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UNION WITH CHRIST

Scripture speaks of believers being “joined unto the Lord” (1 Cor. 6:17). Our union with Him can never be broken (Rom. 8:38,39), and therefore we are eternally secure (Jn. 10:27-30).

The story is told of a shipwreck in the Georgian Bay of Canada. The mate of the ship had leapt from the sinking ship into a smaller boat, with six or seven strong men and a very frightened little girl. One by one the strong men lost their hold as the boat was turned over and over by the raging billows.

Everyone perished that night except the girl, the reason being that the mate had taken the precaution to bind her with ropes to the prow of the boat. And she drifted to the shore where she was rescued, and she lived for many years to relate her wonderful deliverance.

How thankful we should be if, through grace, we are joined to the Lord!

Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding,
Ransomed souls, the tidings swell;
'Tis a deep that knows no sounding;
Who its breadth or length can tell?
On its glories
Let my soul for ever dwell.

What from Christ the soul shall sever,
Bound by everlasting bands?
Once in Him in Him for ever,
Thus the eternal cov'nant stands:
None shall pluck thee
From the Strength of Israel's hands.

John Kent, 1766-1843

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Liz Storey

It was good to have reports at a recent Wednesday Prayer Meeting from Tom & Tim following the start of the youth-work for the Autumn term. They are included below as a reminder for our prayers.

Senior Endeavourers

Tom reported that in Seniors they were very thankful for a good start back this term. There are currently 16 on the books, and equal numbers from those within our Church and from outside and they are pleased that good relationships are being built with all of them.

The Senior Group is divided into 2 classes, with Tom teaching the older ones and Susan teaching the younger ones. Although Paul has stepped back from Seniors to concentrate on other Church responsibilities, he still takes a class once a month and Jo B helps with the group admin and parent contact.

As we know Jenny Chatfield left the Church a generous legacy, with a request that it be used for the youthwork. So, thanks to Jenny, the Seniors' Room upstairs in the Church Hall has now been redecorated and kitted out with new furniture & games. This has been very well received by the young people, and if you haven't already seen it, do take a look! Tom has asked that if any of us have pictures, stories or memories of Jenny, we are requested, please, to share them with him, so the group can recognize her commitment to the Lord and her desire to support the youthwork.

Tom reported that they were thankful to have the bus rota back in place, which puts a little less pressure on leaders before lessons. However, they are still in need of additional teachers as they have no real cover for illness or holidays, so occasionally have to cancel a lesson or Friday night. We are therefore asked to pray that the Lord would provide others who are able to help in the leadership and with teaching.

The group is also looking to introduce a guest speaker once a month. These sessions would be led by Tom and the guest speaker would be given 20-30mins to perhaps share their testimony or speak on a topic relevant to teens that would give them a real perspective of the church and the Christian life. If this is something you feel you could do, please speak to Jo or Tom.

We are asked to pray for the following things:

1. That, in this world where teens are drawn away to all sorts of things, the work will continue and grow, and that the children would bring family and friends along to the group.
2. That the current leaders, would be given strength and energy to continue and that additional enthusiastic workers would be raised up from within our current membership or by the Lord drawing others to join us, who have a desire for teenage souls and can help drive the work forward.
3. That the Lord would work in the hearts of those young people who have attended Seniors for years but who don't seem to have any real spiritual interest.
4. That the Lord would kindle that flame in those young people who have a spark of interest and that the Lord would help the leaders to know how to guide them and answer their questions.
5. That those in the group who have changed schools would settle in and be guided to seek out good friends. And for those anticipating exams soon, that the Lord would calm nerves and help them to be diligent in their studies.

Sunday School

Tim reported that they too had had a very happy return of the Sunday School at the beginning of September and that it was particularly pleasing to have seen all the previously regular non-church children return again. He told us that there are 13 children currently on the register which are split into 3 classes taught by Jo T, Ruth and Nathan. At present, the Sunday School does not have a midweek meeting but Tim plans to review this with the other teachers later in the term.

