, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of West Texas, writes, "Here is a book, born out of wide experience. . . . The recent spread of prayer groups is a striking phenomenon of the religious life of our time. This movement has come in response to a recognized need."

Mrs. Shoemaker says, "As athletes develop certain physical muscles, so members of prayer groups are developing certain spiritual muscles. Those I have mentioned are the most noticeable: the secret bond, the growing understanding of the Bible, concern for one another's troubles, the ability to cope with one's own troubles, a growing belief in the power of prayer, the experience of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the experience of going over and above the call of duty and an increasing participation in united worship."

***A Christian Handbook of Communism*, John Knox Press, \$1.00.**

Prepared by the committee on World Literary and Christian Literature of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, this fourth revised and enlarged edition affords a brief refresher course in the origins, philosophy, and objectives of Communism, especially as it opposes Christian aims and ideals. It grew out of four months of intensive study by a group of Christian workers from many countries. As a digest of their findings this work is clear in its analysis, authentic in its statistics and sources, judicial in its tone, and positive in its witness for Christianity as the only remedy for sin.

In this present era of seeming appeasement with communistic countries and peaceful coexistence as a possible solution of the essential conflict between Marxism and Christianity, this frank assessment of the irreconcilable elements in the two philosophies points up the responsibility of the Christian in making vital to the world the spiritual freedom of the gospel. It urges no political action, stirs no animosities, and proposes no solution to the cold war. It merely appeals for responsible living on the part of the Christian with world evangelism in view. It suggests that the ultimate requirement of a Christian is not that he be successful in any of his undertakings, but only that he be faithful.

H. M. TIPPETT



NEWS BRIEFS

[Unless otherwise credited, the following news items are taken from Religious News Service.]

ALC to Drop Evangelist for Promoting "Tongues"

The Reverend A. Herbert Mjorud will be released from his post as an evangelist for the American Lutheran Church at the end of the year because he allegedly promoted "speaking in tongues" in the church. Mr. Mjorud told the church council he had received the "gift of the fullness of the Holy Spirit" two and a half years ago. Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz, ALC president, said the practice has resulted in confusion and divisiveness within congregations in several parts of the ALC. The action to terminate Mr. Mjorud's services as a staff evangelist does not affect his status as an ALC clergyman, it was explained. He will be eligible for a call to a congregation.

U.S.-British Methodist Merger Is Suggested

Bishop Fred P. Corson of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, president of the World Methodist Council, suggested in Sheffield, England, that the Methodist churches in Great Britain and the United States should consider the possibility of a merger. Addressing the annual General Conference of the British Methodist Church he told the delegates: "This is the age of ecumenicity when all branches of the Christian church should think how they can get on together." He said he was not implying that American Methodists should become British Methodists, or vice-versa. He stressed, however, that British Methodism was the "mother" of world Methodism and therefore should offer guidance to the whole Methodist family.

Soviet Radio Warns of "Bible Smuggling"

Soviet Radio in Moscow called for Russian citizens to resist efforts by tourists to supply Bibles and devotional objects to Soviet Christians. "These tourists will fail in their campaign of smuggling into the U.S.S.R. such imperialist propaganda," the broadcast stated. It was claimed that "one American tourist brought in 100 Bibles to Minsk and an American woman tried to import 700 anti-Soviet religious booklets produced by the American Central Intelligence Agency and State Department."

Church Music Directors Form Choir at Workshop

Some 116 choir directors, church organists, and ministers of music demoted themselves to rank-and-file choir service in Eugene, Oregon, to improve their skills as church musicians at the third national workshop sponsored by the Association of Disciples (Christian Churches) Musicians. Dr. Elaine Brown, director of an interracial chorus called the Singing City in Philadelphia, converted the impromptu choir into a functioning ensemble which presented a concert at the close of the workshop. In the process of preparing them for the concert, Dr. Brown instructed the musicians in skills and techniques they can apply in their own congregations. She emphasized the need for pastors and church musicians to cooperate closely to produce better church music and greater congregational participation.

