

Miracles that follow the plow :: 'Line' of thought

'Line' of thought - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/8/8 8:51

What an exciting day awaits!

A sense of being compelled to start and to share what is prompting us forward, to exhort and edify... What is the particular 'line' ringing through your soul? A theme perhaps, a scripture, a 'line' reverberating in your mind that the Lord has placed or that has you gripped, that finds the Holy Spirit teaching and guiding into all truth?

Glad you asked.

For the past couple of months this simple thought has been repeating itself, something at a glance or maybe even the absurdity of it's seeming insult to our intelligence could be just quickly dismissed with a *well, of course*;

*"Let it be once admitted that with God, no miracle is impossible. Let it be acknowledged that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, no true prayer will remain unblest. But faith in God is by no means a light or trivial thing. Robert Bruce of Edinburgh used sometimes to pause in his preaching, and, bending over the pulpit, say with much solemnity, **"I think it's a great matter to believe there is a God."** Once he confessed that during three years he had never said, "My God," without being "challenged and disquieted for the same." "These words, 'My God,'" said Ebenezer Erskine, "are the marrow of the Gospel." To be able to hold the living God within our feeble grasp, and say with assurance, "God, even our own God, shall bless us" (Psa. 67:6), demands a faith which is not of nature's birth."*

<http://www.fivesolas.com/hidden3.htm>

The Hidden Life of Prayer

by David MacIntyre

(With gratitude to Leonard Ravenhill for the mention of this wonderful little book)

The wonder of it all is in how often this has been brought to the forefront and shared with other parallel lines. One would be from a Tozer message I believe on the bible itself and in his inimitable way, Tozer gave a somewhat chastising response to the thought of how far we can go in our piety as to be dishonest; That we ought not to think of God and the Lord Jesus as something of our 'own' in which he responded with a terse, if I can paraphrase *"I don't know about you, but He IS MY God and I am not about to apologize for it. David didn't and neither did Thomas when he cried out 'My Lord and my God.'"*

Why I find that measuring along the same line I think is that we can lose the great and vast wonder of it all in getting bogged down in theology and other controversies to the point of missing the stark revelation and privilege we have as children of the most High. It is a stark thing to confront ourselves with the reality of God.

This has caused much faith to build to muse on things at any given moment of time. Doing daily chores of this life, when our hearts may be cold, indifferent or just caught up in the machinery of daily living. BUT! You CAN stop in the noise of the mind and throw yourself upward in a microsecond and admit the coldness, ask for mercy, ask for help in that time of need, realise that our feelings ebb and flow, but He remains the same... *...it's a great matter to believe there is a God.*

O the possibilities of faith! I could very well carry this on for pages on end. Last week was privileged to be a spectator of just an incredible display of the power of God as a thunderstorm and grand light show was put on right before my eyes. The sense of reverential fear and yet awe inspiring sense of "this is my God back of all this"... coupled with;

Luk 17:24 For just as lightning flashes and shines from one end of the sky to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.

Made me think of how this was really 'small' in scale being located into just a local region even as the whole sky light up like at noonday. Just incredible, what can one do but worship and praise, gaze in wonder and awe!

One last thought. This morning found another tenacle growing out as I started out with a somewhat flatness of spirit before this line came back once again. The jumpstart from Chip Brodgren:

"I know Whom I have believed" (II Timothy 1:12ff).

"We don't know this Jesus we think we know. He is Wholly Other, totally, supremely, magnificently GOD. Only God can remain silent while we speak blasphemies and heresies in His name. He allows mankind to distort and misrepresent and bring people to a place of despair, just so He can then step in and reveal Himself for Who He really is. And He is never, ever, ever, ever what you thought. Nothing is as you have been told. And then, once you meet Him, you cannot describe Him, except to say He is nothing like what you had been told. Beyond description.

When we realize we don't know, then Christ becomes our Wisdom so we CAN know. When we are children we are apt to say, I know WHAT I believe. As we grow out of infancy and begin to wrestle with the deeper questions and issues of the Christian faith we will learn to say, I know WHY I believe. The ultimate experience, however, is to be brought to a place where we can say with confidence, I know WHOM I believe."

<http://www.watchman.net/daily>

It brought back another scripture;

2Ti 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou **stir up the gift of God**, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

To think of it, to think of the possibilities of today, to think of Him who IS back of it all, who laughs at impossibilities. Stir up the gift *which is in thee!*

"I think it's a great matter to believe there is a God."

