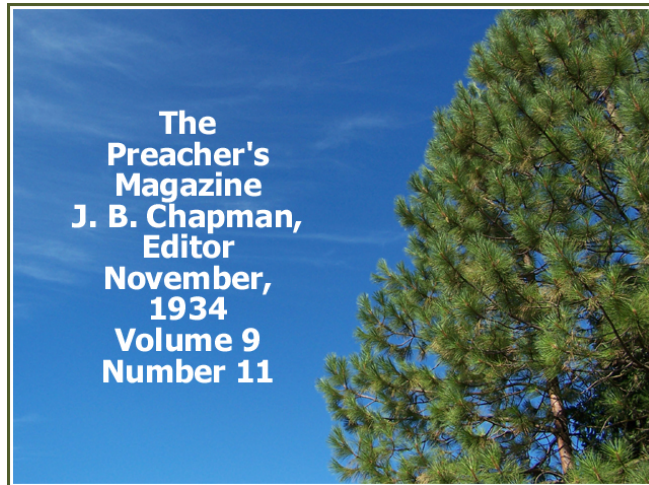


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THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE
J. B. Chapman, Editor

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01 -- OUR CONNECTIONAL INTERESTS -- J. B. Chapman

It is just as difficult for a local church to live to itself as for an individual to do so. It is no doubt possible for the individual, under certain circumstances, to be saved and make his way to heaven without becoming a member of any local congregation of the church, although I think it is scarcely possible for anyone to serve as full a purpose in the world this way as he could do if he cast in his lot with the people of God and shared in their community worship and their co-operation in service. Likewise a Congregation may function to some extent and be simply "a local church." Under such conditions it can finance itself and pray for itself and get oh after a fashion. But there are certain wide interests in which every Christian and every local congregation should be interested that cannot be successfully served in this manner. Take the cause of foreign missions: I know some people think that a passing gift -- and especially a liberal gift -- now and then is all there is to it. But the truth is that the foreign missionary task is not the work of a day or of a year -- scarcely of a generation. For any foreign missionary undertaking to be worth much, it must be regularly supported by both men and money and must be perpetuated for a sufficient time for the native church to be developed and trained for self-support and Self-direction and this practically always takes more than one generation. And all this time there must be a steady stream of prayer, and money, and new missionaries. For not only must there be revivals and souls saved, but there must be education and training and development until there is, properly speaking, a Christian community and a Christian church. And this is not a, work that can be sustained by a local church, unless that local church takes on the proportions of a denomination, which is impossible to all but one church in ten thousand. So, if for no other reason, there must be loyal denominational cooperation for the sake of the foreign missionary task.

This issue of The Preacher's Magazine contains some special material for use of ministers in the Church of the Nazarene in connection with the semi-annual "special offering" for bringing up the General Budget, the larger part of which is for the support of Foreign Missions. In our church Easter and Thanksgiving are, by common consent, everywhere reserved for the purpose of a campaign of inspiration in connection with the denominational program, and on these occasions every pastor and every church is expected to make a special effort to bring up all delinquencies in the payment of the denominational budgets. This plan has met with almost Universal approval, and has been a great blessing to our people, as well as a means of advantage to the world-wide program of the church.

Dr. Morrison and Brother Fleming and others will tell of the needs and give the details of the plan, but I am just urging the full co-operation of our ministers --

especially of the pastors. Make this an occasion, not only for raising money, but also for making known to our people the things our church is trying to do. It is like using Christmas for making known the facts of the life of Christ -- there is no other time quite so good, since the atmosphere is prepared. In two thousand local churches of the Church of the Nazarene, preachers and people will be hearing about our work around the world, and this very fact makes it an auspicious time for you to "Nazareneize" your crowd. And no matter how large or how small your portion of the General Budget is, your people will be happier and better prepared for other tasks if this amount is raised and paid. Our people like to pay the General Budget, and they like to co-operate with their brethren. Help them, lead them on. Present the matter in such a matter that the people will give as a privilege and not merely as a duty. Make the Thanksgiving offering a means of grace to your people. Make it help on with the revival in your own church. Make it an occasion for developing denominational consciousness, and thus it will become a means of helping you with every phase of your work -- district and local.

