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Thy Kingdom Come.

MOST people are very well acquainted with the words of our Lord's model prayer, in which He taught His disciples to earnestly desire the Heavenly Father's kingdom to come, but do we wonder how much thought is placed upon these words—"Thy Kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,"—by multitudes of people who repeat this prayer over and over again, week by week, month by month, year by year?

It is good, of course, that a great number of people do have these words of our Lord's prayer before their minds, but unless these is a sincere desire to understand the real meaning our Lord intended, when giving this model prayer to His disciples, those using the prayer will not benefit very much.

In the first place, when our Lord declared—"After this manner pray ye; Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,"—He desired to lift the minds of His sincere followers to the Father's presence, in the deep realisation that only the great Eternal One, the Father of mercies, could supply the desire of their hearts, as they communed with Him amidst all the adverse circumstances of this "present evil world." As though our Master would imply— There may be times, many of them, when outwardly it may seem that God's Kingdom will never come, when you may be tempted to think that the Heavenly Father had even forgotten you and all mankind, by the way things are happening on earth; or you may have the thoughts presented to you that God is powerless to interfere in world affairs, by the way things are getting out of hand. But, despite all the temptations to the contrary, our Lord would say—Keep on praying to the Heavenly Father in sincerity of heart, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Thus, our Saviour would have His disciples grasp the important truth—Even if the kingdom does not come in your lifetime, you will, by so praying, have your minds and hearts brought into line with the plan of God, which is, that

God's kingdom in "due time" shall bring about the deliverance of mankind from sin and death, so that God's will may be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

It will be noticed also that in referring to the kingdom as the only means of accomplishing that deliverance, our Lord presented this subject from two distinct standpoints. For instance, in Matt. 4:17 we read the words of Jesus—"Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John the Baptist had also used

the same statement previously. And we may ask, What did our Lord mean by those words? Did He really think at that time that the kingdom was about to come—over nineteen hundred years ago? The following verses—in Matt. 4:18-22—give us a guide to our Lord’s meaning. To His invitation—’Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”—we read that four disciples gladly left their fishing business and followed Jesus.

Thus, when our Lord declared, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” in His day, He was undoubtedly referring to the opportunity for His disciples to become members in the kingdom of heaven class; and His whole ministry was devoted mainly to this most important work of finding those who were worthy of being invited to share in the kingdom of heaven with Him. How Jesus encouraged His disciples to appreciate and meditate upon the truths of the kingdom is shown by His words to them, as recorded in Matt. 13:11— “It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.” This was in contrast to our Lord’s treatment of the multitude—He spoke to them in parables because they were not worthy of the deep and precious truths of the kingdom—but to His true-hearted followers the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were revealed. And so, as those devoted disciples prayed, “Thy kingdom come,” they would do so with much more understanding as they progressed in the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom—allowing the Lord’s spirit to bring them into line with this wonderful feature of God’s Plan, the preparation of the kingdom of heaven class.

The Apostles, of course, carried on this great work which Christ began in their hearts, as they preached and proclaimed the invitation for the heavenly kingdom. How beautifully did Paul express this matter in Col. 1:12, 13—”Giving thanks unto the Father, who bath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Who bath delivered us from the power of darkness, and bath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” What a thought is this—that here and now the Lord’s dear people are translated in their minds, hearts and devotions, into the company of their Lord above, together with other members in Christ who are likewise energized by the spirit of God.

The question that we could well ask ourselves is—Do we feel that we have been delivered from the power of darkness, and have been translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son? Perhaps no one of the Lord’s people feels that way fully, but if there is progress in that direction then we can pray, “Thy kingdom come,” with confidence and trust, knowing that our development in the school of Christ is all part of the preparation for the kingdom to come to the earth, so that God’s will may be done here, even as it is done in heaven.

