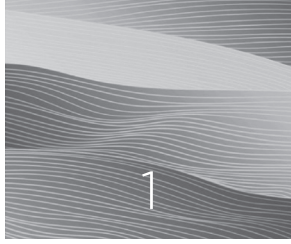


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JESUS CHRIST

I THINK THE GREATEST PRAYER in the world is the unuttered prayer of a great life. I believe that. Jesus prayed. He sent up ejaculatory prayers. He prayed long prayers. He prayed before meals. He prayed in company. He prayed with the people. He prayed alone. He prayed every kind of prayer I suppose there was. But the greatest prayer He ever made was the walk He took from the time He toddled out of Joseph's carpentry shop until they nailed Him on the cross. His life was His greatest prayer.

The Bible says that He pleads for us at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, making intercession for us continually. That has given some people the impression that Jesus Christ is engaged in a perpetual prayer meeting on His knees before the Father, interceding forever. No, His presence there is the

most eloquent prayer in all the wide world—that He is there and that we are here, and that He wears our nature and has our shape and looks like us. An angel walking about could see His form and say a man has arrived. A man is in heaven, a man. Sure, a man is there, our man. God’s Man, the sample Man, the second Adam. He’s there. And His presence there at the right hand of God is the great eloquent prayer for you and me. He bears our names on His hands and on His shoulder and on His breast. And there before the Father, His eloquent presence, is His mighty, efficacious prayer.

Yes, I believe the greatest prayer in the world is the prayer of a life—a life that goes in the right direction. That’s not to spiritualize praying, and that is not to give it a mystical turn and relieve us of the privilege and necessity to pray for specific things and expect them. I think we should always be prepared. A man who allows himself to be run down, four days’ growth of beard and clothes that are soiled—and then suddenly he has to appear before the King! He’s got to do some fast footwork to get ready for that royal appearance. You should be ready all the time.

I think a man is mighty unskillful in prayer if he has to unscramble himself, wash up and get a quick haircut and straighten himself out, trying to look decent as he walks into the presence of God. He should have been like that all the time. Children of God should be presentable all the time. God’s people should never need to rush around and get straightened

up morally and spiritually to get into the presence of the King. They should live so they can enter that presence without embarrassment, any time. They should have on the robes of presence that would allow them to go in before the King without embarrassment, confident of the things for which they ask.

The Good Shepherd

O Thou Shepherd of Israel, a Shepherd of the sheep, the Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie in pastures green, He leadeth me the quiet waters by. O Lord, Thou art the Shepherd of Thy sheep, and we're so pleased with the arrangement. We're so glad it worked out that way. We're so glad that Thou didst so have it.

We wouldn't have felt comfortable if Thou hadst made Moses our shepherd. We remember Moses broke some rocks one time, smote another rock, killed a man. We wouldn't have been comfortable if Thou hadst made Elijah our shepherd, because Elijah called down fire.

O Lord Jesus, we're comfortable having Thee as our Shepherd. We're relaxed and restful, for Thou art a good Shepherd, and a great Shepherd, an understanding, sympathetic, loving Shepherd. We thank Thee, Lord Jesus, for being our Shepherd.

We thank Thee for David, but we're glad he's not our shepherd. If he didn't like a man, he ordered his head off. But O Lord, we thank Thee, Thou art our Shepherd.

Now we pray Thee for any who may be lost this night. For Jesus' sake we pray before the lights go out in this building they may have found the Shepherd, because the Shepherd found them. Grant it, for Jesus' sake. Enlarge our hearts. Make us big inside, bigger inside than we are outside. Make us as big as the

world. Make us as big as the whole church of God inside—big enough to contain every saint. May Thy mercy be over us now, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Complete in Him

In us, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing. In our minds dwell no power of persuasion. Without Thee we can do nothing, but with Thee, we can do all things.

So now Father, we turn away as though we were taking an axe away from a little boy and giving it to a man, as though we were shoving aside an amateur, and letting a master sit down to the instrument. We shove aside the man that men know and we invite the man Christ Jesus to speak, who will effectively confirm the Word by the Holy Ghost.

Help us tonight, Lord; tomorrow may be too late! We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.

The God-Man

O Lord, O Lord Jesus, our Lord. The great world, sons of Cain, nice people, many of them, friendly people. People who would give a dollar if we got in trouble, would lend us their

lawn mower and help us if we got a flat tire, good people. But in religion, they are followers of that man who brought the flowers and didn't bring the blood. Maybe Abel's disposition wasn't as nice as Cain, but he had found the refuge under blood, and he was born of the new Spirit. Then he that was only born once murdered him that was born twice.