And I believe that readers of The Preacher's Magazine who serve in other denominations will find some of the suggestions contained in this issue useful. Let all such brethren use all liberty in adapting any useful suggestion to their own purpose in their own denomination. Nothing in this paper is copyrighted. If you can use any of the plans or suggestions -- use them. Your denomination has a program also, and it needs inspiration and help, and we shall be happy if any plans of ours can be utilized or adapted by any pastor in any denomination.

* * *

There is nothing timely about the habit of exhorting in connection with an acceptance speech. I have become convinced of that. I cannot go into details, but if one will think about it a little he will see that for one to exhort in connection with his acceptance of any sort of position is the equivalent of notifying the people that they are very fortunate to get such a one as himself, and that now, since they have a real leader, it is to be expected that they will wake up and do something unusual. Whereas, the time to boast is when one is laying the armor off, after the battle. If you have been elected to any sort of position and you are minded to accept it, accept it that's all.

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02 -- EXPOSITORY MESSAGES FROM HEBREWS -- Olive M. Winchester

Being Perfected By Christ

"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood . . . what further need was there that another priest should rise?" (Heb. 7:11a).

From whatever aspect the word perfection is presented, it brings to us a certain wondering. When applied to Christ as a process to be accomplished, we stop to muse for we consider that Christ is the only perfect being, but while this is true of His nature, yet in the accomplishment of His work there was a bringing to perfection through suffering. On the other hand when we apply the term to man, we draw back because we feel that the human race is so compassed about with infirmity that it cannot produce one who is perfect. But when rightly considered there is a perfecting of man also.

The Thought Of Perfection In The Old Testament

In the centuries preceding the Christian era the Scriptures were translated into the Greek for the use of the large colony of Jews who had settled in Alexandria and had forgotten their mother tongue. In this translation we find practically the whole family of words that contains the idea of perfecting, and the significance would no doubt influence the New Testament meanings.

Tracing through the use of the adjective perfect we find it applied to the victims to be offered in sacrifice, that is, they were to be without blemish, namely, perfect (Ex. 12:15). Moreover we find the word used to describe the physical features of the daughters of men (Gen. 6:2). But leaving physical aspects and coming to religious, there is a very specific statement made in I Kings 8:61 when Solomon in his dedicatory prayer blessed the people and exhorted them, "Let your heart, therefore, be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day."

But the verb is more extensive in its scope of meanings than the other parts of speech. The Prophet Ezekiel speaking of the rich adornment of the city of Tyro, proclaimed, "The men of Arvad, with thine army, were upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadims were in thy towers: they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about, they have made thy beauty perfect" (27:11). Further we read regarding the building of the temple, "Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the Lord and until it was finished: so the house of the Lord was perfected" (2 Chron. 8:16). Not only is such a reference made to the work of the temple as a whole but to a particular portion of the temple, thus we read, "And upon the top of the pillars was lily work: so was the work of the pillars finished" (perfected) (1 Kings 7:22). Again it is used in connection with Nehemiah's building of the walls; "And it came to pass that when all the enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God" (perfected) (Neh. 6:16). In each of these cases a different word is used in the Hebrew but is rendered in the Greek translation by the verb indicating to perfect. In the apocryphal books the verb is used to refer to men in that they were perfected.

