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**THE GIFT OF
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“THUS PRAY YE”

"THUS PRAY YE"

By

JAMES I. VANCE, D.D., LL.D.

*Author of "This Dreamer," "God's Open," "Forbid
Him Not," "Worship God," "Love Trails
of the Long Ago," "Let Not Your
Heart Be Troubled," etc.*



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GIFT OF

CHARLES H. TAYLOR

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
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To
THE CHILDREN
In My Sunday-School and Church

FOREWORD

THIS series of sermons on the Lord's Prayer was preached without any idea of publishing. But there have been so many requests for publication that the author decided to prepare a manuscript for this purpose.

The most appealing of these requests came from the children in the Junior Department of the Sunday-School, many of whom, it was found, began to attend the morning worship in the church as a result of the interest aroused, and under the encouragement of their superintendent, wrote briefs on the different petitions in the prayer.

It may be said without committing the sin of platitude that the prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray contains the theology of Christ. It is there in germ, if not in full statement, and the more the prayer is studied, the more it is found to contain.

J. I. V.

Nashville, Tenn.

CONTENTS

I.	THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD	11
II.	THY KINGDOM COME	28
III.	THY WILL BE DONE	39
IV.	OUR DAILY BREAD	53
V.	THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN	63
VI.	TEMPTATION AND EVIL	73
VII.	THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY FOREVER	81

I

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

"Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name."—MATTHEW 6:9.

IF Christianity had been expressed in nothing but the Lord's Prayer, that would be enough to place it in the forefront of all the religions of the world. If Jesus had left us nothing but the prayer He taught His disciples to pray, that alone would lift Him as a religious leader and teacher to an eminence unreachd by any other.

The Lord's Prayer opens with a portrait of God,—not of man, not of the world, not of government, not of nature, not of the future, not of the Church, but of God. What a man thinks of God affects what he thinks of everything else. It colors his thinking of man and nature and government and science and art and history, and, of course, of religion.

The big question is not: Is there a God? but: What is He like? God is—that we must all admit—for it is only "the fool" who "hath said in his heart, There is no God," and atheism is the creed of fools. Of all facts, God is the greatest. *But what is God like?*

There is a Society for Psychical Research which has greatly interested many people, especially during the emotions that followed the war. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle—a writer of highly coloured detective fiction—was President until a short while before his death. At one of the séances held by his society, they supposed that they were getting a message from the other side, and asked: "Is God over there?" Receiving an affirmative reply, they asked: "What does He look like?" And the answer which came back was: "We can't tell what He looks like. He is up there where the light is brightest, so bright that it blinds our eyes and we are unable to distinguish His features, so that we cannot tell what He looks like." This, apparently, is as far as psychical research can go with the portrait of God, and it is not far enough to meet the need of man.

In the Westminster Shorter Catechism, we find a noble description of God as "a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." But is this fine conception all that we need as a portrait of the Eternal? Is it as far as we can go in our effort to paint the face of God? To be sure, God said to Moses: "You cannot see my face, for no man can look upon my face and live." But the reference there is probably to seeing God's face with the eyes of the flesh. When it comes to seeing Him with the eye of the soul, with faith, there is

very good authority for the belief that some day we shall see Him face to face, and know as we are known.

The great thing about a face is not its features, but its expression, its character, the soul that shines in the face. You have seen faces that were homely, ugly, but there was so much character in the face, such a soul shining in the countenance, that it stamped itself on your imagination and you can see that face with your eyes shut. Then you have seen other faces whose features were faultless, whose countenances were beautiful, but there was such a lack of character there, such an absence of soul, that for the life of you, you cannot keep that face in memory.

The great thing about the face of God is its character. It is something spiritual, and Jesus tells us what that is when He says: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He lifts the veil from the face of God as He begins the prayer: "Our Father which art in heaven." God is a ruler, but He is greater than a ruler. He is a judge, but He is wiser than a judge. He is a king, but He is more glorious than a king. He is a saint, but He is holier than a saint. God is our Heavenly Father.

As the darkness dissipates and the morning light grows brighter, as the clouds leave the sky and the sun shines clear, as our eyes are touched with visions and we see past the shadow and discover the great reality, this is the portrait of God

that appears. He is our Father. The ancient Jew saw it dimly, but with sufficient clearness, to say: "He shall be called the Father of the fatherless." The greatest of the Hebrew prophets said: "His name shall be the everlasting Father." But it was not until Jesus came that the full-length portrait of God was unveiled. His name for God was: "Our Father which art in heaven." Jesus was the only begotten of the Father. As He hung there on the cross and lifted His nail-pierced hands to tear aside the veil which human fear and sin had woven across God's countenance, the spirit in our hearts cried: "Abba, Father!"