During the first part of the term there has been an average attendance of about 10 children each Sunday, and from the first week, the Lord gave the Sunday School the real encouragement of a new girl from the Friary attending every week.

Although it's early days for this newly formed group, and there is still some fine tuning of things to be done, the leaders are encouraged with how things are going, and are thankful to all those who have helped with the transport and other aspects of the work.

We are asked to continue to pray for the work, and in particular that:

1. The children would be regular and bring their friends along to the group.
2. The teachers would be helped in their weekly preparing and giving of lessons.
3. Above all, there would be a work of God's Spirit that would lead to rejoicing on earth and in heaven at sinners saved.

On other matters, we rejoice with Chloe and her sister Ashley at God's providence in providing them with a house in Salisbury and we pray that they will settle in quickly and that the Lord would bless them together in their new home situation.

September 11th saw the return of the Church Picnic. It was a beautiful sunny day and a good number attended from our fellowship, as well as a few from Ibsley. It was a fun afternoon and included Isaac setting up a very competitive game of archery attended by all ages. Despite fierce competition, some became the stars of the show hitting the bullseye! (We had better all get some practise in preparation for next year!) A game of football also pleased many of our lads, but many enjoyed a more chilled-out afternoon over a chat and an ice-cream!

We were so pleased that on October 10th we were invited to return to Gracewell Care Home, after being prevented from going both there, and Milford House Care Home, due to Covid. We were grateful to the Lord that those leading the service were able to give proof of negative Covid tests before the service, and that 11 residents heard the Gospel simply explained. We pray that future opportunities in the care homes will be blessed to the saving of precious souls for the glory of God.

Many of us will know Christine's Dad, Mr Essen, and remember having happy holidays in Yorkshire in his holiday home. We have been aware of his increasing needs of late following a diagnosis of Dementia and although Mr Essen had been having 24hr care at home, he has now moved to a care home in Richmond. Our prayer is that he will continue to remain settled and well cared for in his new surroundings and that he and the family would continue to know God's peace and comfort in the coming days.

We were so sad to hear that George had a fall recently and sustained a fractured hip. He has had a successful operation to repair the break and is

currently on Amesbury Ward in Salisbury District Hospital. We pray that he will soon be well enough to be discharged back to Laverstock Care Home.

On 23rd September, a Thanksgiving Service was held at Harnham Free Church for Mrs Abigail Luke who died on 31st August, aged 101. The service was led by Rev Andrew Page of Above Bar Church, Southampton; and during the service, several people shared memories of Abigail. Rosemary, Abigail's daughter, gave a detailed review of her mother's long and active life which included a reference to the work, time, and effort that both her parents had put into the beginning of Emmanuel Church in the 1950s to 60s. After this, Rev. Page clearly presented the gospel from John 14:6. Although Dudley and Abigail were never members at Emmanuel, they did often attend the services, and they regularly offered kind hospitality. We know their trust was in the Lord Jesus Christ through whom alone we have the sure and certain hope of everlasting life.

WORDS OF THANKS

Carol and I would like to thank everyone for their encouragements, good wishes, and especially for their many prayers during recent times of difficulty, when Carol has been trying to cope with severe balance problems. The kindness shown to us has been deeply appreciated and the gracious fellowship of the Lord's people has shown us much of the wonderful love of the Lord Himself. We are thankful to say that Carol's condition is now much improved, so that she is no longer experiencing the discomfort of giddiness and dizziness. It is a welcome relief, and we are both truly grateful.

*In Christian love, Carol & Bob
(Ps. 103:1-4)*

THE FATAL PICTURE

A young Spanish Princess fell in love with a very beautiful picture which hung on the walls of a castle in Spain. With the ardour of the Spanish people, she imprinted a kiss on it every time she had occasion to pass by it. In the course of a few months she grew sick, the colour fled from her cheeks, and her eyes grew sunken and dull.