The Thought Of Perfection In The New Testament Apart From The Epistle To The Hebrews

In the New Testament books we find the adjective, perfect, quite frequently used. Westcott classifies these usages giving first those wherein it is used "to describe that which has reached the highest perfection in the sphere which is contemplated, as contrasted with that which is partial such as 1 Cor. 13:10, or imperfect, James 1:4, or provisional, James 1:25, or incomplete, Romans 12: 2; James 1:17; 1 John 4:12, and especially of Christians who have reached full growth in contrast with those who are immature or undeveloped (Eph. 4:13; Col. 1:28; 4:12), either generally (Matt. 5:48; 19:21; 1 Cor. 2:6; Phil. 3:15; James 3:2, or in some particular aspect, 1 Cor. 14:20."

As we note the last references in this list, we cannot but be persuaded that there is a sense wherein men may be perfect. The Master Himself commanded it, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," or as the Revised Version reads, "Ye shall therefore be perfect" In either case the sense is the same. Relying on the context for the import of the passage we find that it deals chiefly with our attitude toward our fellowman; we are to ever maintain toward him a spirit of love whether he be friend or foe. Again we may gather the thought of the purport of this word in Christ's admonition to the rich young ruler, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come follow me." This young man was divided in his allegiance to an eternal inheritance and his earthly possessions; if he was to have a united or perfect heart he must make that allegiance in perfect alignment with the heavenly inheritance. Still another passage specifies the nature of this perfection when the Apostle Paul speaks of the content of the prayer of Epaphras for the Colossians, "That they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (4:12). All these would seem to refer to a relationship to be established between every believing heart and its Lord.

Besides these there are the passages which indicate perfection as a matter of growth and development such as Eph. 4:13. The apostle speaks of the different forms of the ministry given unto the church and the objective for the same, "For the perfecting of the saints . . . till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Here the significance of the perfect man is specified by the following phrase, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." To accomplish this a lifetime of service will be required. With this Col. 1:28 might be allied.

Not only do we have these passages which indicate development in a general sense with the goal the "stature of the fullness of Christ" but also there are special phases of human life wherein there is to be growth and development. There is the understanding, 1 Cor. 14:20 (the word men here in the original is perfect); 1 Cor. 2:6; Phil 3:15. Then there is the matter of right speech, so we have the admonition in James, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man" (3:2).

In the one passage wherein the noun is used in the writings of Paul, the thought is carried right into the heart of Christian perfection giving us explicitly its essential nature. Herein the writer exhorts, "And above all things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:14).

Coming to the usage of the verb, we find it indicating the fulfilling of a number of days (Luke 2:43), finishing a course (Acts 20:24), and the co-ordinating of faith and works to express a full Christian life (James 2:22). While there are these general uses of the word, there is also the special sense being found especially in the First Epistle of John with this meaning. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (2:5). From this passage we glean the thought that the perfecting is in love and the evidence of that is in keeping the Word of God. Again, "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us" (4:12); in this case the test is love for one another. Finally in this same chapter following on in verses 16, 17 and 18, the evidence lies in love to God. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth, is not made perfect in love." When the heart is made perfect in love there is the personal fellowship with God the Father and all fear is removed, especially the fear of condemnation.

"Concluding his comments on the terms as found in these writers, Westcott says, "Through these various applications of the word one general thought is preserved. He who is perfect has reached the end which is in each case set before him, maturity of growth, complete development of powers, full enjoyment of privileges, perfect possession of knowledge."

The Thought Or Perfection In The Epistle To The Hebrews

When we come to follow the significance of the thought of perfection in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find as elsewhere that the import of the term varies and must be determined from the context, There is the matured Christian who has learned to discriminate, between good and evil. (5:14), the phrase "of full age" being expressed in the original by the adjective perfect. This thought of developed knowledge which would qualify the possessors to be teachers is carried on into the next chapter but points in this second instance more particularly to experience as the underlying factor, and in consequence we have the exhortation, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God" (6:1). Here it is plainly implied that subsequent to repentance and saving faith there is an experience that can be expressed as perfect-on.

Besides representing perfection as an experience which is to be the goal toward which the believer should press, hope and assurance of the obtainment of

this experience is set before us in that the ground lies in the work of Christ. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (10:14). Then the veil is drawn aside so that we may catch a glimpse of the other world and there we behold "The spirits of just men made perfect" (12:23b).