God is our Creator and we are warned against neglecting our obligations to Him Whose we are and Whom we ought to serve. St. Paul thus draws a distinction between those who are children of God according to the flesh and those who are more truly His children according to the spirit of His own divine love. Also, St. John tells us who become the sons of God. They are those who receive Jesus Christ and have His life within them.

But the Bible does not attempt to trim God's fatherhood and make it a phase of the Deity operating among a select few. There is nothing in the Book that suggests that God has ever repudiated any of His offspring. They may have left Him, but He has never left them. He hates their sin, but He loves them with a love that never wavers. Christ died, not to reconcile God to us, but us to

God; not to make God our Father, for He was that already, but to help us find our way back to the Father's house.

For any man to minimise the Fatherhood of God—to reject it for himself—to deny it to others—is a grave repudiation of eternal love. If the Fatherhood of God is limited, the brotherhood of man is also limited. If the Fatherhood of God operates in a small zone, the brotherhood of man operates in a small zone. When we are told to love one another, does it mean that we must all belong to the same class or the same group? I should hate to believe it. Is the Golden Rule only binding provided we are all Gentiles, or all Christians? If some of us are Christians and some Jews, does the Golden Rule lose its obligation? Are we only to do unto others as we would have them do unto us provided we all belong to the same color or sect or nation, but if some of us are Gentiles and others Jews, are we licensed to cheat and defraud and oppress? We can never build a better world on that. If God is the Father of a few, the Lord's Prayer is frustrated. "Our Father which art in heaven" becomes a narrow sectarian petition, and I decline to think that of Christ. I refuse to exchange a full loaf for a crust.

*"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind."*

God is the Father of all men—of good people

and bad people, of saints and sinners. God is the Father of all men, insofar as His attitude to us is concerned. It is we, on our side, who sometimes reject His Fatherhood. Like the prodigal, we throw ourselves out of our Father's house. But because we have left Him, has He left us? He is still in the old home, longing and waiting for our return. He is still our Father, ready to give us a father's blessing when we grow sick of sin and come back to our Father's house.

Perhaps some may ask: How can He be the Father of all men when Christ, speaking to the Jews, declared that some of them had the devil for their father? How can the same man have two fathers? But in this passage, in John 8:44, Christ is telling these unbelieving Jews not who God is, but what they are. He is determining their genealogy by the kind of lives they lived and not by the claims they made. It was true that God was their Father, but they were not living as the children of God. They were living as the children of the devil. They claimed to be the sons of God, but Jesus declares they have nothing to show for the claim. He says to them: "If you were the sons of God, you would love Him."

One night on the sleeper coming home from Atlanta, I walked into the smoker and found three men sitting there on the sofa. The big fellow at one end looked up and asked as I entered: "Ain't you Dr. Vance?" When I answered in the affirm-

ative, he said: "My pa is a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher, and knows you." He told me his father's name, and I said: "Your father is a good man, and I value his friendship."

He introduced me to his two friends. One proved to be a cattleman from the ranges of the Cumberland Mountains, and the third a bootlegger who had been to Atlanta on business. We discussed various topics for a while, and then I said: "Gentlemen, what about politics?"

The old preacher's son replied: "Oh, politics is plum ruined. It ain't no 'count no more." The cattleman said: "It sure is ruined." And the bootlegger said: "It sure is!" We were unanimous.

Then I asked them another question: "Gentlemen, what about religion?" The old preacher's son replied: "Oh, religion, sir, is a beautiful thing. It is beautiful. It is beautiful." And the cattleman said: "It sure is beautiful." And the bootlegger added: "It sure is." We were unanimous again.

But the bootlegger went on to say: "There is one kind of religion I don't like." When I asked what kind, he answered: "The kind that says: If you want it, you can't get it; if you get it, you can't lose it; if you lose it, you never had it." I said: "What kind is that?" And he told me. But it is a secret.

The kind of religion to which the bootlegger referred would reject the portrait of God that makes

Him the Father of all men. It would regard as rank heresy the doctrine that God is the Father of all men. It would limit God's family to a small zone. Such a God is not the God of the Lord's Prayer. Let us think of God as our Heavenly Father. Are you weary? Are you lonely? Are you homesick? Let the thought that God is your Father sing a bit of heaven down into your tired heart. Are you living on rebellion? Why not surrender?

Kinship

Fatherhood means kinship. There is something in man's nature that cries out for God. No one can be happy who is God-less. There is a restlessness, an incompleteness, a homesickness, until we find our Heavenly Father. Man is hopelessly religious. He can never wander so far into the far country but there will come an hour when sin sickens him, and, rising from his folly, he will start in his rags to the land of his love and his dreams, with the old cry on his lips: "I will arise and go to my father!"