O God, we hate to think it—we love people, we love the world. We want to get along with everybody. We wish that we could always nod our head and amen everything that everybody says. We hate to be on the other side. We hate to be stubborn and contentious, but O Jesus, they're saying Thou art a good man. Now there's a saying, they say religion deceives people. So they're fighting it out and they're both wrong. O Christ, Thou art more than the man, Thou art God's Man. Thou art God, Thyself God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Thou art Thyself man, born in Mary, in time. The perfect man and perfect God compounded this night.

O Lord Jesus, we pray that the carelessness and the breeziness might go out of our spirits, that we might wait and know Whose side we're on. O Lord, we take Thy side. Even if it's against our friends, we take Thy side. We own Thee, Lord, to boss us, to tell us what to do, and we promise to obey Thee, O Lord. We would be disciples of Thine, taking the cross and following Thee.

We pray for any who may this night not have taken this

way. We pray for such if they be here. God have mercy, have mercy! Have mercy, O Son of God, have mercy tonight. For the world is very evil, and the times are waxing late, and the judgment is drawing near. We beseech Thee, Lord—pity and spare and forgive and have mercy upon our poor souls. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Led by Him

O God our Father, we bless Thy Name, that Thou didst send us help from the sanctuary, out from the heavenly palaces. Down from the lofty heights above, He came. He came to be born under law, to be born of a woman that He might redeem us who were under law, and who by the curse of the law were lost—hopelessly—down to the mud and the blood, down to the shadows and the gloom, down to the tears in the tomb He came. We bless Thy holy Name for sending Him. He came because He wanted to come, but He came because Thou didst send Him. And Father and Son agreed.

We bless Thee, O Triune God. We praise Thee, O blessed Holy Ghost, the conscience of the world that still keeps dimly alive the memory of the world from which we fell. Great God, we do not want Thy wrath to be upon us. We want to have that eternal life which was with Thee. We pray, help tonight

that there might not be one goes out of here who has not received the Son, who has not obeyed the Son, who has not now taken the Son and believed the Son.

O Son of Man, we hear Thy voice. Son of God, we see Thy light. Wilt Thou grant, we pray, that as we go from this place tonight, we may go driven by the hard, overwhelming force of logic to Jesus Christ the Lord? To know that there's nothing on our level, ancient or modern, that can help us remotely, but only He who came from above, only Jesus. Blessed be the name Jesus. We pray Thee, help us love that name and follow whithersoever He goeth.

Help these friends who listen tonight. We thank Thee for the privilege of speaking to them. O Lord we pray, send them out with a bit of another world on their hearts, a yearning, a longing and aspiration, that they may open wide the gates of their soul and receive the Lord Christ in and rest in Him and trust Him and know that even now in the Spirit, they can be raised out of the valley. And finally, that He's coming, taken out for good. And the valley itself, transformed no longer into the valley, from the valley of death, but now of life. For the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Adopted

God and Father of our Lord Jesus, we thank Thee this hour. Thou hast not left us orphans. Thou hast not allowed us to wander into the serpent-infested valleys and left us there. But Thou hast allured us and wooed us, and even there hast placed a door.

Wherever we are, there's a way out and a way in from that spot. Thou hast secured us in Thy grace. Thou hast sent Thy Son, Jesus to die, to rise, to live, to plead—and to be for us, Advocate above, as Savior by the throne of love. And while He's there and we're here, the door is within touch.

We bless Thee. We will not despair. We will not give up. We will not surrender to the suggestions of the enemy. We will dare to believe that with every temptation, Thou wilt make a way of escape. Thou wilt turn our tin into silver and our silver into gold, and Thou wilt give us the garments of praise for the garments of heaviness. Bless Thou the Word spoken this morning. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Our Greatest Treasure

O Lord, we're more concerned that if everything be all right with us, now, and in the day of our death, or at the coming of Thy Son. We're more concerned that if we stand

well in religion, that we have a reputation among the saints. We're more concerned, Lord, that things be now right with us. Oh, we thank Thee, Lord Jesus. Thou didst say to such poor, world-wanderers as we are, "If ye become my disciples and follow me, and go on and become disciples, indeed ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. And if the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed, for I am the Light of the World and he that follows me shall never walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Thank Thee, Lord—there need be no concern, need be no doubts, need be no worries. We can know that we're following Thee. As we walk in the light, as Thou art in the light, we have fellowship with Thee and with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, cleanses us from all sin. This is a greater treasure than all the gold of Ophir or the diamonds of Africa—more to be desired is it than all jewels, all rubies, all the corn and wheat and all the granaries of the world.

