

Religion And Life

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First Moderator of the United Church of Canada
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"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of," wrote Tennison.

It is a great truth, but it may give a wrong impression because it concentrates attention on the concrete results of prayer. Now prayer is a power, but the source of its power is the believer's union with God which prayer establishes. Prayer is a two-way communion and communication between the believer and God. What we say to God in prayer is important, but far more important is what God says to us. It is the fact that the believer's heart is open to God and that the Heavenly Father's heart is open to His child that gives prayer its chief significance in the Christian life.

A business man in Toronto had to go through a serious operation. After the operation he was told by his doctor: "Were you not worried terribly about it?"

"Oh no" was the answer, "I prayed that matter through in the morning and I received the assurance that all would be well. Ontario."

A minister in western Ontario was sent to a young mother who said she could not possibly recover. When he tried to give her that great message, she said quickly: "I know what you have been sent to tell me, but I can't afford to die. My husband and children need me; now, kneel down and pray for my recovery." He did and soon she was restored.

This does not always happen. We are all too familiar with the inexplicable tragedies that occur from day to day. But God had given her the assurance that her request was granted and His personal assurance was her ground of confidence. This was what Paul meant when he said that faith is the gift of God. He gives not only the best desired but also the faith that claims it at His hand. We know many cases of such responses from the prayer-hearing God to the seeking soul.

The outstanding feature of Jesus' prayer life was His Father's response to the Son's prayer. Luke notes that as Jesus came up from the waters of baptism He was praying and the answer was that Heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on Him, and the Father's voice assured Him of His love. From that moment onward Jesus was a man God-possessed and God-driven as no man had ever been before.

The Transfiguration was also an answer to prayer. Luke tells us that "while He was praying the appearance of His face altered and His dress turned dazzling white." (Luke 9:28-29) These are the mountain-

top experience of the earthly history of the Son of God, and in both cases they were given in answer to prayer. The Father's responses to His Son which came in heavenly splendor on these special occasions were His daily experiences Jesus said: "The Son can do nothing of His own accord; nothing but what He sees the Father doing; but whatever He does the Son also does the same. The Father loves the Son and shows Him all that He is doing Himself" (John 5:19-20.) Jesus literally lived in God and received continually the Father's communications of His love and will.

Here we are speaking of what believers know. They have experienced with God's promises and the results revealed a living and loving Father behind every promise. Sometimes because He is love the answer to our plea must be refusal. Jesus in Gethsemane prayed that the cup might be taken from Him but found it to be the Father's will that He should drink it to the dregs. (Mark 14:32-42) Paul prayed three for the removal of his thorn in the flesh, but received instead the assurance that a purpose of grace was being wrought out by means of it. (11 Corinthians 12:7-10) God is not silent when we press our prayers home: He is "a God who speaks." His love has regard to His child's need and the Father cannot be indifferent. Sometimes, and often still, the Father's response is consent. We have just noted such cases. To our weak faith it may seem impossible for the promise to be fulfilled but when the Father gives His word the result is sure.

The object of all this is to show that it is possible to live in secret and open fellowship with God. The prayer of the individual and the intercession of the group of believers both count with God. He will guide us in every decision if we look to Him for leading and are willing to obey. Creative thinking is done most effectively in His presence, it is literally true that the divine Spirit will guide us into all truth.

There is a satisfaction as well as a splendor in this fellowship with God. He is the Author of our being and our destiny; from Him we came and to Him we return. His assurance is that we may have His companionship all the way between. Youth may walk with God in making life's great choices and so work out the divine design in himself. Age has but a step to take into the final and eternal union with God. Manhood and womanhood may feel God's strength under every load.

Central Guardian

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A PUBLIC MEETING will be held at South Rustico Hall, Monday, February 13th, at 8 P. M. to discuss possibilities of organizing a Co-operative Consumers Service. Mr. Dennis and Mr. Jerome O'Brien will be guest speakers. Everybody welcome.

1950 MUSIC FESTIVAL SYLLABUS is now available at Toombs and Miller Bros. Music Stores, Charlottetown. Pepler's Jewellery Store, Montague, A. G. Rogers and Boates Pharmacy in Summerside and Taylor's Drug Store, Kensington. Extra entry forms are available at above stores.