It is this awakening and return which Jesus came to accomplish. He came to restore that which has been destroyed by sin, to redeem that which has been lost by sin, to rebuild that which has been overturned by sin. He answers our cry for God. Through Him, we become partakers of the Divine nature, and we shall never be satisfied until we

awake in His likeness. He is the Good Shepherd, searching until at last He finds the lost sheep and, lifting it to His shoulder, brings it back home and lays it in the Father's arms. Christ did not create God's arms. They were there waiting for the return of the lost. Christ did not die to make God love us. He died because God loves us. He died to make us love God. He hung on the cross to show us that He Who sits on the throne is not a force God, but our loving Heavenly Father, and that this homesickness of our hearts in the far country is because we are His offspring, we are His kindred, and our restless hearts can never find rest until we rest in Him. And so Jesus bids us pray: "Our Father which art in heaven."

Responsibility

A man who loads himself down with a family at the same time loads himself down with a certain kind of responsibility. He is responsible to do all within his power for the happiness and welfare of his family. He cannot shake off this obligation to his offspring.

One afternoon in the late summer I was standing at the railroad station in Boone, North Carolina, waiting for the little train that runs from Johnson City to the mountaintop. I was expecting a friend from New York City who was to pay us a little visit. As I stood there waiting, I saw a man and a woman come down the winding path out of

the woods and cross the railroad track and go into the town. The man was walking in front, with a baby in his arms, in true pioneer fashion. It was a mountaineer and his little family. He had met a girl who had won his heart, and they had married, and God had given them a baby. Nothing had compelled the man to become the head of a family, but in doing so, he had assumed responsibility. He was the supporter and protector of his little family, and he was bound by all the ties that can bind to do everything in his power for the comfort and well-being of his wife and baby.

God loaded Himself down with responsibility when He made the world and those who live in it. "We are His offspring," said Paul to his congregation on Mars Hill. They were not Christians. Paul was the only Christian among them. They were pagans. But Paul said to them: "Since you and I are God's offspring." Your offspring are not your things, they are your children, and God's offspring are His children. He has made us, and not we ourselves. And since He has, He is bound to do all that a God can do for the happiness and welfare of the race He has created.

To be sure, salvation is free. It cannot be earned. It cannot be bought. It must be taken as a gift, if taken at all. Nevertheless, is there not a sense in which on God's part salvation is an obligation? Calvary was a necessity, from the standpoint of God's character. Had God done less than

the most that a God can do, God would have lost His character. There is not the slightest indication that God was ever inclined to shirk His responsibilities as Father. From the dawn of the race He has carried us in His heart. Christ was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. Calvary was not an after-thought. It was a responsibility—the responsibility of fatherhood.

Solicitude

Fatherhood with God is more than an obligation. It is a passion. He is at work for His offspring, not lest His reputation may suffer, but because His heart is involved. Fatherhood is solicitude.

Solicitude means concern. God is thinking about us, and planning for us. He has always been doing this. He has been planning for us since first He thought about us, and in His plan are all things that make for our good, not for our ill. The Bible word for God's plan for man's salvation is predestination. Sometimes it is regarded as a hard if not an unthinkable doctrine, but when rightly understood, there are few truths in the Bible that carry more of comfort to the heart than trusts. Let us take the strongest predestination passage in the Bible.

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son; that he might be the first-born among many brethren; moreover whom he did predestinate,

them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Hallelujah! It is the face of a Father.

Solicitude means more than concern. It means care. God has not only been thinking about us, He is watching over us. He sees what is needed. He knows us by name. His oversight is not that of a professional, but of a Father. He sees to it that all things work together for the good of those who love Him, and who are the called according to His purpose. "What shall we say then to these things,"—the things which are hostile, the things which perplex and bewilder and imperil the happiness of God's offspring? This is what we will say: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Solicitude means not only concern and care; it means love. God loves us because He is our Father, and we are His children. He has always loved us, and will always love us. He loves us whether we deserve it or not. He loved the prodigal in the far country. He loves us whether or not we love Him in return. Nothing can break down this love in the heart of our Heavenly Father. This is what Paul is saying in the climax and close of that peerless chapter of his epistle to the Romans.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to sep-

arate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Discipline

The hardest thing a father has to do is to inflict suffering on a child. He would rather suffer himself. Indeed, he does suffer when his children suffer. This is the meaning of vicarious love. Every parent has experienced it.

I was once in a court room with an old mother whose son had been sentenced to six months in jail for a misdemeanour. I was there in an effort to get the judge to set aside the sentence. I failed. I thought the old mother would die. It seemed as if her heart was broken. But she had done nothing wrong herself. It was her boy who was the criminal, but she was his mother, and she would rather pay the penalty herself than see him suffer.

Suffering is of two kinds—punitive and disciplinary. God has taken the punitive side of suffering when Christ paid the penalty for our sins on Calvary. For those who claim Christ as a Saviour, the penalty has been paid. Of course we can reject Him as our Saviour. Then we must pay the penalty ourselves. We are free to accept or reject.