In a while she died, and it was then found that the beautiful picture had been the cause of her death. Mixed with the colour with which it was painted was a

very subtle poison, which the artist had employed to give to his work that rich green lustre the princess had so much admired, and each time she kissed it her lips had touched the poison.

There are sins that are very attractive to us. We pause; we feel strong emotion of desire; and in a little while we fall into the trap. What we thought were things to bring satisfaction and happiness, prove to contain dangerous poison. The essence of death lurks beneath that sweetness so alluring. In such sins are the fangs of the Serpent, and the “end of these things is death.”

CHRIST OUR SUBSTITUTE

In Napoleon Bonaparte’s time, in a compulsory enlistment to military service, a man was balloted and he did not want to go. A friend offered to go in his place. He joined up in the man’s name, was sent to the front, and, sadly, he was killed in action.

Some time later, Napoleon wanted more men, and the man first balloted was balloted a second time. “You cannot send me”, he said; “I am dead.” “In such and such a battle, you left me buried in the field.” “Look up your records and see for yourselves.”

They did look and they found that he had indeed been killed in action. “It must have been a substitute”, they said. “Yes, true! he replied; “My substitute died in my place, and the law has now no claim upon me.”

By divine and judicial arrangement, the Lord Jesus Christ suffered and died for His people: as their Substitute, taking the punishment due to us, and thus meeting for us all the requirements of the Law.

From whence this fear and unbelief?
Hath not the Father put to grief
His spotless Son for me?
And will the righteous Judge of men
Condemn me for that debt of sin
Which, Lord, was charged on Thee?

Complete atonement Thou hast made,
And to the utmost Thou hast paid

Whate'er Thy people owed;
How then can wrath on me take place,
If sheltered in Thy righteousness,
And sprinkled with Thy blood?

If thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my room endured
The whole of wrath divine,
Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine."

Augustus M. Toplady, 1772

THE CLOUD MADE GLORIOUS

One summer's evening at sunset, I was looking at a cloud in the sky. It was black and forbidding. Away in the West, the sky was made beautiful with the glory of the setting sun, but this cloud had no share in the glory.

A little while later I looked and saw the same cloud, but how changed it was! It had become radiant with beauty. It was shot through with light and with glory. The brightness of the sun was upon it. It was a cloud still, but it was a glorified cloud, a thing to uplift the soul of man.

How many things are there in life like that – clouds, with nothing in them of brightness, of radiance and beauty. But when God's sunlight lights them up how different they appear. They are clouds still, but they are radiant clouds, things of beauty and of loveliness.

Sickness – what a dark cloud that is! How we fear when we enter into it. We shrink from the pain, the suffering that it will bring. But when it is brought under the clear shining of God's love, how different it is. Then it is charged with comfort, shot through with beauty. "God comforteth those that are cast down."
(2 Corinthians 7:6)

Another dark cloud is bereavement, but how that dark cloud is lit up by His love and tenderness. "The Lord hath comforted his people and will have mercy

upon his afflicted” (Isaiah 49:13). “(He) hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace” (2 Thessalonians 2:16).

It is so with all the dark clouds of life that we naturally dread and fear. God’s presence and love can make them radiant and beautiful. When on the Mount of Transfiguration the disciples feared as they entered into a cloud, yet we read that, when the cloud had passed, they saw no man save Jesus only.

STRANGE FOOTPRINTS OF OUR KING

(edited – MHW)

There was a place in the Island of Skye where a godly minister used to preach. It was in the parish of Duirinish, in the northern part of the island. A little girl called Mary Bethune lived there and was one of his hearers at the very last time he preached. She was then a girl of about eleven years of age. In listening to him, she was particularly struck with his text. It was in Psalm 68;19-20: *“Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. He that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues (the “outgoings” or “escapes”) from death.”* Under this sermon she was moved to think; and the two subjects which filled all her thoughts were: death, and the deliverance which God can give.