So, how about you? What's your 'line' ?

Re: 'Line' of thought - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2005/8/8 13:09

Some wonderful thoughts there Mike, thank you for sharing that.

There has been a 'line'; ringing through my mind of late, it is from John 15:11...

"...and that your joy might be full. "

I believe verse 10 tells us what the fullness of our Lord's joy was, to keep the Father's commandments. There was no greater joy for His heart than to obey the Father's will. I have been challenged to consider where my joy is taken. Over and over in my prayer time this verse has been coming to mind.

I can take great joy in the many blessings the Father has bestowed, spiritual and natural, I can take joy in the hope of an inheritance beyond imagination, I can take joy in seeing a soul saved, I can and should take joy in these wonderful things, but is the fullness of my joy found in simple obedience and utter dependence on the Father?

Do I rejoice in giving, even if it hurts? Do I rejoice in taking a back seat to others? Do I rejoice in laying down my life? Do I rejoice in these things simply because it glorifies my Father in Heaven? This type of joy is foreign to me, that is my flesh, it is utterly alien. Certainly nothing that I can work up in my own strength. As the previous verses in chapter 15 explain, it comes only by a simple abiding in the vine that this fruit of the Spirit, this joy, can be full.

It is the cry of my heart that His joy might remain in us...*that our joy may be full.*

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/8 14:24

For me?

I have been drawn in again to the extraordinary state of the church of Ephesus as we find it in the Revelation. Surely no local assembly was ever more blessed than Ephesus. Their 'ministers' had included Apollos, Paul, Timothy and, very likely, John. They had experienced their own personal Pentecost and received a letter from Paul that is amongst the greatest pieces of scripture we have. It is difficult to imagine a more favoured group of people and yet at the time of the Revelation letter they stood in danger of being extinguished by the Lord Himself, and the 'only' thing they got wrong was they had 'left behind' their 'first love'. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1Cor. 10:12-13, KJVS)

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/8/8 15:27

God allowed me to preach at a church last night and I got off on describing Hell. I said something that I have never really thought about and didn't until after the service. I said "There are people in hell today that don't fully know why they are there. They thought they were good people. They went to sleep one night and woke up in hell. They might not know why they are there until the Great White Throne Judgement, but some of us will find out why they are there when we are judged."

Wow that was sobering to me! Let our witness not distort Christ! We have got to preach the Gospel to every creature!

Re: 'Line' of thought, on: 2005/8/14 5:28

Glad you asked :-).

First 'line' of thought first ~ Mike, did you drop off of the planet, once you posted this ?
Or did that Chariot of fire come get ya ?

Secondly, I read quite a few articles tonight on this particular site below, but this one stuck in my craw ... so I hope I can keep it "reverberating in my mind."

It's in bigger font on the site, then if I posted it.... <http://www.watchman.net/articles/apostasy.html>

Another line of thought that went through my mind - 'sort of' crosses with your line of thought up there Mike are we asking God for things that we Already possess ?

When we ask for "grace to get through the day or whatever" don't we **already have it** inside of us ... when He moved in ?

A bunch of verses went through my mind when I thought that, and I felt sorta silly that I forgot just WHO IS living inside and why He's in there and what HE'S capable of doing.

I forgot we already have been equipped with all that we'll ever need. Power, gifts, wisdom, endurance, Truth, etc. etc. etc., are available through His Holy Spirit inside of us.
Though it never hurts to ask for more, wisdom, love, humility, etc. etc.

After Pentecost, the Apostles just went out and started Doing. They didn't wait to ask for what they already had.

I guess we need to go back and look over the Scriptures that tell us what we already have and just walk in/by Faith after that. Build up our faith more with Scripture, so we don't waste precious time 'waiting' for what's already resident and have the power to deal with things and what's coming and be used mightily, by faith in What and Who we have inside.

These are just a few verses I thought of ...

Col 2:6 -10 ~ **As** ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord (By Faith -), so 'walk ye in him': rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, Because in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and ye are 'complete' in him, which is the head of all pri

ncipality and power

Eph 1:23 Which is his body, 'the fullness' of Him that filleth all in all.

1Jo 2:20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

1Jo 2:27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. {Jn.16:13}

2Pe 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue

1Pe 4:11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God, in 'all things', may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Phi 4:11-13 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Eph 1:2-12 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ....

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with All spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his Own Will: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ.