*"The sweet compulsion of His grace
Respects our sanctity of will,
He gives us day, thou hast thy choice,
To walk in darkness still."*

But the disciplinary side of suffering remains,

and God uses it to fashion us more and more in His likeness, to build within us a larger experience of His grace, and to equip us for increasing service. This is what was meant when Christ said to Paul: "I have called thee to suffer." It did not mean that He had called him to the pangs of torment in hell, but to a fellowship of suffering that would equip him for redemptive service. It is what God means when He says to us: "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

One day I was calling on a woman who had lost her only child, a fine lad twelve years of age, in an epidemic of influenza. The bereavement had crushed her. She was bewildered. She could not understand. The boy was all that she had of happiness. She and her husband had separated, and when her little boy died, she felt there was nothing left to live for. As I conversed with her, she lifted her face, from which all the light had died, and asked me this question: "Do you think God took my little son away from me to punish me?"

I replied: "Never! He is your Father. You would not do a thing like that yourself. Why should you think that your Heavenly Father would? No, this is the way He is with you in your sorrow. In your suffering, He feels all that you feel. In some strange way, under the operation of natural law, a germ which your little boy's body

could not resist struck him down. But you have not lost him. He is in your Father's arms, and He wants you to know that what has happened only binds you the more closely to Him."

This is the meaning of all the discipline of life. For one who claims God as his Father, suffering has ceased to be penalty. It has become the touch of a hand of love to fashion us more and more into His likeness.

Yearning

Fatherhood also means yearning. In order to understand the yearning of our Heavenly Father, let us go to what we are wont to call the parable of the prodigal son, which would better be called the parable of the yearning father. Jesus painted this picture, I think, not so much to tell us about a boy with the wanderlust in his heart, but about a father who could not forget his children.

The boy wants to see the world. He would adventure life for himself. He claims his part of the estate and leaves home. The father lets him have his way. Why should he worry any more about the boy? He has given him a start. He has set before him a good example. He has tried to instill within him the principles of decency and rectitude. Why should he worry about a boy who was throwing himself away? He is a father. He cannot repudiate his fatherhood. And so he sits there in the door of the old home waiting, watching, longing,

yearning, until at last love's vigil is rewarded, and the wanderer comes back home.

This is Christ's portrait of God. His children wander into the far country. They waste their substance in riotous living. They throw themselves away. But why should God worry? He has done all that a God could do to protect free agents against sin. He cannot altogether protect us against ourselves. The wanderlust beats in our pulses. But why should God worry? He is our Father. He cannot forget His own. And so He sits there in the door of His heaven, waiting, watching, longing, yearning, until at last once more love's vigil is rewarded, and the wanderer comes home.

How can we stay away from our Father? Where is the sinner in the wide world who does not at times say to himself: "I will arise and go to my Father"? God's love is calling, calling through the long night, and it can never be satisfied until the wanderer comes home.

There is an old story that comes down to us from the days of the Civil War. There had been a battle, fierce fighting all day long. Many were the slain and wounded. At nightfall the two armies encamped close to each other. There was no time nor opportunity even to bury the dead. At nightfall an old farmer who lived nearby and whose son was a soldier on one side came into camp to see what had become of his boy. He had not returned. He secured the consent of the command-

ing officer to go out and search for his boy. He could carry no light, and so he walked up and down amid the wounded and dying calling the name of his son: "John Thomas, your father wants you. John Thomas, your father wants you." Soon a groan carried him to the spot where lay the body of his son desperately wounded. He lifted him to his shoulders and was soon staggering back to the lines.

We may think thus of the love of God, searching among those wounded and slain by sin, calling for us. Our Heavenly Father wants us. How can we stay away from Him? How can we ever be happy out of His arms?

Is it any wonder that Christ bids us pray: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name"?

II

THY KINGDOM COME

"Thy kingdom come."—MATTHEW 6:10.

CHRIST began to launch His religion on the world, not with a treatise on theology, not with a charter for the Church, but with a declaration of that sublime fact which takes precedence over all others—the Fatherhood of God.

Next, He prays His prayer for humanity. He surrounds His portrait of God with a picture of the kind of world God wants. He calls it the Kingdom of God. What did He mean? What was He after? What is the Kingdom of God? Where is the Kingdom of God? How is the Kingdom of God to be brought about?

One fatal mistake that has been made is to consider it a future world Kingdom, a realm the children of God may hope to enter after death, some celestial abode which our Heavenly Father is preparing for His family after the fitful fever we call life has spent itself and we have moved on into the house not made with hands, but eternal, in the heavens.