Her occupation was looking after a herd of goats; and while out with her goats, she was constantly meditating on these themes. Indeed, she found it impossible to do anything else. Whoever she met she questioned them about God who could save from death, and when she came home in the evening, these were still the only things she wanted to talk about. The minister who had so preached to her conscience left the place soon afterwards and Mary never saw him again. The minister of her own parish, apparently ignorant of the Gospel, gave her no help at all; for, after conversing with her, he agreed with her parents and neighbours in the opinion that the girl’s reason was beginning to be unhinged.

She continued thus for some time, finding no-one qualified to give her the information she needed, as to how she could become acquainted with that “Jehovah” to whom it belongs “to rescue fully from death” (as it is in the metrical translation of the Gaelic Psalms), and feeling more and more the necessity of

being able to say, "Our God is the God of salvation", she came to the conclusion that if she remained in that neighbourhood, she would never find the answer to her heart's need. She decided to travel and to pursue her inquires elsewhere.

At that time all necessary goods were procured from Inverness, and conveyed to Skye on horseback. In her girlish simplicity, Mary thought that "Jehovah" and "salvation" must be in Inverness too! There were few roads from one place to another, and there were many rapid rivers and streams, practically none of them with bridges over them. But she was not put off by this, because her soul-concern had complete mastery over all her other thoughts. She set out on her long journey. She threw her "tonnag" (a square piece of cloth) around her shoulders and fastened it across her breast with a wooden pin, and then, bareheaded and barefooted, she began her quest, to find what she had set her heart upon. Accordingly, from hamlet to hamlet did Mary proceed, questioning all whom she met. Some put her off gruffly; some ridiculed her as meddling with what was not suitable for a person of her years. The most simply regarded her as a person under some strange hallucination.

However, she met with some kindness, some offering her food, drink, and shelter, thus helping her forward on her journey. Mary was determined to persevere, whatever the trials and hardships.

It is not known how long it took her, only that the Lord whom she was seeking had His blessed eye upon her, ignorant as she still was of Him. Her way, after crossing Kyle-Rhea, lay through Glenelg; and after crossing the heights, she made her way through Glenmoriston. She then found herself at Lochness, by the side of which she walked till she arrived at Inverness. She had now reached the only bridge then spanning the River Ness. It was an oak bridge, a frail erection, which was carried off some years ago by a flood.

The time was that of the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in that town. She spoke in her usual strain to those she met, but encountered many strange rebuffs on putting her questions. At last she was led to address one who at once felt a deep interest in the barefooted, bare-headed girl, who had accosted her just as she had many others before.

Mary observed a person, having the appearance and bearing of a lady, walking along the bridge on her way to the place of worship which she usually attended.

To her she made an approach, repeated disappointments having intensified her earnestness. She said: "My lady! Is God in this town of Inverness? And if so, where shall I find Him?"

The lady looked at first with amazement, as many others had done on similar occasions, just because an all-important question of this kind is so seldom put. She hesitated a while and then, on Mary repeating her question with still greater earnestness, she replied: "Yes, God is in this town. Come you with me, and perhaps you may find Him." She then took the girl by the hand, walked with her to the church, and led her to the seat which she herself occupied.

The services of the day having been begun, Mary was all attention; and we may suppose her kind friend to have been deeply exercised in prayer for the salvation of this poor friendless child thus providentially thrown on her for protection.

The minister engaged in the work that day is said to have been Mr James Calder of Croy, a true man of God, as was his father before him, and as his three sons were after him. He seemed that day to find liberty in the declaration of the truth, and he had one hearer at least who drank in every word he uttered concerning God, the sinner, and the Saviour. And as he became more and more earnest, and more than ordinarily simple and clear while enlarging on the subject in hand, Mary was enabled clearly to apprehend the truth proclaimed. She could contain herself no longer. She started up, and, clapping her hands together, exclaimed, "I see Him now; I understand it all now. I have found Him! I have found Him! I have found Him!"