The words of the Apostle Paul in Phil. 3:20 are in full agreement—”For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Our hearts, our minds, our ambitions are centered there, during the time of our earthly sojourn, to the intent that our new minds may be fully transferred to that heavenly kingdom at the time of the spirit birth, in the first resurrection. What meaning, then, is contained in the words “Thy kingdom come,” as we meditate upon the first or spiritual phase of God’s kingdom? Of those who shall inherit that heavenly kingdom, the Apostle declared—”And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”

While then, our Lord encouraged His true disciples with the words--”The kingdom of heaven is at hand”—that they may give diligence in their preparation as members of that kingdom of heaven class, yet how differently did Jesus answer respecting the kingdom of God when this subject was put to Him by the Pharisees, those who did not in any way appreciate the Lord nor seek to understand the heavenly phase of the kingdom. We read—”And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (with outward show—margin) : neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold the kingdom of God is within you (among you—margin) .” (Luke 17:20, 21.) Our Lord was here referring to the time when the

kingdom of God would be operating in the world, when its rule and authority would be felt by mankind, including the Pharisees, who would be resurrected and required to obey the laws of that kingdom, if they were to receive its blessings. The Pharisees had really sought to, ridicule the idea that Jesus would ever have a kingdom; they would reason—He is so insignificant, with no visible support, no army of soldiers to ever establish a kingdom, having only a few, lowly followers of little reputation in their eyes. Jesus' answer that His kingdom would never be established with great, outward show, so that it could be located or pointed out in any particular country, but rather that its effect would be felt worldwide, no doubt astonished the Pharisees, but is a very helpful and important guide to all who are worthy of understanding the establishment of the kingdom on earth, as well as the setting up of the heavenly phase of the kingdom.

Jesus gave a similar answer to Pilate to that which He gave to the Pharisees, when He declared in John 18:36—"My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." "My kingdom is not of this — this order of things, this present evil world. No, our Lord would imply. My servants will never need to fight for the establishment of My kingdom. Rather, when Christ's kingdom comes all* adverse rule and authority in the world will have been subdued, Satan will have been bound, and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2:14.) Truly the kingdom of God will be "among" or "in the midst" of all nations, and all mankind shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest. (Jer. 31:34.)

We also have the same truth respecting the kingdom of God in its two phases presented by various of the prophets in the Old Testament. Of particular interest is the prophecy of Daniel. In chapter 2 we have the record of God's revelation to Daniel of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Daniel was given a wonderful interpretation of a great image of which Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed. This image of a man, comprised of various metals--gold, silver, brass, iron and clay—represented the four great empires of earth from the time of Babylon, to Medo-Persia, Greece, and finally Rome, each empire being pictured by a portion of this image from the head down to the legs, feet and toes. There can be no doubt that the important lesson which Daniel was instructed of God to give at that time was especially recorded for the instruction and guidance of God's people of this Gospel Age.

Quoting from Daniel 2:44, 45, we read—"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest (see verses 34, 35) that the stone was cut out of the mountain; without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." It is of special interest to note that the stone (verse 34) smote the image upon his feet. Therefore, "In the days of these kings," represented by the toes of the image—the divisions of the Roman Empire which exist in the world today—"shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." The members who will comprise this heavenly phase of the kingdom have been selected from all nations since the time of our Lord's first advent, as we saw from our Lord's words—"The kingdom of heaven is at hand." However, the actual "setting up" of this kingdom, takes place in the closing, days of this Gospel 'Age, in "the harvest, which is the end of the world" (age); Matt. 13:39, the time in which we are now living and have been for some considerable time.

From Mal. 3:17 we read—"And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." The "making up" or gathering to the Lord's "jewels," or special treasure, as the margin states, is described by the Apostle Paul as the resurrection of "the dead in Christ" and the "change" of the last living members beyond the veil in the first resurrection, during the period of the harvest of the Gospel Age. (1 Thess. 4:1 5-17; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.)

In Daniel 7 we have the same picture of world empires depicted as four beasts, and the outcome with the establishment of God's kingdom is clearly revealed. In verse 22 we read—"The Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. This follows the complete overthrow of the Papacy which sprang up within the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire, which is pictured by the "fourth beast, dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly." (Dan. 7:7.) The power of the Papacy began to be broken in 1799, when Napoleon took the Pope prisoner to France, and verse 26 of Daniel 7 indicates the "consuming" of this Papal system is to continue unto destruction.—"The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Then follows the description of the complete "setting up" of God's kingdom,—"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan. 7:27.)