Surely we have learned to know Christ better

than this. He was speaking of this life. By the Kingdom of God He meant a state of society on earth in which the world of living people would come to dwell and enjoy a true happiness. It is the kind of world God wants here on earth. The kingdoms of the world are to become His Kingdom. The kingdom of Great Britain is to become God's Kingdom. The Republic of the United States is to become God's Kingdom. The Soviet Republic of Russia is to become God's Kingdom. China and Japan and the islands of the sea are to become the Kingdom of God. This was Christ's vision. This is the thing for which He longed and prayed and hung on a cross, and this is the marvelous thing which has been slowly but surely coming to pass on our planet since that fateful hour when the Man of Galilee taught a little group of fishermen to pray: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come."

As we study Christ's teachings and follow Him in His ministry, His dream becomes plainer and the meaning of the Kingdom of God more evident.

A Kingdom of Hope

It is a Kingdom of hope, not of despair. Christ was not a pessimist.

Jesus was not satisfied with the world as He found it. There were things over which He wept. There were conditions which He bitterly denounced. There were wrongs which threatened

the reign of God. But Jesus did not surrender His vision. He kept on praying: "Thy kingdom come."

He found the ordinances and ceremonies of religion in the hands of a polluted priesthood. The prayers on their lips were reeking with hypocrisy. But He did not despair. He prayed: "Thy kingdom come."

He found the government in the hands of scoundrels. The rulers were stealing the taxes. Graft and corruption placidly and insolently occupied the seats of power. But Christ did not lose heart. He said: "Thy kingdom come."

He found the poor in rags and want. Hunger and disease stalked through the hovels of the wretched. The children were without a chance. The women were bearing heavy burdens. The rich were fleecing the poor. The strong were oppressing the weak. The unfortunate were wearing the chains of slavery and toiling at the beck and call of hard taskmasters. Christ found all this, and vastly more, in the world when He came. But He did not despair. He did not say: "It is useless to try. There is too much sin and suffering and rottenness and injustice in the world ever to hope for a better day." He lifted His eyes to God and cried: "Thy kingdom come!"

And so the Lord's Prayer bids us never cease to hope. It is still a world running over with rottenness and hypocrisy and injustice, but we must not

become pessimists. We are saved by hope. No night is so long that it cannot end. No disappointment is so bitter that it cannot be retrieved. No fight is so desperate as to have no chance for victory. "Thy kingdom come." It is coming.

A Kingdom of Rights

The Kingdom of God is a Kingdom of rights, in which people are not to lose their rights, but to gain and enjoy them.

There are some things to which every man has a right—the right to think, the right to work, the right to worship. He may not enjoy his rights. His freedom may be taken from him. He may be robbed of a just wage. He may be persecuted for conscience' sake. But things are moving. There is a God in heaven Who believes in justice, and human history is His story. His Kingdom is coming. As we look back across spent centuries we discover the progress of human rights. They are moving on like a path of light on the face of a dial. Chains are slipping from the wrists of slaves. Prison doors are opening, and the persecuted and oppressed are finding a way.

The trouble so often is, we try to get our rights by destroying the rights of others. We would ease our own burdens by making heavier the burdens of others. We resort to force, and sometimes to trickery. But that is not the way the Kingdom of God would have us get our rights. The Kingdom

of God is not a dictator government. To be sure, the objectives sought by some of the dictator governments of earth may be in some respects similar to the objectives of the Kingdom of God. But the methods used are as far apart as heaven and hell. The Kingdom of God is not to be confounded with a communistic order which begins with a denial of Godhood, with a government that would substitute force for love, with a régime that robs man of liberty. The Kingdom of God is a reign in which rights are won by duties done, rather than by wars waged; rather, indeed, than by privileges claimed. It is a reign in which war, and all that goes with destructive and aggressive war, is taboo.

Let us not imagine we are praying: "Thy kingdom come," when we are satisfied with any system which deprives our fellowmen of their rights—their right to work, their right to think, and their right to worship. It is a Kingdom of justice. We are not praying: "Thy kingdom come," when we are satisfied for people to be underpaid and underfed and underprivileged. There is no substitute for justice. Nothing is ever settled until it is settled right. There is nothing of the Kingdom of God in duplicity and dishonesty and treachery and overreaching and oppression.

A Kingdom of Privilege

Jesus is interested in people, and the God Whom He reveals must likewise be interested in people.

He wants us to have more than the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table. He wants everybody to have a full life. It is great to meet hardship with courage, to front the future with the spirit of the pioneers, to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. But because it is, let us not conclude there is any particular merit in seeing to it that people have a hard time. We are not praying: "Thy kingdom come," when we take all the profits, when we pay starvation wages, when we sit by a warm fire while others freeze, and beside a bountiful table while others starve.