Many may regard all this as fanaticism. There have been too many instances in which persons who loudly proclaimed their deliverance from ignorance, doubt, and unbelief, have given occasion for scoffers to deride all such experiences as simple delusion. In Mary's case, however, that moment in the old Gaelic church at Inverness proved to be the moment of her spiritual birth. She soon forgot all her weary wanderings from the western shores of the Isle of Skye. She now knew One on whom she could lean with assured confidence for time and eternity. She realized pardon for the past and the foundation for a good hope for the future. She might not at that time be able to give such clear answers to questions which might be put to her as she could at a later stage; but she had in her soul a knowledge of the same nature and kind as Anna had

when she recognized the promised Messiah in old Simeon's arms in the court of the Temple at Jerusalem.

The first outburst of enraptured feeling over, she sat with all composure, during the rest of the sermon, and joined in the service with the congregation. Mary could now say, "This God is my own God, the God of my salvation;" and she might fully rest on His Providence for all that concerned her welfare in life. Even should all the people in church pass out without taking any interest in her, she knew that He who kept her and shielded her all the way, and who had that day revealed Himself to her soul, would raise up some friend to act towards her the part of a guardian. She had that, indeed, already: for the kind lady who led her into church could not now part with her. She conducted her out as she conducted her in. She bought her to her own house, provided for her once, and watched over her with a mother's solicitude.

Years passed on. Mary was evidently growing in grace. She had found a home and employment in her benefactress' house and continued in her service till the lady died. Then she left Inverness and obtained a place of residence in the parish of Croy, where she could enjoy the ministrations of her spiritual instructor in the Lord - Mr James Calder. Not long, however, after her removal to that parish, Mary was called upon to act towards another Skye wanderer the same part that was performed towards herself by the lady whom she met on the bridge on her arrival at Inverness.

To the mineral water at Strathpeffer, a farmer's wife from Kilmaluag, in the parish of Kilmuir in Skye, came down, in hopes of recovering from some ailment wherewith she was afflicted. She was accompanied by a daughter, and they remained there for some weeks.

At that time there were three parishes in the neighbourhood highly favoured. The ministers in each were men of God and men of prayer, abounding in works of faith and labours of love. They had much to do to uproot habits and practices which were the result of ages of superstition and ungodliness. Among such favoured parishes was that of Dingwall, and in good old Mr Rose's day, and in the days of his predecessor, Mr Mackenzie, the town was the resort - especially at the times of the Communion - of great numbers of people. Many of them were pious persons, while not a few were drawn by mere curiosity. Among the latter, on the occasion to which our story refers, was the girl from Kilmaluag. She had seen the Sacrament of the Supper administered in Skye;

she had heard preaching, too, both on ordinary and on Sacramental occasions; but she heard now what she had never heard before. She was struck with amazement. She had begun to discover what she was in the sight of the Holy One.

She returned home to her mother under deep conviction of sin, regarding herself as lost, and as being under the curse of God. But there was a hidden something within which led her to seek more and more of the truth, however awful her sense of misery was. Furthermore, although herself under a sense of condemnation. she would have her mother go to Dingwall next day along with her and hear for herself what had so deeply impressed her.

You would perhaps think that her mother would bless the Lord for what she should have regarded as encouraging the hope that her child would now prize the Physician of souls. Instead of that, not knowing herself what it was to be a sinner, she regarded all her daughter's fears as groundless; she moreover feared that if her daughter was to go again to Dingwall to hear a sermon, she would be lost to her, or perhaps become crazy. She therefore made preparations for their return to Skye at once; and with this purpose, she replied to her daughter's solicitations by saying: "Janet, you don't go to Dingwall tomorrow. You and I will stay at home to wash, and to prepare for our journey homewards on Monday." "No, no!" said Janet, "Tomorrow is Sabbath. Neither you nor I should profane that day, and so break the fourth commandment." But to this exhortation Janet's mother paid no regard. Sabbath found her engaged as she purposed, and she would insist on her daughter joining her in the desecration of the Lord's Day.