The question may be asked—When does God's kingdom really come? In the first place, it will be when the kingdom of heaven class is complete and with their Lord in the heavenly inheritance. Further, with earth's turmoil and distress over, then will follow the fulfilment of the prayer—"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," as expressed by the Psalmist—"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is governor among the nations . . . All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." (Psa. 22:27, 28; 145:10-13.)

The manner in which God's kingdom will come and how its power will be exercised in the world is also of great importance. It will be realised that the gathering of the kingdom of heaven class to the inheritance above will be unknown to the world at large; to the majority of mankind the Lord's people finish their earthly lives as do others of the human race. It was prophesied by the Psalmist concerning the saints — "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." (Psa. 82:7.) While people generally fall into death like prince Adam, the Lord's true people finish their earthly course like prince Jesus. Our Lord's death on the cross was an ignominious one and in apparent weakness, but His resurrection was in great power and glory. Likewise it is recorded of His followers:—"Sown in dishonour; raised in glory: sown in weakness; raised in power: sown a natural body; raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:43, 44.)

With the completion of the body members of Christ, the heavenly phase of the kingdom will be fully "set up." Then, out of the earth's travail will come the order of the new birth for humanity, as pictured by the rising sun which sheds its warmth and healing rays over the whole globe. Our Lord gave this beautiful illustration to show that the kingdom of God will not be isolated in any one locality, so that no one could rightly say —"Lo here; or lo there. . . . See here; or see there." Rather, it will be—"As the bright shining, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day." (Luke 17:21, 23, 24.) The prophet Malachi gave the same testimony respecting the shining forth of the kingdom blessings to all humanity worthy of that favour when God's kingdom has come, and His will is done on earth, as it is in heaven — "The Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." (Mal. 4:2.)

Thus, with the kingdom established in heaven and in earth, it will be truly manifest that "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be (become) his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev. 21:3.) The "tabernacle of God" here mentioned will be those in whom the Lord can fully dwell, the glorified church, with Christ as its Head. In verse 2 of this 21st chapter of Revelation this same Gospel

Church in glory and kingdom power is termed "the holy city, new Jerusalem," and is said to "come down

from God out of heaven.” Yes, indeed, the holy influence and power from God’s exalted “new heavens,” the “first fruits unto God of his creatures,” will descend upon all the families of the earth for their lasting blessing as they co-operate with the laws of the kingdom in sincerity of heart. This will truly be the fulfilment of the “earnest expectation of the creation waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God,” (Rom. 8:19.) “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) over the Christmas season, for the four days December 25th to 28th, with additional gatherings on January 1st and 2nd. These assemblies will be held in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord’s name. A helpful season of refreshing is confidently anticipated, by the Lord’s grace. Further information is obtainable from the secretary, Mr. J. B. Hiam, C/o Berean Bible Institute, Kew, E.4, Victoria.

Lord, Increase Our Faith.

(Luke 17.5-19)

OUR Lord’s teachings were contrary to the spirit of this world, and so adverse to its policy that His disciples felt that to adopt His methods and principles and discard their own really involved a revolution of their former ideas. And in yielding themselves as true disciples, they felt the need of a stronger, firmer faith than they had yet been called upon to exercise. They were quite persuaded from the purity and nobility of His character and from His miracles and His teachings, that He was indeed a teacher sent from God; yet, remembering the requirement of discipleship, “Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath (all his own ideas and will and possessions and earthly prospects) , he cannot be my disciple,” they felt that to continue in this attitude of acceptable discipleship would require a growing faith which would rise to every emergency of His requirements. Hence their request, “Lord, increase our faith.”