So, we seek tonight to know and be sure that we're not only descendants of the Reformers, but true sons of their faith and obedience. Whatever our denomination is, we're not only in the tradition of our denomination, but that we have the spiritual experiences of those who in other days brought those denominations into existence by their faith.

Thank Thee for every true Methodist. Thank Thee for every holy Presbyterian. Thank Thee for every godly Baptist. Thank

Thee for every happy Nazarene. Thank Thee, O Lord, for every blessed, heart-happy Quaker. Thank Thee for every man and woman of God—whatever denomination—that loves Thee tonight, and we feel we're a part of their fellowship. But oh, save us, we pray Thee, from the tragedy and snare of entrenched privilege, of vested interests, believing everything's all right, because we're descended from parents that are all right. Great God, save us from this!

Now, we trust Thee, that Thou wouldst send us out from this church with a quiet, certain, sure gaze at the Light of the World, meekly disclaiming all self-righteousness, humbly denying ourselves, willingly taking the cross, sorry for all that is imperfect and wrong, glad for the blood that cleanses, grateful for the grace that pardons. And remember sin no more, forever. Blessed be Thy name.

Amen.

Trusting with Confidence

Lord Jesus, Thou knowest prophetic teachers are not agreed, and we don't claim tonight. We're not even going to pray tonight for the moment, for universal revival, though we think it's theoretically possible. But Father, we think everybody's agreed on personal revival. That it's entirely possible for the coldest, most barren, gloomiest, most defeated Christian,

within a few hours' time, to move into a place of victory and fruitfulness and power and optimism and happiness, such as they've never dreamed could be theirs.

We believe it's entirely possible for a church that has dragged for years, and suddenly come alive, as though Thou hadst said, "Let there be light and there was light." Thou hadst said, "Let the church bring forth," and lo, it was so. We believe this Lord, and we want it for ourselves. We want it for this church. We want it for these who will listen tonight. We want a personal revival in each heart. We want the church revival that will melt us all in one, who had the individual revival.

O God, we beseech Thee, give us tonight vision to see it, courage to take advantage of it, and faith to believe it. Now that Thou would revive Thy Work. That Thou would move in and the eyes of men shall see the Glory of the Lord. O Lord Jesus, Thou Glory-bringer, Thou Joy-dispenser, Thou Physician of souls, Thou Son of Righteousness with healing in Thy wings, Thou Star of the East, the horizon adorned Him, Thou bringer of Good Tidings.

O Lord Jesus, we've shut Thee out so long. Thou hast knocked at our doors so long and we've been asleep, or we've been preoccupied. Forgive Thee, Lord, forgive. Forgive those who listen. Forgive tonight. Forgive us for failing Thee there. And give us a strong and courageous purpose, and beginning now, we will straighten up.

Beginning now, we will fill up the hollow places and begin to do the things we've stopped doing or never did. And we'll smooth down the bumps, those ugly humps that indicate the presence of things committed and done that ought not to be done. Father, we'll stop doing them. We'll smooth the way by repentance and humility and meekness in spirit. Great God, help us.

Our High Priest

Now Father, we pray Thy blessing upon us. Oh, we scatter from this little building to so many places. So many responsibilities, obligations, callings, and back to school for many. Oh, we pray that we'll go with confidence that we're not orphans of the storm. That we're not bits of matter, animated for a period, floating in space. That we're sons and daughters of a God who's got His eye on every one of us and knows our name and number and face, and the High Priest carries our name on His shoulder and on His breast and on His forehead before the presence of God. Before the face of the Father, stands our great High Priest, and we need no merit of saints. We need nothing but the merit of the great High Priest.

We thank Thee we can enter boldly into the throne of grace and receive mercy and grace to help in time of need. For He knoweth our infirmities, and feels all the pinch and pressure of

our weaknesses, for He was Himself man and walked among us. Send us out with great hope and encouragement. Send these young people back to school, chins up and knees bent and eyes bright knowing that the Lord is on their side and grace, infinite, matchless grace is greater than all their sins.