Janet at first earnestly pleaded with her mother to desist, but it was all to no purpose. She next pleaded for leave to go to Dingwall, but this request was peremptorily refused. The daughter then told her mother that, whatever the consequences might be, she must go to hear the Word of God, and proceeded to arrange her "tonnag" for that purpose. Seeing this, her wicked mother raised up both her hands, and with fearful oaths imprecated curses on her daughter's head! She solemnly devoted her to Satan and charged her at the same time to go away, and never be seen by her again.

Janet cried bitterly, and ran out of their temporary place of abode. The people from that neighbourhood by that time had all moved away to Dingwall. Her first

impulse was to go after them; but after proceeding some way, she felt herself so oppressed with a load of terror that she was compelled to rest.

“What is the use,” she said, “of my going to Dingwall? There is no hope for me. I am under the curse of God, and my own mother has devoted me to the enemy. I can never obtain deliverance. It is as well for me to turn and direct my steps some other way.”

And turn she did. But the Lord, who, unseen and unknown, had His eye on her, by His own Spirit suggested some recollection of a word she had heard before read to her. She turned again in the direction of Dingwall, and had proceeded some few steps, when the enemy, though formerly foiled, again returned to the assault. Her former doubts came on with redoubled power, and she walked back again till something else occurred to her which prompted her to ‘hope against hope’. So again, she proceeded in the direction of the place where the Gospel was preached. Matters went on thus for the greater part of the forenoon-Janet sometimes progressing and again returning.

She did reach the outskirts of the congregation at last. We do not know who the minister was who at that special time was speaking; but Janet heard him commending to his hearers the blood of the Cross, holding forth the efficiency of its application for the taking away of guilt, and the removal of a sense of condemnation. As if he had been specially directed to address Janet personally, she heard him say, “Should you be sensible of the overwhelming load of the curse of God, and your mother's curse along with that, you will find more than enough in this blood for the removal of both, and for rendering you righteous before God.”

Janet heard this. To her it was a word in season. It calmed the tempest within. She sat down at the feet of Christ and listened with diligent attention. When the congregation was dismissed, all went either to their own homes or to the houses of friends, who showed their hospitality to them as strangers coming to the feast. But Janet had no house to which she could go; her mother had discarded her; and she might be ready to ask, “What am I to do now?” The Lord had, however, been graciously revealing Himself to her soul throughout the whole afternoon and evening of that day. Why, then, should she fear? Some person might be prompted to show kindness to her; and if not, it was summer, and she could remain outside for one night at least. She would hear the sermon next day, and she would wait for that before she would decide as

to where to turn her steps. Still, who could doubt that, after all, poor Janet would feel something like a weight on her spirit, or rather be conscious of a blank which sadly needed filling up, when she saw the whole congregation gradually melting away, with none to speak a kind word to her?

But, stop! Who is this coming up and approaching Janet Macleod with a kindly smile? This is Mary Bethune, now grown up to womanhood, grown in faith and knowledge, and in Christian experience. She is, moreover, largely acquainted with professing Christians through the whole country, and she has come to Dingwall, along with others, expecting “a feast of fat things: of wine on the lees well refined.”

She and they have not been disappointed. But now the appearance of a Skye girl has attracted her attention.

Janet's dress and manner are almost a new sight to her. She speaks to her and is convinced by her first word that they are both natives of the same isle. Her kind inquiries draw out Janet's heart all at once. The unvarnished tale is soon told; the harrowing horrors and the gracious consolation. The two are drawn to each other with an influence far more powerful than that of country and kindred. Janet finds shelter with Mary where she is herself lodged.

From this day forward the two are inseparable. Mary conducts Janet to the domicile occupied by herself in the parish of Croy. They continue to sit together under the same minister (Mr James Calder) till the day of his removal to the Upper Sanctuary.