Baptist Congregation Marks "Christmas in July"

The Reverend C. Norman Bennett of the Central Baptist church in Altavista, Virginia, hoping to avoid the commercialism of the holiday season, celebrated a "truly Christian Christmas" in mid-summer. On July 26 this church threw open its doors to the summer heat and held its Christmas service. Baptists of Altavista filled every seat in the church and extra chairs had to be set up in the aisles. Outside, the morning heat was above 90 degrees, and inside, the humidity literally clung to the walls. Women wore bright summer dresses, the men wore loose, light suits. But the spirit was thoroughly Christmas. That was what they had come for. "We aren't trying to change the date of Christmas," Mr. Bennett explained. "We are trying to put Christmas back into perspective, without the usual exhaustion of the December season. For most people these days," he continued, "the Christmas season usually begins before the Thanksgiving dinner is over, and the religious meaning is lost."

Old Church Building Divided in Rare Expansion Plan

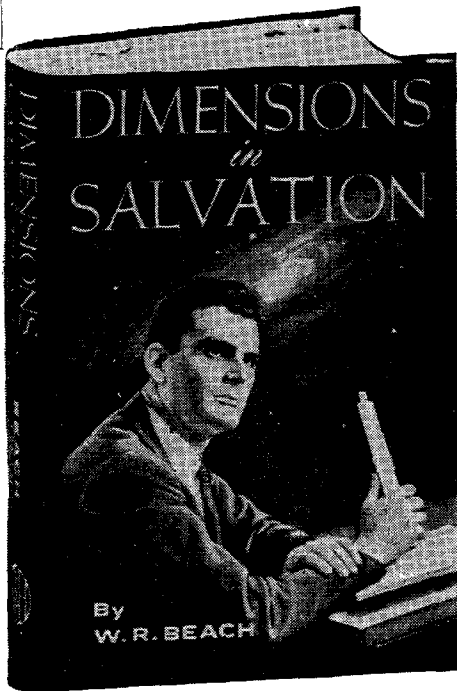
Westfield Presbyterian church in Westfield, New Jersey, was split in two—but it was the 103-year-old church structure, not the congregation, that was divided. Too small for its 4,500 members and 2,000-plus church school students, the old building was literally pulled apart by a powerful winch. In the 36-foot gap between halves of the building, a new addition will be constructed. Westfield church, largest United Presbyterian church in the United States, was founded in 1782. The \$250,000 construction project is expected to be completed by December.

Catholic Institute Publishes Hymnal of Christian Unity

A hymnal on Christian unity, believed to be the first of its kind, was published by the Gregorian Institute of America at Mary Manse College (Ro-

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man Catholic) in Toledo, Ohio. Named *Hymnal of Christian Unity*, the book contains 100 hymns selected to promote musical bonds among Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christians. The editors are Dr. Clifford Bennett, president of the Gregorian Institute, and Paul Hume, chairman of the department of music at Georgetown University and music critic of the *Washington Post*. They said that music, rather than theology, initially offers the greater possibility of enhancing a spirit of unity and mutual acquaintance.

House of Commons Approves Anglican Vestments Measure

A measure giving Anglican clergy legal sanction to wear ritual vestments at Holy Communion services was approved by the House of Commons, 205 votes to 23. Previously the proposal was approved in the House of Lords, 86 to 15, with a small vocal minority opposing the bill as a "drift toward Rome." Approved by the Anglican Church Assembly last February, the proposal now goes to Queen Elizabeth for royal assent as titular head of the Church of England. In effect, the bill merely regularizes a common practice of many clergy, who wore vestments even though they were not technically authorized to do so.

Jewish Choir's Recital Aids Anglican Church

An Orthodox Jewish choir gave a benefit recital in a suburban Anglican church in London to help finance a new roof for the building. The performance took place following a service for the Anglican parishioners. Before the choir entered the church, its vicar, the Reverend Harry Norton, had all Christian symbols covered out of respect for the Jewish group's religious beliefs. Later a spokesman for the Archbishop of Canterbury lauded the inter-religious gesture of good will as furthering better relations between Christians and Jews.