Finally in drawing the contrast between the old dispensation with its rites and ceremonies, one of the special inadequacies of the ritualistic sacrifices was that it could not make the comers thereunto perfect. We have the question asked, "If perfection were by the Levitical priesthood . . . what further need was there that another priest should arise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" Then there is the definite statement, "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." Furthermore there is the assertion, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sin" (10:11f). In each of these references there is the implication that the law was in default because of its inability to make its worshippers perfect, and that the objective of the Christian dispensation was to this end. Moreover in the last passage there is indication of what the nature of Christian perfection is that in this state and condition there is no more conscience of sins.

When we seek to gather the meaning of Christian perfection from the many references found in Scripture, limiting ourselves to those passages which indicate the experience and do not imply a general sense or refer to Christian maturity, we find that in summing up the thoughts, the leading characteristics may be expressed in love to God that excludes fear of judgment, love to man that includes friend and foe and the purging the conscience from the sense of sin, causing the individual to keep the commandments of God and do His will. All this was included in the atoning work of Christ, as its great objective and goal, and toward this experience every Christian should press until it becomes a reality in his life. recognition that this is possible only through the working of grace in the human heart, yet we would not deny but that it is in the realm of grace to accomplish this. Another priest has arisen after the order of Melchisedec who is made after the "power of an endless life," he "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

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03 -- TEMPTATION -- Children's Leader

Down on his knees in the snow an Indian was making a little path between some pine branches which he was pushing down into the snow.

"What are you making?" asked a man who had been watching him.

"A snare for rabbits," answered the Indian. "But I don't see the snare," said the man. "Ha! Ha!" laughed the Indian. "I shan't put in the snare for a couple of weeks yet. I fix this lane now so the rabbits will get used to it. Tonight they will come and be scary about it. Next night they'll come a little closer. Soon they'll grow bolder, thinking there is no danger, and nibble at the twigs. Then I'll put my snare in the middle of the little arch and I shall catch a rabbit every night."

"Yes, I see," nodded the man. "That's just the plan Satan uses when he wants to catch a boy or girl. He gets them to make little beginnings, little nibblings at temptation, little puffs of cigarettes, little sips of wine, and when he has fooled them into thinking there is no danger he catches their souls."

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04 -- PREPARING THE ATMOSPHERE FOR PREACHING -- Paul S. Hill

Much has been said about the preparation of the sermon and the preacher, but even a well prepared preacher, with a well prepared sermon, will sometimes fail because of the lack of a prepared atmosphere for the sermon delivery. We do not refer to poor ventilation, and heat, and cold, though these are important. We refer to the flatness or deadness or emptiness of the spiritual atmosphere which exists just preceding the preaching of the sermon. Such an atmosphere will frequently spoil a sermon and a preacher. On the other hand, a good preaching atmosphere will often make for the success of even a poorly prepared sermon and preacher.

What we mean by a good preaching atmosphere is revealed in the ministry of Jesus. "And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." There it is; attention, expectancy, anticipation, open eyes, open hearts, reverent expectancy. An ideal preaching atmosphere. But Jesus did not always have such a responsive congregation. Sometimes the atmosphere was contrary to the reception of truth, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

When the time comes for preaching, the minister is supposed to preach, whether he has a sermon or not, whether he is prepared in his own heart or not, whether there is a good preaching atmosphere or not. Preaching is his job, a part of the service, what he is paid for, what the people expect him to do. Succeed or fail, preach he must, lest he come under condemnation, disappoint the people, fail as God's messenger and get down in his own experience.