1Co 3:21-23 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

This ain't hyperfaith ... but it is, in the sense of just having hyper-faith in what Christ died to send us, which dwells inside of us ~ His Holy Spirit and all He's been sent to do, in and through us.

I thought, like Corrie Ten Boom said, we should write down verses that will "get us through, unto the end" ... for strength, confidence in the Lord and His Spirit, etc.

Sounds like a good summer project.

Praying you're well.

Annie

Re: 'Line' of thought, on: 2005/8/14 13:18

Hi Mike,

Beautiful start to this thread. Do you know that 'laughs at impossibilities' is from a Wesley hymn? I think there are another 8 verses, but the cyberhymnal offers these -

*Father of Jesus Christ, my Lord,
My Savior and my Head;
I trust in Thee, Whose powerful Word
Hath raised Him from the dead.*

*I hope, against all human hope,
Self desperate, I believe;
Thy quickening Word shall raise me up,
Thou shalt Thy Spirit give.*

*To Thee the glory of Thy power
And faithfulness I give;
I shall in Christ, at that glad hour,
And Christ in me shall live.*

*Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, "It shall be done!"*

Re: My 'Lines' of thought, on: 2005/8/14 13:39

The Lord is speaking to me about 'love'.

Separately.

The Lord is speaking to me about 'relationship'.

That's how spaced out I am. :-P

The Lord is speaking to me about 'knowing' Him.

The Lord is speaking to me about His 'calling' on my life. 8-)

This is the most recent, and was given a new shaft of light through one line of what Annie quoted: 'that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ,'

Finally I have to say this, that since I joined SI, like so many others, my spiritual life has received the proverbial kick towards greater glory. :-?

Amen. Bless the Lord at all times! GOD IS GOOD!

Re:Need a line, on: 2005/8/14 15:58

Hey, Good News, Mike's still alive. :lol:

Guess he would have been happier in that "Chariot to Heaven" scenario I asked about, but, nonetheless, the poor guy has to stick around and suffer here with us (or suffer under the weight of us, is more like it). :-?

I was checking my emails, and since SI is a shortcut on my desktop, I decided to peek - just in time to see him sign-off.

Shhhh ! - don't tell anybody, O.K. ?

Love youse guys. (Jersey talk) :-P

Annie

Re: Line of thought ... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/8/16 9:24

Great response's here ... Am still a bit disoriented, been out of state, make that InTheLight's home state for the past 8 days. Unable to get at my PM's at the moment and am unsure if it is related to the the hacking that took place, hope there is much prayer going out over this.

Quote:
-----Guess he would have been happier in that "Chariot to Heaven" scenario I asked about, but, nonetheless, the poor guy has to stick around and suffer here with us (or suffer under the weight of us, is more like it).

Very kind of you GrannieAnnie, had just a few brief moments to check in and only within the last couple of days... Certainly *it's is better* Phi 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

But as the reminder goes...

Phi 1:24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

Phi 1:25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

Phi 1:26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

It certainly is true, my heart was not so strangely warmed just to pop in and "hear" from all you saints.

Re:, on: 2005/8/17 0:05

"Am still a bit disoriented"

It's O.K. brother Mike. We've known that for some time now. :-D

But when your "Seated in Heavenly places" but your feet are still on this planet, who ain't 'Disorientated' ?

We're peculiar, strangers and pilgrims in this world, according to Peter. No debate there. :-?

I've been "strait betwixt" for a long time (hey, that would make a good sign-on name-hmm ?), but I seriously doubt that for me "to abide in the flesh is more needful for you" ... or anyone else here :lol: .

I'm sorry, it's nearing midnite again, when I "lose it".

Just glad to have you back, to suffer a bit longer with us. Misery loves company ~ ha.

Keep them good posts a'coming.
Blessings !

Re: Got thrown some Life 'lines'., on: 2005/8/18 3:49

Whenever I've needed 'spiritual surgery' I've gone to this site. I needed to be in surgery there for a few hours tonite.

From Chip ...

Paul tells the Ephesians that God "has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). This will not happen after we have died, but has already occurred. How did we arrive at the highest place in the universe, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and name (Ephesians 1:21)? It all begins with "I am crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20a). For if I was crucified with Christ, then I died with Christ. And if I died with Christ, then I was buried with Christ. And if I was buried with Christ, then I was made alive with Christ. And if I was made alive with Christ, then I ascended with Christ. And if I ascended with Christ, then I am seated together with Him in the heavenly places. It is not about me, it is all about Him! Our union with Christ is the way we overcome. There is nothing in me, personally, that overcomes: the secret is "not I, but Christ" (Galatians 2:20ff).