After Mr Calder's death, Mary and Janet found a place of residence, and a ministry which they relished as being profitable to their souls, in the parish of Nigg, in the county of Ross. Mr McAdam was then newly translated to that charge after the parish had been long under the blight of a minister whose coldness had the effect of scattering the Lord's flock, and of rendering the place of worship a desolation. Under Mr McAdam's ministry, those two godly women continued to sit, while they lived, supporting themselves by the labour of their hands, respected in the place, and growing in ripeness for the abode of the just, till at about the age of eighty years they were removed to the enjoyment of the communion of saints above, and the blessedness of uninterrupted fellowship with Him whom they loved so much below.

You may perhaps enquire whether Mary or Janet had any communication with their relatives in Skye? Communication by letter was not then so easy as it is now. Neither of them had learned to write, but Mary had communication with her parents through a name's sake of her own who was minister of Alness in the county of Ross. She went once to her native place and remained there for some time, but not having the privilege which she had found so delightful in the land of her adoption she returned again to that district and never afterwards visited the Isle of Skye.

But she and her companion never failed to wrestle together in prayer for the people in their native island; and I heard a godly minister in Skye, now departed (the Rev. Roderick Macleod), give expression to the complacency he felt in connecting the spiritual influences in each of the parishes whence these women came with the continued and persevering entreaties which they were known to have laid at the foot of the Throne in behalf of their native district.

We may learn, moreover, that a minister may be instrumental for good, while he himself may be denied the privilege of knowing that any good has been done. The minister under whom Mary Bethune's whole soul was roused to seek after the knowledge of the Lord never knew of the effect produced till Mary and he met beyond the grave.

This story is now finished. If the recital may have the effect of stirring up any young person to follow on to know the Lord, I have my reward. If any person, young or old, be incited by the examples here related, to regard everything else as vile in comparison with the knowledge of Christ and Him crucified, I would earnestly bid him God-speed; let him press on till he know for himself this Saviour who was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," till he be begotten again unto "a lively hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER ON PRAYER AS A MEANS OF GRACE

Archibald Alexander (1772-1851) served as first professor at Princeton Theological Seminary and was the founder of Princeton Theology, which was

the theology of the Westminster Standards with a strong emphasis on spiritual experience and vital godliness.

Although God is everywhere present, yet he is invisible. He is an all-pervading Spirit, yet is perceived by none of our senses. We behold his glorious works in the heavens and in the earth, and may learn something, by careful observation, of the general laws by which the material universe is governed; but still the great Architect is concealed.

As far as reason can lead us, we seem to be shut out from all intercourse with our Maker; and whether prayer is permitted would remain for ever doubtful, were it not for divine revelation. We are not surprised, therefore, that some deists have denied that prayer is a duty, or that it can be available to the Deity. Indeed, considering man as a sinner, it would seem presumptuous for such a creature to obtrude himself into the presence of a holy God.

Prayer is everywhere in the Bible recognized as proper and inculcated as a duty. But it is also a most precious privilege, one of the richest blessings conferred on man. It opens a method of intercourse and communion with our Father in heaven; it furnishes a refuge for the soul oppressed with sin and sorrow; it affords an opportunity to the heart overwhelmed with an intolerable weight of misery to unburden itself, to pour its griefs into the ear of one who can pity and help.

The moral effect of prayer is important. It humbles the soul, and excites veneration for the august and holy character of God. But though prayer brings into exercise the noblest acts and emotions of which our nature is capable, yet it would be a grand mistake to confine the efficacy of prayer to its moral effects.

Prayer, when offered in faith, for things agreeable to the will of God, actually obtains for the petitioner the blessings which he needs. It has an efficacy to obtain forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and deliverance from a thousand evils. Prayer enters into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth; the prayer of faith is the mightiest engine upon earth. The Lord of heaven has given his word to answer prayer. He will be inquired of by his people, that he may bless them.