And they were quite right in their reasoning; for the Lord also clearly shows that the true disciples make progress in the school of Christ toward the full overcoming of the spirit of the world. And this progress can be achieved by faith only—by such full, implicit confidence in His teachings and training as will keep them continually as earnest, diligent pupils under His guidance and instruction. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

(1 John 5:4.) This, by the way, is very suggestive of what it signifies to be an “overcomer,” to whom pertains all the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel of Christ. It is simply this: That day by day we attentively heed and patiently carry out the instructions of our infallible Teacher and Guide in full, unquestioning faith in His wisdom and love, no matter how heavy will be the daily cross or how severe the discipline. It is indeed a tedious, life - long process, but the end will be glorious, and even the daily discipline, patiently and meekly borne, will bring the present rewards of conscious progress in the great work of overcoming and of a nearer approach to the goal of a ripened Christian character. All of this is implied in the beautiful words, so expressive of the faith and fervent devotion of true discipleship

“Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee,
E’en though it be a cross that raiseth me.”

We observe that the Lord made no direct answer to this request of His disciples, but that He dwelt upon the power and desirability of faith. He showed that even a weak, but genuine faith could so lay hold upon the power of God as to instantly root up and replant a tree, and on another occasion He said it could

remove mountains into the midst of the sea. Is the suggestion preposterous? No, not to faith; for, bear in mind, faith is not imagination, nor self-will, nor ignorance, but it is a reasonable thing, founded upon good and substantial evidence; so that our Lord's teaching here implied what on another occasion He clearly stated; namely, that the request be made according to the will of God (John 15:7) . Thus, for instance, if the least disciple were assured, on good evidence, that the removal of such a tree or mountain would be a part of the Divine will, and that it was his duty to do the commanding, he should have equally strong faith in the results. Thus it was when the Lord caused the barren fig tree to wither. This, observe, was not to satisfy mere idle curiosity, but, like all of His miracles, which God wrought by Him (Acts 2:22) , it was for a definite and wise purpose, to teach an important lesson, and also to convince His disciples of His Divine recognition and authority.

Verses 7-10 show that it is in the Lord's service we are to look for rewards of faith, the special manifestations of Divine favour, in the removal of obstacles and difficulties found to be in the way of our progress in His service by cultivating Christian character in ourselves and others, and in ministering generally to the furtherance of Divine plans. We may not expect these rewards of Divine favour, except as we prosecute the service. And when they are received we are not to regard them as evidences that we have done any more than it was our duty to do. As servants of God we owe Him the full measure of our ability; hence we may not feel that we have merited or earned the great blessings of heavenly inheritance and joint-heirship with Christ. We have merely done our duty; but God, with exceeding riches of grace, has prepared, for those who lovingly serve Him, rewards far beyond what they could have asked or hoped for. We can do no meritorious works; even at our best our service is marred by many imperfections, and could never find acceptance with God except as supplemented by the perfect and finished work of Christ.

Verses 11-16 show how the rewards of faith, which are of God's free grace, and by no means earned by our faith, should be gratefully received. The examples given illustrate the fact that rewards of faith are not always gratefully received. Here were ten lepers cleansed, and only one returned to give thanks and worship. So also of the many who receive justification by faith, the forgiveness of sins and have peace with God through Christ, how few return to present themselves living sacrifices, thank-offerings to God, their reasonable service.

Thy Will Be Done.

With quivering heart and trembling will
The word hath passed thy lips,

Within the shadow, cold and still,
Of some fair joy's eclipse.

"Thy will be done!" Thy God hath heard,
And He will crown that faith-framed word.

Thy prayer shall be fulfilled,—but how?
His thoughts are not as thine;

While thou would'st only weep and bow
He saith, "Arise and shine."

Thy thoughts were all of grief and night,
But His of boundless joy and light.

Thy father reigns supreme above;
The glory of His Name

Is grace and wisdom, truth and love,
His will must be the same.

And thou hast asked all joys in one,
In whispering forth, "Thy will be done!"

—F. R. Havergal.

Any influence is religious which fills the mind with gratitude and peace, which makes a man humble and patient and wise, which teaches him that the only business possible is to attune and harmonise his mind with the precious purpose of God. A. C. B.

Prayer--How and for What Should We Pray?

(Matt. 6:5- 13.) (Address Contributed.)