This is why the Lord says to take up your cross daily, and follow Him. The Throne is only for those who can drink of His cup and be baptized with His baptism - that is, be crucified, dead, and resurrected. We only see the cross, so we think this is terrible. But the Lord sees that the cross leads to death, and death leads to resurrection, and resurrection leads to ascension, and ascension leads to being seated with Him in His throne. It is impossible for us to take up the cross and not be resurrected. I am almost afraid to make it so plain lest we fail to appreciate its mystery, but it is all there in the Scriptures. We cannot ascend until we have first descended. Can we embrace the cross, and love the hands that nail us to it, and hold nothing against the One Who put us there? Can we commit our spirit into His hands and give up the ghost of Self, when we see the joy that is set before us?

Just as certainly as the Vine was crucified, dead, buried, resurrected, ascended and seated, so the Branches were crucified, dead, buried, resurrected, ascended and seated. The whole issue is: will we abide in the Vine and share in the overcoming, or not? Overcoming is bound up with abiding. The Lord says, "Live in me, and I will live in you" (John 15:4a). Now the Lord says that overcomers will sit WITH Him in His throne. How is that possible? Because we are IN Him, and He is IN us, so "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him" (I Corinthians 6:17) and "the two shall become one" (Ephesians 5:31, 32ff).

<http://www.watchman.net/articles/overcomes.html>

Another good one to read in full length ...

<http://www.watchman.net/articles/daniel5.html>

Until He Comes.

Annie

Re: The Hidden Life of Prayer - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/7/8 12:33

Happened upon this old thread looking to see if I would be repeating myself in what I was going to present here and thought I would just tag this on to it.

The Hidden Life of Prayer
by *David MacIntyre*

The Life of Prayer

"My God. Thy creature answers, Thee."
-Alfred de Musset.

"The love of Christ is my prayer-book."
-Gerhard Tersteegen.

"Prayer is the key of heaven; the Spirit helps faith to turn this key."
-Thomas Watson.

In one of the cathedrals of Northern Europe an exquisite group in high relief represents the prayer life. It is disposed in three panels. The first of these reminds us of the apostolic precept, "Pray without ceasing." We see the front of a spacious temple which opens on the market-place. The great square is strewn with crowds of eager men, gesticulating, bargaining—all evidently intent on gain. But One, who wears a circlet of thorn, and is clothed in a garment woven without seam from the top throughout, moves silently through the clamorous crowds, and subdues to holy fear the most covetous heart.

The second panel displays the precincts of the temple, and serves to illustrate the common worship of the Church. White-robed ministers hasten here and there. They carry oil for the lamp, and water for the laver, and blood from the altar; with pure intention, their eyes turned towards the unseen glory, they fulfill the duties of their sacred calling.

The third panel introduces us to the inner sanctuary. A solitary worshipper has entered within the veil, and hushed and lowly in the presence of God, bends before the glancing Shekinah. This represents the hidden life of prayer of which the Master spoke in the familiar words, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:6, R.V.).

Our Lord takes it for granted that His people will pray. And indeed in Scripture generally the outward obligation of prayer is implied rather than asserted. Moved by a divinely-implanted instinct, our natures cry out for God, for the living God. And however this instinct may be crushed by sin, it awakes to power in the consciousness of redemption. Theologians of all schools, and Christians of every type, agree in their recognition of this principle of the new life. Chrysostom has said, "The just man does not desist from praying until he ceases to be just;" and Augustine, "He that loveth little prayeth little, and he that loveth much prayeth much;" and Richard Hooker, "Prayer is the first thing wherewith a righteous life beginneth, and the last wherewith it doth end;" and Páre la Combe, "He who has a pure heart will never cease to pray, and he who will be constant in prayer shall know what it is to have a pure heart;" and Bunyan, "If thou art not a praying person, thou art not a Christian;" and Richard Baxter, "Prayer is the breath of the new creature;" and George Herbert, "Prayer...the soul's blood."

And yet, instinctive as is our dependence upon God, no duty is more earnestly impressed upon us in Scripture than the duty of continual communion with Him. The main reason for this unceasing insistence is the arduousness of prayer. In its nature it is a laborious undertaking, and in our endeavor to maintain the spirit of prayer we are called to wrestle against principalities and powers of darkness.