FAITH

*Have faith in God! Do not have faith in fear!
Add this commandment to the list of ten!
Let the commandment be: "Thou shalt not fear!"
And when you've said it once, say it again!
"Fear not, for I am with you," saith the Lord.
What better place for faith than in God's Word?
—BUD COLLYER in *Thou Shalt Not Fear*
(Fleming H. Revell Company)*

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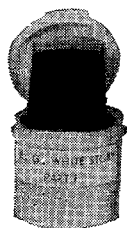
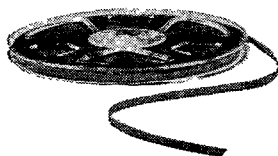
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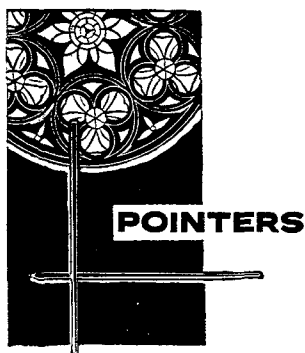
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A JOYFUL SOUND THE Christian should enjoy being one. Some feel that the "joys of our Lord" are to be entered into only in the world to come. They condemn any expression of fervor in devotions as emotionalism. The sound of an "Amen" has well-nigh disappeared from the eleven o'clock worship service, not because the sermons are lacking in fervor but because there seems to be a "gentleman's agreement" among the saints that the "night before Christmas" atmosphere (where not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse) must prevail. In some congregations, to say a fervent though cultured "Amen" is to subject oneself to the silent pressure of a thousand stares, or to frowns of disapproval equal in impact to the chilling blast of arctic air in midwinter. Worship actually has become the prisoner of "culture." And the fervent worshiper is quickly labeled the congregation's oddball and as such is apologized for.

This formal atmosphere was not characteristic of apostolic worship. To quote a minister at a recent gathering of the saints, "It was so finely organized and smoothly executed that I wonder whether the Lord could get into the line-up." This certainly is no plea for "unreined" emotionalism nor unlimited congregational expression, nor for the "panting, ranting" pulpit manner. Conversely, has it occurred to you, as it has to me, that the saints may also freeze to death? Said one of the fervent worshipers of another age, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound" (Ps. 89:15).

E. E. C.

ECCLESIASTICAL HERMIT It is inconceivable, but sometimes true, that ministers often of the same faith spend years in the same city and never get acquainted. The most frequently heard excuse for this is, "I've been too busy lately." Beneath this veneer are problems so basic as to require attention, immediate and remedial. For that which separates clergymen weakens the church in its witness.

Chief among the "reasons" for ministerial estrangement is pride. Each man is waiting for the other to get in touch with him. This can go on endlessly unless someone breaks the ice. Another "reason" for lack of fellowship is fear—fear that one's own members may find the other pastor's ministry more to their liking. Yet others shield their

provincialism behind the prevailing class distinctions of certain areas. And yet others are hermits by nature. They prefer to work alone. The impossibility of this has not yet registered with them.

Brethren, much of the joy in being a minister lies in fellowship with others of like profession. The enrichment is mutual. God has in His wisdom distributed His gifts over a wide area. Every man has something to offer you! It also is a relief to know that others have problems as do we. Shared suffering brings relief. Fellowship between ministers builds confidence in the clergy. For the reasons here mentioned, and many others, God's men ought to get together more often. In short, let the hermit forsake his lair, venture forth in today's world, and learn the reality of our Lord's prayer, "that they may be one."

E. E. C.

SOMETHING NEW IN EVANGELISM there is no plagiarism of method. This is of necessity true as there is nothing being done that hasn't been done as it is being done. In short—there is nothing new under the sun. Occasionally we are treated with a fresh approach to our problems—*fresh*, I say, only because history has obscured the last practitioner who did it this way. There is little room for selfishness or pride in the practice of our saintly craft. To the extent of our willingness to share, we all grow.

To practice a successful method and hide it under a bushel makes little sense when you consider the basic issues. (1) We are working to get out of this world. It follows that the more men doing a better job in more places more often will hasten the end. (2) You cannot conceal a good method forever. A good plan will advertise itself. (3) Sharing is a law of life itself, and its violation can only bring misery and embarrassment upon discovery.

"There is no new thing under the sun." Only an omniscient God could make this revelation as man is often separated from the preceding generation by barriers of time and information. For instance, what advantage, structural or otherwise, does the Empire State Building have over the tower of Babel—except air conditioning? What secrets of antediluvian glory did the Flood bury? He who knows the end from the beginning declares that there is nothing new *under the sun*. Then let us in humility share the good so freely shared with us by others, till the day we meet *above the sun*—where I am told there is something new.

E. E. C.

Times are always hard for those who seek soft jobs.

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Work is not only the way to make a living, but the way to make a life.

To do more for the world than the world does for you, that is success.