There may be extenuating circumstances, but usually a minister is to be blamed for lack of a prepared heart to preach a prepared sermon. In the usual order of events he knows he is to preach at a given time, knows he will need heart preparation to preach, and is to be blamed if he goes to the appointed preaching place without either a sermon to preach, or a heart to preach. But though a minister is responsible for sermon and heart preparation, he is not always responsible for a

good preaching atmosphere. The best prepared sermon and heart will frequently come in contact with a poorly prepared preaching atmosphere, and that condition may be the undoing of both his sermon and his heart, so that he leaves the pulpit broken in spirit because of failure in preaching. Part of every sermon is in heart preparation, part in sermon preparation, but the biggest part of a sermon is its delivery, and in order that a sermon be delivered with effect, there must be the preparation of an atmosphere that will put the preacher at his best, and the congregation at its most expectant and responsive mood.

It is hard to describe this thing we are calling the preaching atmosphere. Perhaps it will help if we say it must be Christian. That does not explain it very well, but what we are trying to say is that worldly things, silly strata of thought, ranting testimony meetings, jazz music or singing, the introduction of some trifling thing, these, and many more like them, create a very poor preaching atmosphere, and are to blame for many poor sermons, and many ministerial failures. There is a dignity without starchiness that is Christian. There is form without formality, geysers of grace without the gas of gabble, there is the power of the Spirit that is so different from "worked up" jubilation or sentiment.

If a minister is in charge of the preliminaries of the preaching service he can do much to create a good preaching atmosphere. His choice of the hymns can be used to produce a spirit of reverence and worship. The notices, (always a bug-bear) can be given briefly and clearly, and need not have a bad effect. The offering can be taken without a funny story or rowdy invitation to "shell out." Usually a pastor has the opportunity of creating a good preaching atmosphere, but sometimes he has perplexing conditions that are hard to overcome. We know of one church where a good brother would gather all the songbooks up before the service and pile them up on the front seat beside him, then when anyone came in he would arise, travel to the back of the church, shake hands with the new arrival, say a few words in a monotone, give him a songbook opened at the proper song, and return to his seat at the front of the church, only to repeat the process the next time another person entered the church. As the people kept coming in for about a half hour from the time the meeting began it can easily be seen how distracting this would be to the congregation of worshippers and the minister, and how difficult it became to create a good preaching atmosphere. The only settlement there was, was a settlement with the good man and his songbooks. This accomplished in love with a little tact helped a lot.

Sometimes there is a previous speaker who takes part of the service. The cause he represents is good. He should be heard and the cause he represents given attention, but such men are hard to follow with a sermon. Especially is this so if they have requested an offering and people are thinking how they can give, or how they can help. Usually when this first speaker is finished the people are ready to go home. It is nearly always disastrous to the preacher, even though he is well prepared. He feels as though he were saying, "The time is not quite all gone, brethren; stay a little while longer and I will preach you a little sermon."

Sometimes the preaching preliminaries are in the hands of another than the preacher himself. Then indeed he is at the mercy of the winds, unless the other has the same object and mind as himself. Song leaders can be a great help to a minister, or alas, they can well-nigh destroy him.

We have heard of great preachers who, when they stood to preach in the poorest possible atmosphere, stood before the people in silence until there was a hush of expectancy and reverence.

I once saw a noted Sunday school worker spend, it seemed to me, all of five minutes, getting control of his congregation, and himself, but he created just the atmosphere he desired and delivered a wonderful address, which would have been impossible without the preaching atmosphere. He has a natural impediment in his speech and had need of self-control. He stood there waiting to speak to a noisy body of people whose minds were in a variety of directions. Standing perfectly still his face showed strong desire with strong determination. Helpless because of the impediment in his speech, strong because he had a message for the Sunday schools of the world. Little by little the noise subsided. Finally he said "I cannot speak to you until everyone is giving attention." Another long pause with increasing quiet. Then "Let every one look this way please." And not until every eye was looking in his direction, and, I believe, every person waiting to hear what he had to say, did he begin his address, the opening sentences of which I still remember, although it was about thirty years ago. Here are the opening sentences of his address made in a created atmosphere: "The best people in any community are the ones who go to church. The best people in any church are the ones who go to Sunday school and help run it." If those two sentences had been spoken to an unprepared congregation, regardless of how they might later have recovered themselves, his entire address would have lacked its full size and meaning. From the beginning he held the rapt attention of all and the people went away saying, "What a wonderful message." The result of a prepared atmosphere.