"Dear Christian reader," says Jacob Boehme, "to pray aright is right earnest work." Prayer is the most sublime energy of which the spirit of man is capable. It is in one aspect glory and blessedness; in another, it is toil and travail, battle and agony. Uplifted hands grow tremulous long before the field is won; straining sinews and panting breath proclaim the exhaustion of the "heavenly footman." The weight that falls upon an aching heart fills the brow with anguish, even when the midnight air is chill. Prayer is the uplift of the earth-bound soul into the heaven, the entrance of the purified spirit into the holiest; the rending of the luminous veil that shuts in, as behind curtains, the glory of God. It is the vision of things unseen; the recognition of the mind of the Spirit; the effort to frame words which man may not utter. A man that truly prays one prayer," says Bunyan, "shall after that never be able to express with his mouth or pen the unutterable desires, sense, affection, and longing that went to God in that prayer." The saints of the Jewish Church had a princely energy in intercession: "Battering the gates of heaven with storms of prayer," they took the kingdom of heaven by violence. The first Christians proved in the wilderness, in the dungeon, in the arena, and at the stake the truth of their Master's words, "He shall have whatsoever he saith." Their souls ascended to God in supplication as the flame of the altar mounts heavenward. The Talmudists affirm that in the divine life four things call for fortitude; of these prayer is one. One who met Tersteegen at Kronenberg remarked, "It seemed to me as if he had gone straight into heaven, and had lost himself in God; but often when he had done praying he was as white as the wall." David Brainerd notes that on one occasion, when he found his soul "exceedingly enlarged" in supplication, he was "in such anguish, and pleaded with so much earnestness and importunity," that when he rose from his knees he felt "extremely weak and overcome." "I could scarcely walk straight," he goes on to say, "my joints were loosed, the sweat ran down my face and body, and nature seemed as if it would dissolve." A living

writer has reminded us of John Foster, who used to spend long nights in his chapel, absorbed in spiritual exercises, pacing to and fro in the disquietude of his spirit, until his restless feet had worn a little track in the aisle.

One might easily multiply examples, but there is no need to go beyond Scripture to find either precept or example to impress us with the arduousness of that prayer which prevails. Should not the supplication of the Psalmist, "Quicken Thou me, according to Thy word...quicken me in Thy righteousness...quicken me after Thy loving-kindness...quicken me according to Thy judgments...quicken me, O Lord, for Thy name's sake;" and the complaint of the Evangelical Prophet, "There is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee," find an echo in our experience? Do we know what it is to "labour," to "wrestle," to "agonize" in prayer?

Another explanation of the arduousness of prayer lies in the fact that we are spiritually hindered: there is "the noise of archers in the places of drawing water." St. Paul assures us that we shall have to maintain our prayer energy "against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Dr. Andrew Bonar used to say that, as the King of Syria commanded his captains to fight neither with small nor great, but only with the King of Israel, so the prince of the power of the air seems to bend all the force of his attack against the spirit of prayer. If he should prove victorious there, he has won the day. Sometimes we are conscious of a satanic impulse directed immediately against the life of prayer in our souls; sometimes we are led into "dry" and wilderness-experiences, and the face of God grows dark above us; sometimes, when we strive most earnestly to bring every thought and imagination under obedience to Christ, we seem to be given over to disorder and unrest; sometimes the inbred slothfulness of our nature lends itself to the evil one as an instrument by which he may turn our minds back from the exercise of prayer. Because of all these things, therefore, we must be diligent and resolved, watching as a sentry who remembers that the lives of men are lying at the hazard of his wakefulness, resourcefulness, and courage. "And what I say unto you," said the Lord to His disciples, "I say unto all, Watch!"

There are times when even the soldiers of Christ become heedless of their trust, and no longer guard with vigilance the gift of prayer. Should any one who reads these pages be conscious of loss of power in intercession, lack of joy in communion, hardness and impenitence in confession, "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works."⁵

"Oh, stars of heaven that fade and flame,
Oh, whispering waves below!
Was earth, or heaven. or I the same,
A year, a year ago!

"The stars have kept their home on high,
The waves their wonted flow;
The love is lost that once was I,
A year, a year ago."