The Kingdom of God is a Kingdom in which the forgotten man finds himself remembered, in which lowly and humble people, the little folks of the world, find they are, after all, of some importance. This is the meaning of the Beatitudes. Christ begins to pronounce the things that are blessed, and in every instance He mentions those things the world scorns and discredits. He lifts into dignity and importance that which is cast down and despised. Blessed are the meek, blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the persecuted. That is the way it will be in the Kingdom of God.

This is Christ's vision of redeemed humanity. It is the only kind of world that will satisfy God. It is the sort of society Jesus came to establish—not a monarchy, not feudalism, not plutocracy, not fascism, not communism, but a Kingdom in which

humility and meekness and gentleness and forgiveness are the hallmarks of greatness.

Citizenship Based on Character

It will be a Kingdom in which rank is determined not by birth or tradition or possessions, not by name or title or office, but in accordance with what people are themselves. The Kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

God looks at the heart. The sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite spirit. What a society that will be where people are measured not by their claims but by their aspirations, not by publicity but by the secret thoughts and intents of the heart! Such is the Kingdom of God. It is a Kingdom of sincerity, of integrity, of honesty, of freedom from cant and hypocrisy and pride.

This is the sort of social order with which God is concerned, and it is coming. It is drawing like a sun on the horizon. It is the hope of the world. Mankind will never be satisfied with anything short of the Kingdom of God.

Perhaps you are asking: What about the Church? Have we not here a fellowship of saints—the Bride of Christ? I should be sorry to say anything that would appear to detract from the beauty of holiness enshrined in the Church.

The Church is essential to the purposes of God. But the apostles made it plain that even the Church

is not the consummation of the fulness of Christ. It is not the goal of the religion of Jesus. It is a way station—a divinely appointed means to the eternal end. It is the power-house of faith and service. It is the agency for establishing the Kingdom. The Church is the place to which we go to get religion, to have our spiritual life recharged. And this is vastly important. Man cannot do without religion.

Let us not confound religion with dogma, or with some particular system of theology, or with some definite form of ecclesiasticism. "Religion," said Dr. William Lyon Phelps, "does not necessarily mean a particular creed in which you or I may have been reared. Religion means living spiritually—that is, living in the consciousness of an intimate, friendly relation with the Unseen. A prominent man I know told me he accompanied the late Father Duffy when the priest called on a man whom he was trying to 'save.' My friend of course stayed in an adjoining room, but he could not help hearing Father Duffy say: 'My God! My God! I am not trying to convert you to my religion. I am begging you to find some religion of your own, for we must have some religion, some faith, some belief to cling to, or else we perish.'

"Why *must* we have some religion? Because without it our lives have no significance. History is without meaning. Literature is no more than a pretty trick. The noble army of martyrs all died

in vain. Goethe said that a man who does not believe in a future life is already dead in this life; and so he is, for he regards himself as of no more importance than an animal.

"Religion should be the motor of life, the central heating plant of personality, the faith that gives joy to activity, hope to struggle, dignity to humility, zest to living. The more religious faith we have, the happier we are."

And we go to church to get religion, to get that super-element in life which will send us back into society and to our task to build there the Kingdom of God. The Bible starts in a garden and ends in a city. The city is not New York, nor London, nor Paris, nor Nineveh. It is the Holy City. "And I John saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." But the Kingdom of God is not a bucolic scene where white sheep graze on green fields and fat cattle get ready to be butchered. It consists of men and women who are toilers in the busy tasks of earth, and who bring their burdens to Him Who said: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me."

The politician goes to church, not to get votes, but to get religion, to learn how to pass laws for an ideal state. The doctors go to church, not to discover patients and enlarge their income, but to help build the Kingdom of God. Lawyers go to church

to get religion, not to learn how to protect their clients from unjust treatment, certainly not to encourage them in the promotion of nefarious schemes, but to make their contribution in building the Kingdom of God. Business men go to church not to make money, but to get religion, to be inspired to conduct business in accordance with the Golden Rule. Women go to church, not to learn how to get to heaven when they die, but to get religion and make their homes a bit of heaven here on earth.

This is what the Church is for. This is why there are Christians in the world. They are engaged in the great enterprise of building living stones into the Kingdom. They are workers together with God—rescuing individuals and restoring society—God Who is sounding out a summons that will never call retreat.

This is the sort of social order with which God is concerned, and despite all wars and rumours of war, it is coming. As men accept the Christ, so will the Kingdom dawn like the sun on the horizon. It is the only hope of a world in distress. Our crises and depressions mean that mankind will never be satisfied with anything short of the Kingdom of God.

Of the increase of this Kingdom there shall be no end. It declines to remain static long enough to be painted. You cannot put it into a picture. One must try to capture it with the imagination.

Things are to go on getting better forever. Our Maker has something waiting for us, down the road that will be better than all our dreams. Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, what God hath prepared for those who love Him, and our mission as Christians is to live so as to bring in the Kingdom. Whether we work for wages or work for fame, this should be our objective. He who is not living for the Kingdom has missed life's great vocation, whatever may be his avocation. Therefore, let us keep on praying: "Thy kingdom come."