ALTHOUGH prayer is essential to true Christian living, nowhere in His Word has God commanded His people to pray. In many places we are invited to do so, and told that it will bring blessings, and particularly do the Apostles exhort us to pray; in fact, they would impress that it is an absolute necessity, but God's Word does not say that you must pray.

It is good to reflect on that. God apparently does not want to compel anyone to pray to Him —considering it as a duty to be performed. Quite a few people grow up with this thought that prayer is a duty, because as children they were trained at their mothers' knees to lisp their prayers to God. That is good surely, and every Christian can appreciate the good endeavours of mothers to train up their children in the way they should go. But later in life it is possible for such children to continue their prayers mechanically—merely “saying their prayers.”

While, as Christians, we would not discourage even this, yet it is clear to us that the real essence of prayer is much more than this. One cannot but question the sincerity of many who merely repeat written prayers; the prayer books of the nominal churches have never appealed to us, nor the chants set to music with the same object in view. In remonstrating with some on this point they have sought to impress the beauty of these prayers; we would not question the beauty of words (except where doctrinal points may enter in) , but the fact that the words are written and often learned off by heart, they are not always (we would be inclined to say, rarely) uttered in real sincerity. A little poem is of interest and to the point:—

I often say my prayers,
But do I always pray ?
And do the wishes of my heart
Go with the words I say ?

I may as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone,
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone.

For words without the heart
The Lord will never hear.
Nor will He to those lips attend
Whose prayers are not sincere.

The old saying, “Familiarity breeds contempt” is very true in many respects, and even applies to Jesus' model prayer, which is commonly referred to as “The Lord's Prayer.” Rather, in this case, we would say, “Familiarity breeds indifference,” for the words are uttered so often that little thought is given to their significance. In fact, the manner in which the Lord's prayer is often recited is repulsive. One wonders if our Lord ever intended that it should be a prayer uttered word for word throughout, as is the custom in the so-called Christian world. The thought has been advanced (and it seems reasonable) that the Lord gave it to His followers as an illustration, or example of the things for which we should ask our Heavenly Father, leaving the choice of words in our petitions to us. This thought seems strengthened by our Lord's words—“After this manner pray ye.”

Both in public and private prayer it is essential that we mean what we say, and that we remember that we are actually speaking to our Father in heaven. In private prayer, the fact that there is no one else to hear us

sometimes promotes the tendency for the mind to wander. Every Christian knows something of the distractions that occur to the mind while engaged in prayer. In public prayer it is the opposite. The fact that there are others to hear, sometimes presents a temptation to pray so as to impress them and to forget that we are praying to our Heavenly Father.

To lead in public prayer is not always easy: in fact to do so for the first time or two is often a real ordeal. The advice of one has been of much help—"Forget everything but the fact that you are praying to God; thank Him for those things which personally you recognise as His good gifts to you, and request of Him for those things that you personally desire and of which you feel in need, and you will find that you have voiced a prayer to which every earnest soul present can utter a fervent Amen." Be not worried over much about a prayer of many words; remember the Lord had little time for those who thought they would be heard for their much speaking. In public prayer two things appeal—sincerity and brevity.

Our Lord's model prayer can and should give us much help regarding that for which we should pray, and the manner in which we should do it. First seems the thought of deep reverence—"Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name.- Only those who know the true character of our God can approach Him with the proper reverence. "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in heaven." Only the Lord's true people can pray in such a strain, for one must have at least an elementary knowledge of how the kingdom is to come that will mean God's will done on earth, before he can pray thus with sincerity. Thousands utter these words who know little and believe less of Christ's personal return with the object of fulfilling the prayer; they pray for the extension of Christ's Kingdom through the enlargement of their particular denominational system; they pray uninstructed by the Word of God. Many others who utter these words are more patriotic than they are God-fearing; so long as Christ establishes His kingdom through their nation it will be all right.