FUNERAL AT LONG CREEK The funeral of the late Mrs. John MacLeod of Long Creek was held Wednesday February 8th. A short service was held at her late residence, followed by service in the Long Creek Baptist Church. The services were conducted by Mr. Ramsay and Rev. Mr. Barbour. Pall-bearers were David Ehnman, Nell MacKenzie, Malcolm Lamont, Fred Strick, Norman Stretch and Gordon Ward. Interment was in the church cemetery.

FUNERAL FRIDAY The funeral of Mr. James MacSwain Pleasant Valley was held from his late residence on Friday afternoon Feb. 10th and was largely attended. Rev. W. E. MacPhail conducted the services at the house and grave. The pallbearers were Messrs. John S. MacLeod, Murdoch MacLeod, Lloyd MacLeod, Andrew Stevenson, Walter MacKenzie and Alex MacDonald. Interment in Pleasant Valley Cemetery.

Ellen's Diary

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"The family will have it that most of these have disappeared, since we came away! We have only one granddaughter. A petite golden-haired sprite, with a broad welcoming smile for us, a warm bit of a body to cuddle. 'Isn't it nice' she smiled to her grandfather, with whom she spends many an hour at the choring 'that were all home again?'"

Today James reached another milestone on a path that has commenced to wind down in a gradual descent, and not as once "up and away." It would return many memories to him, especially of his childhood days when his family circle was still unbroken and the cares of the farm, which fell to his lot early in life, had not yet weighted his shoulders.

"My boyhood," we have heard him remark, an arm about Jamie, his namesake, "I don't seem to recall that I ever had any. I was a child, and then all at once I had to be a man, with a man's responsibilities and worries!" We know that today he was up early to take care of the choring, while the younger farmer there, made many a trip between woodlands and yard. His time is taken up now with "the hauling home" of the wood.

"Keeps cool, doesn't it, Ellen?" a youngish farmer, a neighbor greeted us this morning with a smile. Steps were crisp in the snow and the pieces of the small wash were spreading stiffened quickly when touched by the frosty breath of morning. "Cool! you wouldn't call this cool — at 15 below!" we replied, pinning smallish pyjamas on the line. "Just pleasant weather I'd call it!" he replied with a grin "Old ones feel the cold, they say." It was indeed pleasant, calm and clear and sunny. "Well," we laughed, "since we're new in this neighborhood, can you say if the young women round about can see this wash, just to know that an old one still has some spirit left?" "No," he returned "the house hides it! If you want to show them how smart you are you'll have to move the line down to the front field!"

Frosty still it is, and with it a light snowfall and at last we are into Winter's cool reign "down on The Island."

Until tomorrow—Diary — Good-night

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Pioneer Days

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to an amazing size, and is often fifty to eighty feet in height."

And speaking of forest fires, Mr. Johnstone says:

"More than 60 years ago, a great fire was kindled on the north side of the Island, it is said, by a spark from an Indian's pipe . . . The ground it overran is still discernible, being all sprung up of spruce, var and white birch."

On July 30, 1821, Johnstone writes:

"I have now travelled over the greater part of the Island . . . the soil of the whole Island has been thrown up by water. It is, therefore, very . . . and nearly all of

one kind and quality and is laid upon a bottom of red soft freestone . . . The land is low and level . . . There are gentle rising grounds, but no hills, at least none deserving the name of mountains . . . The scenery everywhere is beautiful land romantic but much of the land is far from market."

Mr. Johnstone describes as "truly an excellent settlement, well cleared. The settlers, however, are both ignorant and indolent farmers, and much of the land is running wild and barren under their management."

Mr. Johnstone says the road to St. Peter's is the best on the Island, broad and spacious. Of the early settlers he has this to say: "They live long and are exceedingly healthy . . . They are all

placed on a level and taught one lesson, namely: that if they wish of them die in youth."

Speaking about the children of those days, Mr. Johnstone says: "The children here thrive uncommonly in infancy and in general are as big at 12 months as those in Scotland at 15 or 16. Few of them dies in youth."

He describes the women as being very prolific, the fish as abundant, the live stock as degenerated in size and weight. Then, as now, potatoes and grain went to Newfoundland, Halifax, etc.

This description would not apply to the Island today, yet it is worth reading if only to learn how our forefathers lived when the land was covered by unbroken forests.

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