*"He is sounding out a summons
That will never call retreat,
He is sifting out the hearts of men
Before His judgment seat,
Be swift, my soul, to answer,
Be jubilant, my feet,
While God is marching on."*

III

THY WILL BE DONE

"Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

—MATTHEW 6:10.

THIS is the third petition in the greatest of all prayers. To have it answered is the one thing needed to make this a safe and decent world. If God could only have His way on earth as He has in heaven, everything would be as it should be. The people would have their rights, and their privileges, too. Citizenship would be based on character. The Golden Rule would be observed in the big as well as in the little relations of life, and the Beatitudes would become our standard of values. The Kingdom of God would be here.

It is for this Christ prays. He does not pray that His will may be done in heaven. He assumes that it is done in heaven. There is no rebellion there. There may have been once upon a time, but that is past. Now God reigns without a rival. But there is rebellion on earth, and His prayer is for such conditions to obtain on earth as exist in heaven. "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

It is a great prayer. The great apostle made it

his daily prayer. His chief concern was to do the will of God. When he traveled on his missionary journeys, he hoped to be prospered by the will of God. In his letter to the church at Rome, he tells the believers that "the Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." He wants them to know "what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God." He reminds the church at Corinth that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God. Peter says to those who suffer: "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him as unto a faithful Creator." When a man realizes that his sufferings have come to him by the will of God, the sting is taken out.

John declares that "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

And Mark says that "whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

John speaks of those who are born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. At the well of Samaria, Jesus said to His disciples: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."

During that last tragic week in Jerusalem, there on the streets of Jerusalem, beset on every side by His enemies, thronged by confusion as well as opposition, Jesus prayed: "Father, glorify thy name." He was passing through the valley of decision, facing the supreme crisis of His life. He seems

to have been in doubt as to what He should do. Through it all, He reveals Himself as intensely, desperately, but gloriously and divinely human.

Frankly He says: "Now is my soul troubled." The choice was not easy. Comfort pulled one way, but duty another. The desire to escape the tragedy of suffering, humiliation, and death counseled retreat, but the cause He had championed and for which He had pledged His life bade Him go forward. Thus Christ was fighting the battle of Calvary before He reached the cross-crowned hill.

"What shall I say?" He asks. He seems to say: "I scarcely know what to do, what prayer to offer, what step to take. Shall I pray: 'Father, save me from this hour'? Shall I ask for exemption?" All that was human in Christ clamoured for that prayer. How hard was the cross! If He will only give up His absurd claims to Godhood and compromise a little with those crafty priests, how easily He can escape the net that is closing in upon Him! He can get back His lost popularity, and become once more the idolized hero of His country. But Jesus says: "For this cause came I unto this hour." Jesus came not to live but to die; to hang on a cross, not to shun it. He came to feel the nails and thorns, not to be pampered and applauded. He had been on His way to the cross ever since the star shone down its light on the stable door in Bethlehem—indeed, for long ages before that.

Now the cross is close enough for Him to reach out His hand and touch it. It is the last week. Palm Sunday is behind Him. Two days more, and the arrest, and then the trial, and then the hour to die. With the clock about to strike the hour, shall He pray: "Father, save me from this hour"? In sight of the cross, shall He turn His back and go away? "No," He seems to say, "I can never do that. I cannot pray for exemption. I cannot ask to be saved from the cross. For this cause came I unto this hour." And thus the curtain rises.

Christ proclaims His choice. He makes His great decision. Facing the cross, stepping deeper into the thickening shadows, He cries: "Father, glorify thy name!" The struggle is over. The battle has not been lost. It has been won. The Son of man has said: "The will of God be done!" Nor was there a sublimer moment in the life of Jesus. Calvary's struggle was won before the battlefield was reached.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, the struggle will return for a little while, but there will be no hesitation as to the outcome. There will be great weariness. There will be the agony that sweats as if it were great drops of blood. But there will be no soul in doubt, asking: "What shall I say?" For He has learned what to say, and says it.

"If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. Father, glorify thy name." No wonder a voice was

heard from heaven saying: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Christ shows us the path to take when our feet falter. He tells us the choice to make when our souls are in doubt. He gives us the creed to shout when courage sags and temptation whispers, and the agony and suffering which ever walk in the wake of duty counsel retreat. "Father, glorify thy name. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done."