Those who pray these words intelligently and sincerely know that the best of earthly kingdoms are still incomparable with that which will operate when the prayer is fully answered, but the child of God who prays sincerely is no agitator. Though he prays sincerely for God's kingdom to come, he does not desire to hasten it beyond God's appointed times and bounds. A true Christian is a most law-abiding subject and is sympathetic to every endeavour by nations and governments in their herculean task of trying to better the conditions of their people. Because their failures are so manifest, the Christian prays for the One Kingdom that can usher in lasting "Peace on earth, and goodwill toward men."

"Give us each day our daily bread." While the thought of our temporal needs, in the way of food, etc., may be included in this request, it apparently should not be the uppermost thought. Rather should we view it as a request for the supply of spiritual food that nourishes and builds us up as "new creatures in Christ." To agonize in prayer for temporal blessings would put us with the unconsecrated, for -all these things do the Gentiles seek after." (Matt. 6:31-33.)

-And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Perhaps this aspect of sincere prayer is more carelessly passed over than any other. Many times are these words uttered without due thought to their significance. Just how freely do we forgive those who trespass against us? Do we not allow wrongs done to us to rankle in our minds, so that for days, sometimes months, and even years, a grudge or unforgiving spirit is exercised? Would we like to think of God forgiving us our trespasses that way, holding against us the things we do wrong? That is what we ask every time our lips frame the prayer—"Forgive us, as we forgive others." If we would pray this prayer sincerely, we must search first our own hearts to see that no lingering animosity and bitterness against any remains there. God has pardoned us fully, without merit on our part. He has done it fully, forgiven every offence: He has done it liberally, forgiven many offences. This is to be the measure of our forgiveness and our pity for others. We are all liable to offend brethren, just as we are liable to offend God. We all need forgiveness of one another, as we all need it of God. There is no danger of carrying it too far. Let us each remember our own sins and

follies: let us look over our and see how often we have offended God; then, remember that all this has been forgiven us and then fresh with this feeling let us forgive our brother, our sister, as we have been forgiven. And let us not rake up old offences and charge them again, but let us forgive utterly and treat others as though they had not offended, for so God treated us. Let us endeavour to cultivate a very tender sympathy and pity for the weaknesses of one another, not from any standpoint of our superior virtue, but from the standpoint of our own liability to err.

“Lead us not into temptation.” The thought here seems to be—Help us, forewarn us, so that we do not allow ourselves to endure needless temptation. So many things we do thoughtlessly tend to increase our difficulties in maintaining a consecrated walk. We need to be resolute, uncompromising, respecting all of which God’s Word warns

us as hindrances to the walk of the new creature. Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15) i.e., He did not give way to the tempter. He did not say—“Well, I have given up this way of living really, realising that it indulges the fleshly mind, and encourages a worldly spirit, but I suppose this once won’t matter, I don’t want to appear too unsociable.”

The point is well illustrated by the story of a man who wanted a new bus driver. There were several applicants for the position and he asked each one, How near could you drive to the edge of a cliff with safety, for my buses traverse some hazardous roads. One thought he could steer the bus within a foot of the edge with safety; another thought he could go within nine inches, and so on. One said, “I don’t really know how close I could drive to the edge with safety. but I know that I would keep as far from the edge as I possibly could.” He got the job. Lord, guard us, help us to steer as far clear of temptation as possible, and so—“Deliver us from evil”—i.e., the results of entering into temptation, steering too close to the edge of the cliff, instead of giving it a wide berth. We cannot play with fire and not get burnt.

So, we see the force of the Apostle’s injunction, “Watch unto prayer.” Watch before you pray and watch after you pray. As we are about to draw near in prayer we might ask ourselves for instance — Am I allowing any spirit of bitterness against anyone to remain within me? If so, I must get rid of it, because I am asking the Lord to forgive me for trespasses and shortcomings. When we have prayed we should say, Now I have asked the Lord to help me, put me on guard concerning those things into which I might enter unheedingly, and that would hinder me from walking in that “newness “of life” that truly pleases Him. I must watch for His leadings and promptings, be led of His spirit, for “as many as are led by, the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Watch to keep humble; let no proud spirit enter and remain. Never be self-confident of being able to do anything. Poor Peter; if only he had watched more unto prayer on the night of our Lord’s betrayal, he would have spared himself much remorse—“Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.” The motto is— Don’t be too sure anywhere.