The only remedy for this sluggish mood is that we should "rekindle our love," as Polycarp wrote to the Church in Ephesus, "in the blood of God." Let us ask for a fresh gift of the Holy Spirit to quicken our sluggish hearts, a new disclosure of the charity of God. The Spirit will help our infirmities, and the very compassion of the Son of God will fall upon us, clothing us with zeal as with a garment, stirring our affections into a most vehement flame, and filling our souls with heaven.

"Men ought always to pray, and -although faintness of spirit attends on prayer like a shadow- not faint." The soil in which the prayer of faith takes root is a life of unbroken communion with God, a life in which the windows of the soul are always open towards the City of Rest. We do not know the true potency of prayer until our hearts are so steadfastly inclined to God that our thoughts turn to Him, as by a Divine instinct, whenever they are set free from the consideration of earthly things. It has been said of Origen (in his own words) that his life was "one unceasing supplication." By this means above all others the perfect idea of the Christian life is realized. Intercourse between the believer and his Lord ought never to be interrupted.

"The vision of God," says Bishop Westcott, "makes life a continuous prayer." And in that vision all fleeting things resolve themselves, and appear in relation to things unseen. In a broad use of the term, prayer is the sum of all the service that we render to God, so that all fulfillment of duty is, in one sense, the performance of Divine service, and the familiar saying, "Work is worship," is justified. "I am prayer," said a Psalmist (Psa. cix. 4). "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving," said an Apostle.

In the Old Testament that life which is steeped in prayer is often described as a walk with God. Enoch walked in assurance, Abraham in perfectness, Elijah in fidelity, the sons of Levi in peace and equity. Or it is spoken of as a dwelling with God, even as Joshua departed not from the Tabernacle; or as certain craftsmen of the olden time abode with a king for his work. Again, it is defined as the ascent of the soul into the Sacred Presence; as the planets, "with open face beholding," climb into the light of the sun's countenance, or as a flower, lit with beauty and dipped in fragrance, reaches upwards towards the light. At other times, prayer is said to be the gathering up of all the faculties in an ardor of reverence, and love, and praise. As one clear strain may succeed in reducing to harmony a number of mutually-discordant voices, so the reigning impulses of the spiritual nature unite the heart to fear the name of the Lord.

But the most familiar, and perhaps the most impressive, description of prayer in the Old Testament, is found in those numerous passages where the life of communion with God is spoken of as a waiting upon Him. A great scholar has given a beautiful definition of waiting upon God: "To wait is not merely to remain impassive. It is to expect-to look for with patience, and also with submission. It is to long for, but not impatiently; to look for, but not to fret at the delay; to watch for, but not restlessly; to feel that if He does not come we will acquiesce, and yet to refuse to let the mind acquiesce in the feeling that He will not come."

Now, do not let any one say that such a life is visionary and unprofitable. The real world is not this covering veil of sense; reality belongs to those heavenly things of which the earthly are mere "patterns" and correspondences. Who is so practical as God? Who among men so wisely directed His efforts to the circumstances and the occasions which He was called to face, as "the Son of Man who is in heaven?" Those who pray well, work well. Those who pray most, achieve the grandest results. To use the striking phrase of Tauler, "In God nothing is hindered."

The cultivation of the habit of prayer will secure its expression on all suitable occasions.

In times of need, in the first instance; almost everyone will pray then. Moses stood on the shores of the Red Sea, surveying the panic into which the children of Israel were cast when they realized that the chariots of Pharaoh were thundering down upon them. "Wherefore criest thou unto Me?" said the Lord. Nehemiah stood before King Artaxerxes. The monarch noted his inward grief, and said, "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart." That question opened the door to admit the answer to three months' praying; and the hot desire that had risen to God in those slow months gathered itself into one fervent ejaculation, "So I prayed to the God of heaven."

Again, one whose life is spent in fellowship with God will constantly seek and find opportunities for swift and frequently-recurring approaches to the throne of grace. The apostles bring every duty under the cross; at the name of Jesus their loyal souls soar heavenward in adoration and in praise. The early Christians never met without invoking a benediction; they never parted without prayer. The saints of the Middle Ages allowed each passing incident to summon them to intercession-the shadow on the dial, the church-bell, the flight of the swallow, the rising of the sun, the falling of a leaf. The covenant which Sir Thomas Browne made with himself is well-known, but one may venture to refer to it once more: "To pray in all places where quietness inviteth; in any house, highway, or street; and to know no street in this city that may not witness that I have not forgotten God and my Saviour in it; and that no parish or town where I have been may not say the like. To take occasion of praying upon the sight of any church which I see, or pass by, as I ride about. To pray daily, and particularly for my sick patients, and for all sick people under whose care soever. And at the entrance into the house of the sick to say, 'The peace and the mercy of God be upon this house.' After a sermon to make a prayer and desire a blessing, and to pray for the minister." And much more of a like nature.

