

Classics

God's Great Need

By An Unknown Christian



“God Wondered.” This is a very striking thought! The very boldness of the idea ought surely to arrest the attention of every earnest Christian man, woman, and child. A wondering God!

God “wondered that there was no intercessor” (Isa. 59:16, KJV). Oh, how great must be God’s wonder today! For how few there are among us who know what prevailing prayer really is! Every one of us would confess that we believe in prayer, yet how many of us truly believe in the power of prayer? Why are many Christians so often defeated? Because they pray so little. Why are not our churches simply on fire for God? Because there is so little real prayer.

The Lord Jesus is as powerful today as ever before. The Lord Jesus is as anxious for men to be saved as ever before. His arm is not shortened that it cannot save; but He cannot stretch forth His arm unless we pray more—and more really.

We may be assured of this—the secret of all failure is our failure in secret prayer.

If God “wondered” in the days of Isaiah, we need not be surprised to find that in the days of His flesh our Lord

“marveled.” He marveled at the unbelief of some—unbelief which actually prevented Him from doing any mighty work in their cities (Mark 6:6, KJV).

Astonishing Prayerlessness

Surely there is nothing so absolutely astonishing as a practically prayerless Christian. These are eventful and ominous days. In fact, there are many evidences that these are “the last days” in which God promised to pour out His Spirit—the Spirit of supplication—upon all flesh (Joel 2:28). Yet the vast majority of professing Christians scarcely know what “supplication” means; and very many of our churches not only have no prayer meeting, but sometimes unblushingly condemn such meetings, and even ridicule them.

And what of those churches where the old-fashioned weekly prayer meeting is retained? Would not weakly be the more appropriate word? Have we ceased to believe in prayer? If you still hold your weekly gathering for prayer, is it not a fact that the very great majority of your church members never come near it? Yes, and never even think of coming near it. Why is this? Whose fault is it? Is it a joy or just a duty?

We are never so high as when we are on our knees. We believe the time has come when a clarion call to the individual and to the Church is needed—a call to prayer.

Not an Option

Has it ever occurred to you that our Lord never gave an unnecessary or an optional command? It can easily be shown that all want of success, and all failure in the spiritual life and in Christian work, is due to defective or insufficient prayer. Unless we pray aright we cannot live aright or serve aright. This may appear, at first sight, to be gross exaggeration, but the more we think it over in the light Scripture throws upon it, the more convinced shall we be of the truth of this statement.

Now, as we begin once more to see what the Bible has to say about this mysterious and wonderful subject, shall we endeavor to read some of our Lord's promises, as though we had never heard them before. What will the effect be?

The inspired words of the Apostle of Love need to be heeded today as much as ever before: "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness towards God; and [then] whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him" (1 John 3:21, DARBY).

"True—and I believe it." Yes, indeed, it is a limitless promise, and yet how little we realize it, how little we claim from Christ. And our Lord "marvels" at our unbelief. Will you give heed to it? Or shall it fall on deaf ears and leave you prayerless?

Devil Dreads It

Fellow Christians, let us awake! The devil is blinding our eyes. He is endeavoring to prevent us from facing this question of prayer. Do we realize that there is nothing the devil dreads so much as prayer? His great concern is to keep us from praying. He loves to see us "up to our eyes" in work—provided we do not pray. He does not fear because we are eager and earnest Bible students—provided we are little in prayer.

Let us never forget that the greatest thing we can do for God or for man is to pray. For we can accomplish far more by our prayers than by our work. Prayer is omnipotent; it can do anything that God can do! When we pray, God works.

All fruitfulness in service is the outcome of prayer—of the worker's prayers, or of those who are holding up holy hands on his behalf. We all know how to pray, but perhaps many of us need to cry as the disciples did of old, "Lord, teach us to pray."

AN UNKNOWN CHRISTIAN, who chose to remain anonymous, wrote a

classic book on prayer in the 1930s titled A Kneeling Christian. This article is excerpted from that book.

Taken from Prayer Connect magazine.