Watch unto prayer. As one has said, “If you foresee trouble, don’t say, I will pray about that to-morrow.” Take it to the Lord straight away; then watch for His answer. Many a time we may not know just what we should do in certain matters, but if we take it to the Lord He will guide us; it may not always be instant guidance, but it will be guidance; that is sure. Sometimes the best thing is to watch, pray, then watch again; in other words, wait in watchfulness. If not answered soon enough to suit us, don’t faint and cease to pray. (Luke 18:1-8.) It must be God’s will that the answer should be delayed.

Another mistake many of us make regarding prayer, is to think it is a means of grace for petitioning the Lord only. (See Phil. 4:6.) Forget not the prayers of thanksgiving. Count your many blessings and it will surprise you what the Lord has done. We should thank Him that we have been endowed with hearts and minds that sought Him, and for His unspeakable gift of His Son, Jesus, that made it possible for us to

approach Him in prayer. Frequently, we are quick to thank the Lord for all the pleasant things we receive at His hand, but as we gain experience in the Christian way we find cause for thankfulness also in the persecutions and afflictions, the hard places. These things help to refine our hearts and cause us to appreciate more deeply still the things that are right and good and true. Severe trials and testings often show up to us our own lack of patience and spirit of long suffering. Thus the realisation of our failings is conducive to humility and contriteness of heart, whereas if we met only with proportionately less severe experiences and were thus able continually to overcome, we would surely become puffed up, and start congratulating ourselves as to what fine Christians we were. How true are the words of the hymn—"Our Father knows what things we need, each step along the way."

"Then let us leave it all with Him,
Assured that, come what may.
Our Father knows just what we need
Upon our pilgrim-way."

So should our prayers be prayers of faith also —fully, completely satisfied that He knows what is best. Such a faith will leave all our prayers and requests rested completely on Him—"Nevertheless, Lord, not my will but Thine be done." And let our prayers and concerns for others rest likewise. Sometimes we are ready to trust the Lord fully for the conduct of our affairs, but we let the concerns of other brethren, with whom we are intimately associated, lie as a burden on our heart, and fear that the Lord cannot do for them as He can for us. May God guide these few thoughts that they may be a help in keeping our prayers simple and sincere, both in petition and thankfulness, and full of faith toward God.

Liberty.

According to the Scriptures, liberty is granted only to those who are doing the will of God, and, according to Isa. 35:8, during the Millennium the highway of holiness leading to the perfect law of liberty and love will not be trodden by anything unclean. The Scriptures show that those who will be judged during the Millennium are called the unjust; therefore, being raised from the dead, a schooling process will be necessary, and Rev. 20:4; 2:27, shows that the Christ, Head and Body, reigning a thousand years, will rule with a rod of iron. We see that during that time the law of obedience will be enforced and those who will not hear (obey) will be cut off. (Acts 3:23.)

The reason the new creation is under the law of liberty is that, having put away sin, they are dead with Christ from the elements of the world (Col. 2:20), and, having the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5), they, through the spirit, mortify the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13), and walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4), following in the steps of: their Redeemer (1 Pet. 2:21) . Should they no: keep in this condition they will cease to be sons of God and cease to be under the law of liberty.

Used Postage Stamps.

Used postage stamps of all varieties can be sold to support the truth work. Friends willing to assist may forward all the Australian stamps they can procure, as well as other stamps, leaving a, least a quarter of an inch of paper around the stamps: that is, do not remove stamps from the paper.

(Quite a number of friends have sent in used postage stamps: would all please accept sincere thanks for their efforts in this way.)

Rest in the Lord.

Oh, blessed life !—the heart at rest
When all without tumultuous seems—
That trusts a higher will, and deems
That higher will, not mine, the best.

Oh, blessed life!—heart, mind and soul.
From self born aims and wishes free,
In all at one with Deity,
And loyal to the Lord's control.

—W. T. Matson.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 1.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

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