

JNO. L. WEST & CO., PUBLISHERS. Vol. 9. THE PULPIT. My Hourly Prayer.

BY REV. CHARLES H. SPURGEON.

PSALM 119:117—"Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe; and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually."

It is a very sweet remark that every prayer is an inverted promise. That is to say, God promises us such a blessing, and therefore we pray for it; or, if you please, if God teaches us to pray for any good things, we may gather by implication the assurance that he means to give it. If thou feelest in thy heart a God inspired desire to ask a certain favor it is because God intends to bestow it upon thee.

A prayer is the shadow of a coming blessing. Therefore do we pray, because the blessing is coming. It is said that prayer cannot alter the purpose of God. Of course it cannot. It does not alter it, but indicates it, and since people are moved to pray, it is a sign that God is about to do it. It is because the Spirit knows the mind of God, and his movement to pray is a revelation of the mind of God to the praying one. Believing supplication is God writing his desire upon the hearts of his own children, with the intent to fulfill them. Is it not written, "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart?" It is not that God will give the desires of his heart to every man. No; but to that man whose heart is in such sympathy with God that he delights in God, and consequently desire what God desires. Then, when our heart runs side by side with the mind of God, our prayer is parallel with his purpose, and consequently it is done unto us according to our desires.

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Our need to be upheld. I, first, UPBOLDING—God's holding us up. It implies a danger, and that danger takes many forms. The true description of a believing man's life is, that he walks in his uprightness. The figure is not hard to understand. A man stands upright, though he hath sought many inventions. The very form and figure of man's body testify to his uprightness.

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come leaping down again with his alpenstock, where you could not have trodden for a minute? It seemed as if scarce a rabbit or a chamois could have found a pathway, and yet the strong, sure-footed man has danced down beneath his burden. How often have I envied the Alpine peasant those legs and feet. It is much the same in spiritual things. Strong men stand on their high places, and leap from crag to crag; but for us, we are not strong or sure-footed. Alas, we have feeble knees, and hands that hang down; and often we are as weak as water. We are children, whose tottering footsteps are not as yet familiar with running or climbing. It is as much as we can to stand when leaning on the Beloved; but to stand upright upon a rough road has not yet come to such felicitous as ours. I speak not of very few but of many. The most of us are poor puny things. Ah, if thou knowest thyself, thou wilt not think that thou canst stand. It will rather be a wonder to thee that thou hast not already fallen, and when thou seest others slip, thy heart will be in thy mouth; for thou wilt say, "I next—I next, unless the grace of God prevent." So what with the way and our feet, we have need to pray, "Hold thou me up!"

But that is not all, for there are cunning foes that seek to trip us up. They lay snares for us; they dig pits; they cast their nets across the way. Perhaps some of you are happily free from temptations in your own households, and possibly some are free from distinct temptation from the world. I congratulate you; but very few but are in that condition. Our foes compass us about like bees. Some threaten; others flatter. A few would bribe us; more would bully us. The bad would deceive, for they put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; and the best of men, if you follow them too closely, may mislead you. Trust ye not in any brother; neither lay hands upon any human guide. There is one that can conduct you safely, but if you do not follow him, you will soon slip with your feet. Many watch for our halting; and if they could find us tripping they would report it with glee to all the sons of Belial. Therefore have we good need to say, "Hold thou me up." Specially is there such need to those of you who work in shops where ungodliness is in the ascendant, so that religion is held in ridicule. Great need is there in the case of those who are parents with a father who will, if he can find you doing a little amiss, make a great deal of it. Equal necessity is there to you, young men, who meet with conceited coxcombs who talk philosophy and rail at our old-fashioned faith. You should pray, "Lord, hold thou me up, and I shall be safe."

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good things, and so helps us to stand in the evil day. How much we owe to the love of the Spirit! He keeps the feet of the saints. When they are tried he quickens them, and by gaining more life they surmount temptation; when they are likely to be deceived he enlightens them, and so that the evil one toucheth them not. By sanctification, by helping our infirmities, by teaching us the discipline of God, and by his divine comfort he holds us up; and to him be glory evermore.

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so the Son of God in ascending on high, among the royal endowments with which he enriches his church, bestows the office and gift of the Christian ministry. And down through the whole New Testament record, his ministry are appointed and sent forth by the Holy Ghost. "They being sent forth by the Holy Ghost," said Luke. And "the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers to feed the church of God," said Paul. And therefore with regard to their entire life-work, they could say, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." Hence they went forth under the authority of the triune Jehovah. Their ministrations were and are dispensed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

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The Secret Influence; A Lesson from the Parable of the Mustard Seed. BY GEO. E. BAKER.

What miracles are sometimes wrought in this world by seeming trifles! What little things have been known to change the whole current of a life! But let us not deceive ourselves. We do not know of what things are great and small results prove them, and be sure the causes are always commensurate with effects. It was said of Edward Burke, that if he could stand with him under a man during a fever without being made to feel the change which his influence had wrought in him. The same may be said of you and me, and of the church we meet. Only the impression made are not always so palpable as in this case. Two pieces of painted cork in a vessel of water, the size of a hen's egg, the other of a man's size, they move with increasing velocity towards each other until they meet, and then the smaller cork is hurled into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And after his resurrection he said to his disciples: "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." And thus we discover that the relative position of Christ to the essential nature of the plan of salvation is the measure of the relation which his ministers sustain to the official propagation of that plan to all the world. He was sent into the world, and he sent men into the world—with the original designs of atonement for fallen man. He was accredited to our earth with the sign-manual, seal and authority of God-head. He came in conformity to an eternal purpose—"A purpose which God purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began." And hence a refined and delicate sensibility pressed his holy nature with constant solicitude as to how his mission was destined to be accomplished. How did he allude to his Father as the Father of his embassy—as "him that sent me!" And so, as the Father sent him, separated from all other beings and from all other work, and sanctified him to the one grand mission of human redemption, so he sent his ministers with the tidings of this redemption to all the peoples of our earth.

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fluence is divine, all such influence manifesting itself through human lives comes from faith in God. It was simple but sublime faith in the Jehovah of Israel that gave the little maid such a beautiful character, that led her to my land with the prophet that in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy! With such faith even a stripling can cope with a giant, but without it a giant is only a weakling. "I have fought the good fight," says Paul exultingly, but in the same breath he adds, "I have kept the faith." The clauses should be inseparably linked together in every human life. Not even Paul could have fought such a fight or achieved such a character without faith, for faith is the medium through which the divine supplies pour themselves down into the struggling soul. "Have faith in me," said Jesus to the man who was blind of mustered seed... nothing shall be impossible unto you!

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such a public manner. The spectators at an exhibition are too numerous and good to attempt a detailed description. All were simply splendid, from the work of the Kindergarten Department to "Charlotte Corday in Prison," by Miss Lumpkin, or the "Holy Family," by Misses Fowler and Murfree. The writer is indebted to the accomplished principal of this department, Miss Neilson, for explanations concerning the pictures.

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Not is it singular that he should pray for us, for he loves us and has promised to remember us in heaven. He prayed for us here. Through our tears we have read over and over again that sublime and precious prayer which John has put on record, and in which we have, on such a legacy, for our Master says: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe upon me through their word." It is written: "If any man will, he shall be a witness with me, and I will have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous." All this is not surprising, but it is astonishing that his people should be expected to pray for him.

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