Jesus read a scripture lesson before He preached. Perhaps that was the reason why "The eyes of all that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." Surely a short reading from the Bible will help, if it is well read. A solo of lofty theme, and sung with spiritual sweetness and power will help, just as a silly song full of religious jokes will hinder. A prayer (silent or audible) will help. However it is created, this thing we call preaching atmosphere must be created. The church and the preacher must insist upon it. At every preaching service there must be a spirit, a condition, an atmosphere which allows the Word of God to run and be glorified. Otherwise the preacher, the church, and the world at large will be deprived of one of God's greatest blessings.

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We take the following from "Then Remembered They," one of the booklets sent out by The World Wide Revival Prayer Movement (Dr. and Mrs. Henry M. Woods, 5 S. Oxford Avenue, Ventnor, Atlantic City, N. J.), and which are being so widely used in a revival of prayer all over the world.

Rev. Samuel Chadwick, late President of Cliff College, England, has written, "The conviction deepens that the supreme need of the Church is the spirit and habit of prayer. There are many other needs. There is need of laborers and of funds, of wisdom and of reform, of simplicity and of friendliness, but the need of prayer transcends them all. If only the Church of Christ could be impelled to prayer, there would be an end of barrenness and failure. It is the lack of prayer that lies at the root of all our troubles, and there is no remedy but in prayer. The habits of worldliness will never be broken by strong and fiery words of censure. The powerlessness of the Church cannot be cured by reproach. Spiritual destitution and moral laxity are not to be removed by clever analysis and urgent appeal. Things will never be better until prayer is restored to its true place in the organization of the Church and the habits of individual believers. There is no substitute for prayer, but to prayer all things are possible. This is a truism of the Christian faith. Nobody denies it. Everybody says it. All history confirms it. If only the people of God could be baptized into a passion for prayer, life would quicken, miracles would return, souls would be saved, and coffers would overflow. Why do we not set ourselves to prayer? The remedy is sure and simple, the need is urgent and acknowledged. Why is it so slow in getting to work?

"The remedy is not so simple as it seems. Prayer is sometimes spoken of as a lost art, and that means there is an art of prayer. The command to ask seems simple enough and the promise is to them that ask. 'If you have not, it is because ye ask not.' 'Ask and ye shall receive.' What could be simpler than that? And yet the Scriptures speak of it as toil and labor. Prayer taxes all the resources of mind and heart. Jesus Christ wrought many mighty works without any sign of effort. There was in His marvelous works the ease of omnipotence, but of His prayers it is said, 'He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears.' There was no strain in healing diseases, raising the dead, and stilling the tempest; but in prayer there was agony and the sweat of blood. All who have shared His intercession have found it a travail anguish. Great saints have always been mighty in prayer and their triumphs have always been the outcome of pain. They wrestled in agony with breaking hearts and weeping eyes, until they were assured they had prevailed.

"Their experiences read like the records of spiritual hysteria. Their words are to us an unknown tongue. It is useless to quote them, for we have lost the key to the mystery. They spent cold winter nights in prayer, they lay on the ground weeping, and pleading, and came out of the conflict physically spent, but spiritually victorious. They wrestled with principalities and powers, contended with the world rulers of Satan's kingdom, and grappled with spiritual foes in the heavenly sphere.

A lost art. No man can speak of the inner shrine of private devotion, but the secret life of the individual is revealed in open life of the Church, and in the fellowship of believers there is little power in prayer. There is a marked absence of travail. There is much phrasing, but little pleading. Prayer has become a soliloquy instead of a passion! The powerlessness of the Church needs no other explanation, and the counselors of the Church need seek no other cause. To be prayerless is to be both passionless and powerless."