Once more, one who lives in the spirit of prayer will spend much time in retired and intimate communion with God. It is by such a deliberate engagement of prayer that the fresh springs of devotion which flow through the day are fed. For, although communion with God is the life-energy of the renewed nature, our souls "cleave to the dust," and devotion tends to grow formal-it becomes emptied of its spiritual content, and exhausts itself in outward acts. The Master reminds us of this grave peril, and informs us that the true defense against insincerity in our approach to God lies in the diligent exercise of private prayer.

In the days of the Commonwealth, one of the early Friends, "a servant of the Lord, but a stranger outwardly," came into an assembly of serious people, who had met for worship. "And after some time he had waited on the Lord in spirit he had an opportunity to speak, all being silent; he said by way of exhortation, 'Keep to the Lord's watch.' These words, being spake in the power of God, had its operation upon all or most of the meeting, so that they felt some great dread and fear upon their spirits. After a little time he spake again, saying, 'What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.' Then he was silent again a little time, but the whole meeting, being sensible that this man was in some extraordinary spirit and power, we

re all musing what manner of teaching this should be, being such a voice that most of the hearers never heard before, that carried such great authority with it that they were all necessitated to be subject to the power."

Soldier of Christ, you are in an enemy's country; "Keep to the Lord's watch."

<http://www.fivesolas.com/hidden1.htm>

Re: - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/7/12 2:13

Thank you for posting this about prayer
charlene

Re: 'Line' of thought - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/7/12 15:44

Hi everyone.

Brother Mike, appreciate this brother.

This was very much on my heart and mind at the prayer meeting last night and has come to mind on and off again recently also. ...

"I think it's a great matter to believe there is a God."

This sense of... do I, do we, glorify God as God(Romans 1:21); that is do our lives give adequate expression to His being our God.

?

I read some time ago of a saintly man that was known to sometimes continue no further in prayer than to utter "God" over and over again for hours, as if to have been so struck with the magnitude of the thought of, God.

"I think it's a great matter to believe there is a God."

I think just now of the passage of scripture which says

"If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory."

...then shalt thou not remove. And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness...

Perhaps we more than anyone, I say we as Christians, do swear and testify that *the Lord liveth*, that is verbally, in a literal sense.

Ohh, but is it in power, and in truth? Do we show forth His praises?

Do we give an adequate expression to the world, to those around us, of God; one that is true both outwardly **and** inwardly?

If I can connect this with another sort of line of thought that has been on my mind this week, going back to something which has challenged me when I read it, and that is how God dealt with the children of Israel when they complained about the manna. I find it challenging to consider when I think of the life that I am accustomed to.

In what I believe is a divine commentary upon this, in Psalm 106, it says...

"They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."

And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul

Ohh dear brothers, could this perhaps be written over much of the religious strivings of our western world?

And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul

Re: 'Line' of thought - our testimony - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/7/13 16:20

Brothers and sisters,

It so happens that when I got home last night, this month's issue of the Voice of the Martyrs was on my desk. I decided to take it with me to work this morning to read on the bus.

The main article is about *our testimony*.

It talks about Pastor Wurmbbrand, and how, after years of torture and being fed drugs in his food, he had forgotten the scriptures. All he could do was to say 'Jesus, I love you'. Yet in spite of this he led people to Christ while in prison!

It talks about his wife Sabina who herself was imprisoned and how she turned the threats and anger of a guard into a quiet 'go away'.

And there are other stories, like a young Iranian woman leading people to freedom in Christ in her land, or a priest in a N

Miracles that follow the plow :: 'Line' of thought

azi Concentration camp who offered his life so that another prisoner could live.

Powerfull testimonies. But not only in words.

Chris

Re:, on: 2007/7/13 22:24

Quote:

-----by ChrisJD

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And there are other stories, like a young Iranian woman leading people to freedom in Christ in her land, or a priest in a Nazi Concentration camp who offered his life so that another prisoner could live.

Powerfull testimonies. But not only in words.