God can make any means effectual; and among the instituted means for the government of the world, and the preservation and comfort of his people,

prayer holds a high place. The objection that God is immutable, and knows what we need, has no more force against prayer than any other means—no more force than if urged against the necessity of cultivating the ground in order to obtain a crop, or receiving food to nourish the body. The Christian life is sustained by prayer. By it every grace is exercised, every blessing is obtained. Without the sincere desires of the heart, prayer is nothing; it is worse—it is a mockery. He is the best Christian who prays most. As God is ever near to us, “for in him we live, and move, and have our being,” we are permitted to hold intercourse with him at all times, and in all places. We are commanded to “pray without ceasing”—to “be instant in prayer”—to “pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands.”

In prayer there is not only an outgoing of the soul to God, in acts of faith, love, and confidence, but there is an actual communication from God to the soul. Prayer is a holy converse—a fellowship with God. One hour spent in prayer, will accomplish more good than many employed in study or labour. Surely, then, it is good to draw nigh to God.

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD

Joseph Addison Alexander

Joseph Addison Alexander (1809-1860), third son of Archibald Alexander, became a remarkable Biblical scholar, skilled in 25 languages, and he was also a prolific poet. In 1833, while on travel in Europe, he wrote what his biographer, H.C. Alexander, called “one of his noblest productions.”

When fortune smiles and friends abound;
When all thy fondest hopes are crowned;
When earth with her exhaustless store,
Seems still intent to give thee more:
When every wind and every tide
Contribute to exalt thy pride;
When all the elements conspire
To feed thy covetous desire;
When foes submit and envy stands
Pale and abashed with folded hands;
While fame's unnumbered tongues prolong

The swell of thy triumphal song;
When crowds admire and worlds applaud
"Be still and known that I am God."

When crowns are sported with and thrones
Are rocked to their foundation stones;
When nations tremble and the earth
Seems big with some portentous birth;
When all the ties of social life
Are severed by intestine strife;
When human blood begins to drip
From tyranny's accursed whip;
When peace and order find their graves
In anarchy's tempestuous waves;
When every individual hand
Is steeped in crime, and every land
Is full of violence and fraud;
"Be still and know that I am God."

When to the havoc man has made
The elements afford their aid;
When nature sickens, and disease
Rides on the wing of every breeze;
When the tornado in its flight
Blows the alarm and calls to fight;
When raging Fever leads the van,
In the fierce onset upon man;
When livid Plague and pale Decline
And bloated Dropsy, form the line;
While hideous Madness, shivering Fear
And grim Despair, bring up the rear;
When these thy judgments are abroad:
"Be still and know that I am God."

When messages of grace are sent,
And mercy calls thee to repent;
When through a cloud of doubts and fears
The Sun of Righteousness appears;
When thy reluctant heart delays

To leave it's old accustomed ways;
When pride excites a storm within,
And pleads and fights for every sin;
Be still, and let this tumult cease;
Say to thy raging passions, "Peace!"
By love subdued, by judgment awed:
"Be still and know that I am God."

THE MIDWEEK PRAYER MEETING

Mrs. Prayer Meeting died recently at the First Neglected Church in Worldly Avenue. Born many years ago in the midst of great revivals, she was a strong, healthy child, fed large on testimony and spiritual holiness, soon growing into world-wide prominence, and was one of the most influential members of the famous Church family.

For the past several years Sister Prayer Meeting had been in failing health, gradually wasting away.

Her death was caused through lukewarmness and coldness of heart. Lack of spiritual food, coupled with lack of faith, shameless desertion and non-support, were contributing causes of her death.

Only a few were present at the end to sob over the memories of her past beauty and power. Carefully selected pall-bearers were asked to bear her remains tenderly away, but they failed to appear.

Her body now rests in the beautiful cemetery of Bygone Glories, awaiting a summons from above