Send us back to service and out to our neighbors, confidently expecting that we shall see the gifts of the Spirit restored to this church. And that we shall see the mighty power of a risen Christ operating in this church. We ask these things in His name.

Amen.

Clarity and Security

Lord, we thank Thee that Thou didst come to rescue us on a life raft, ready to perish, shark fins breaking the water all about us, Thou didst come walking upon the sea. Thou didst say, “Be not afraid, it is I.”

We thank Thee, O Thou Shepherd, Thou pilot in Galilee. Thou Savior of mankind. Wilt Thou bless us and help us? Save us, we pray Thee, from the fogginess and muddiness of our thinking. Clarify us in our eyesight, poor eyesight, on blind eyes. And may we see the sharp, clear line that distinguishes those who are from those who are not. Those who will from those who won't. We thank Thee, Lord, for everyone that will,

and thank Thee for the security afforded us in Christ by the old rugged cross.

Now, bless us for the afternoon. Give us an afternoon of relaxation and meditation. Save us from thinking, saying, or doing anything that would tend to cloud up the sky above us. And bring us back tonight, we pray, and add greatly to our numbers as Thou has been doing these nights. And may we make some real progress in the Christian life today. In Christ's name.

Amen.

Come and Rest

Blessed Lord Jesus, blessed Lord Jesus, ruler of all nature. O Thou of God and man, the Son. How we love Thee. How we praise Thee. How we bless Thee. In our folly and shame and infamy we were never at rest, and we sought eagerly to satisfy ourselves. When it was over, it wasn't satisfying. It still left a hollow there. A broken cistern, we found nothing in it but lizards and dust.

But we thank Thee we heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest." We came and we laid our head upon Thy breast and we heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's Light; look unto me, Thy morn shall rise, and all Thy day be bright." I came to Jesus and I found in Him my star, my sun, and in the light of life I'll walk till traveling days are done.

O Jesus, Thou art so much that we don't know how to pray even. We know not how to pray. We stand before what Thou art, as a little boy before a mountain. Vast, illimitable, huge, and awesome. Thou art all that we want and need. Thou art calling us to Thyself.

Please don't let anybody lay his head on a pillow tonight until he has turned from the folly of the fool to the wisdom of the just. And has sought to become another man indeed, and be born again by faith in the shed blood and atonement which Christ made. Amen and amen.

Amen.

Ready for Him

O God, we thank Thee Thou didst not forget us in the night. We thank Thee Thou didst send Thine only begotten Son, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made. Being of one substance with the Father, who created heaven and earth. We thank Thee that He came. He grew. He died. He rose. He lives now at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. We thank Thee that from His place of vantage there, all power is His.

And we bless Thee, O Lord God, we bless Thee, that we are not pensively looking back tonight to a manger and a virgin, but upward and upward where the stars are turning. Upward

where the holy angels veil their faces. Upward where the seraphim hide their feet and their hands and their faces as they cry “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. Heaven and earth are full of His glory.”

And Lord, Thou hast there our names. Thou hast our names on Thy hands engraved and on Thy bosom and on Thy shoulders and in Thy heart. Thou art there our Advocate above, our Savior, by the throne of love. We praise Thee tonight, Lord Jesus, that nothing can change that, nothing. Nothing can take it away. Nothing can rob us, Lord, nothing. We thank Thee, Lord God, this evening that it is well with us because we have been touched by the wand of Him who rules heaven and earth and at whose feet soon the earth and the hell and the heaven above shall kneel and declare that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Wilt Thou help us this evening, Lord? Bless us greatly. Bless the music and the message of truth which shall follow. And grant we pray Thee, O Lord, we may go out from here determined with our jaws tight shut and our feet set in the way of Zion and our face like a flint, that come what may, we'll follow Jesus. Not only when the snows come and the green holly tell us it is Christmas, but all through the long drag of February and March and over into the heat of summer. And regardless of what kind of weather nor what season of the year, follow the Lord Jesus Christ steadily along, until we shall be glorified together.

Graciously bless us now tonight we pray. Give us, we pray,

receptive hearts to receive all of the truth that will come down from Thy throne to us. Not only for ourselves we pray, but for all the churches, Lord, everywhere, all the churches, that Christ may be magnified in our mortal bodies and in our lives until He come. We ask it in Jesus' holy name.

Amen.