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06 -- I WILL POUR OUT THE SPIRIT OF SUPPLICATION -- Andrew Murray

"The mystery of prayer is the mystery of the divine indwelling. God in heaven gives His Spirit in our hearts to be there the divine power praying in us, and drawing us upward to our God. God is a Spirit, and nothing but a like life and Spirit within us can hold communion with Him. It was this man was created for, that God might dwell and work in him and be the life of his life. It is this, the indwelling of ,God through the Spirit, that alone can explain and enable us to appropriate the wonderful promises given to prayer.

"God gives the Spirit as a Spirit of supplication, too, to maintain His Divine life within us as a life out of which prayer ever rises upward. Without the Holy Spirit no man can call Jesus Lord, or cry, Abba Father; no man can worship in Spirit and truth, or pray without ceasing. The Holy Spirit is given the believer to be and do in him all that God wants him to be or do. He is given him especially as the Spirit of prayer and supplication."

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07 -- RULES FOR PUBLIC PRAYER -- Mildred Bangs Wynkoop

In order to formulate rules for public prayer we must first determine its function in a service. We recognize at once the obvious function of prayer, that of invoking the blessing of God upon the special occasion. But there is a function equally as important and which is, I believe, almost totally unrecognized by the mass of men and women. It is the psychological preparation of the people's minds for the truth. Happy is the man or woman who can touch the throne of grace and bring blessing and refreshment of spirit through public prayer, but equally happy is the one who can so wisely and so sympathetically guide men's wayward thoughts away from themselves in prayer that when the final "Amen" is heard the whole atmosphere seems pervaded with God. God is always there. Our trouble is too often forgetting ourselves long enough to sense Him.

Now we are ready for rules which we have reason to believe are wise ones.

1. Choice Of One To Pray

a. If one senses the spirit of prayer on the service, open the prayer to anyone who so desires. Sometimes a broken, sobbing, incoherent cry will do more to bring God near than the flowery stratosphere ride of an arch-deacon. It is usually well for the pastor to gather up the fragments and close. There is a finished feeling to such a custom.

b. Never call on a visiting preacher or prominent layman merely because he should be recognized. It would be wiser to recognize such a one by letting him read the announcements than to lead a group of people to the throne of God when he knows nothing of the spirit or needs of the people. Instead of keeping the spiritual needs foremost, it is too much of a temptation to make his prayer a work of art rather than a work of grace.

c. If no other guidance seems forthcoming, the pastor should pray. He knows the needs. He feels the heart throbs of his people. His heart is broken, if he be a true pastor, with the same heart-break before him. He can pray and pull the cord that brings spiritual refreshing.

2. How To Pray

a. Ordinarily, intercession of a personal nature is out of place. If private prayer is adequate, public prayer will be a summing up of the general needs of the people. As the prayer progresses, each can say, "Amen, that is my need."

b. It will not include prayer for any particular individual in the audience with the exception of those who are sick.

c. Always, there will be a spirit of encouragement in the prayer. Not a sad recital of the dark aspect of things local and general, but an expression of a vibrant living faith in the almightiness of God.

d. Why pray all around the world when there is a world of need before you? There are occasions when outside things should be remembered but never an occasion for mere padding to make a longer, more eloquent prayer.

e. The tone of voice should be carefully watched. The people must be able to hear every word yet it must not be so easily heard that the people in the next county can stay at home and get the service.

f. A common fault in those partaking in public prayer is for an otherwise pleasant voiced individual to begin praying in a sepulchral tone. The boys in the congregation will mock him at school the rest of the week. If emotion comes, let emotion alone determine one's tone of voice.

g. The habit of ending every sentence in a gasp for breath sounding like a-a-a is offensive to the ears of the people and should be avoided.

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THE END