Among the cards which came to me at a Christmas season was one from a little friend in a distant city who has suffered much, both in body and spirit, but under the hand of discipline has grown more and more triumphantly submissive to the will of God. One after another of the things she prized most and of the people she loves best have been taken from her. But through loneliness and sorrow, through pain and discipline and cross-bearing, she has learned to say: "Father, glorify thy name." On one side of this card, these lines in illuminated letters shone out:

*"In the center of the circle
Of the will of God I stand,
There can be no other causes,
All must come from His dear hand."*

And on the other side of the card, in the handwriting of my little friend, I read this line from á Kempis' *Imitation*: "For thou hast Him Whom all the world cannot take from thee."

This is victory. Is it yours? Where does your life take its stand, inside or outside the circle of God's will? For your business, your family, your health, your happiness, your influence, for all you have and are and can ever hope to be, can you say: "Father, glorify thy name"?

There are three things for us to keep in mind when we come to consider the will of God.

Spacious

The will of God is spacious. It is not a little corner of the world. Some imagine they must live a cramped life if they are to do the will of God. Some feel that it means a life impoverished, gloomy, cabined, imprisoned, confined. But the circle of God's will is big enough for God Himself to move within it. Surely space ample for the stride of Jehovah cannot cramp an earth-worm. God is not trying to reduce our activities, nor interfere with our freedom, when He bids us do His will. The brook has not lost itself when it joins the river. The glow-worm has not lost itself when it has faded out in the radiance of the noontide sun. And man's little soul has not lost itself when by faith it has tapped Omnipotence.

To be sure, there are some things outside the domain of the will of God. Sin is on the outside. The things which are hostile to the Ten Commandments, the ideals and activities which run counter to the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, are

on the outside. God is infinite. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. But He is not the author of sin. It is a crazy creed that would make God the author of that which He forbids, the creator of that which He seeks to destroy.

That which places a man outside the will of God is not so much what he does or says, but rather the attitude he takes to God Himself. Is there self-will? Is there a refusal to recognize God's authority? Is there a rejection of the doctrine that man's chief end is to glorify God? To be sure, none of us is perfect. But it is one thing to sin wilfully, and another to struggle against sin, even though sometimes we fall. It is one thing to live in known sin, and another to sin with repentance. The penitent who prays, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," is living inside the will of God. The self-righteous Pharisee who prays, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are," is outside. The sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite spirit. "A bruised reed will he not break, and smoking flax will he not quench."

Doing the will of God does not strip life of its joy. The will of God is not a desert. It is not a barren land. There is room there to be happy, to realize the dream of dreams, to do the biggest work, to achieve the loftiest ambition and reach the highest development—because the will of God is as spacious as the plans and purposes and activities of God Himself. One can roam the fields forever,

and never an hour is stale, nor a moment stained with regret.

Supreme

The will of God is supreme. Sometimes in our pious moments we are disposed to say: "The Lord's will be done." It will be done whether we say it or not, whether we wish it or not. For God is a real God, He is sovereign, He is in control, He is absolute. He is not the creature of the forces which operate in His world, but the Creator. He is not dependent on our whims for the success of His plan. He is not the result of an evolutionary process. He is not the mood of a superstitious mind, nor the product of a theological system. God is an objective reality. Why not? If there is such a thing as finite personality, why not infinite personality? Where did the world come from? Suppose you could run the universe back to the ultimate atom. Who was the father of the atom? Who made the molecule? Who packed into that tiny entity the limitless universe and its endless development? "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

God's will is supreme. He has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. There is no other creed possible for the mind that thinks straight and far. Of course if one thinks short and crooked, he can be satisfied with a muddier creed. But if he thinks straight, and he thinks far, he cannot stop short of a God Whose will is supreme. In the very nature

of the case, God must be our biggest and best, and if in our quest for reality we should come upon something bigger and better than the God we worship, then the God we worship must give up His throne and surrender His dominion to the God Who is greater. In the very nature of the case, the God Who is a real God must be supreme and reign without a rival.

What folly, then, to think of defeating the will of God, to speak of breaking the law of God. It can never be done. Instead of breaking the law of God, we break ourselves. Yonder down the street walks a man between two others in uniform. He has been arrested for breaking the law, and the policemen are taking him to the lockup. We say the poor wretch on his way to jail has broken the law. But in reality the law is breaking him. The government is not in collapse. It is regnant. The same thing happens when we break God's law. The law is not broken. It breaks us. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The will of God is supreme.

Hence, it is not a question as to whether the will of God stands or falls, for it stands eternally. It is merely a question as to whether I shall be forced to submit to God's will or of my own choice elect to conform to it. I must submit, I can elect. I may take my stand in opposition to the will of God, but sooner or later God will have His way. I may choose to conform my life to God's will, to select

His way as my way, and then I shall have Him Whom all the world cannot take from me. Human freedom is not a scheme to thwart the will of the Almighty. It is the privilege of choosing whether I shall live my life within or without the zone of the will of God Whose source is perfect freedom.

Safe

The will of God is safe. It is not arbitrary. It is the expression of God's character. It is what it is because God is what He is, and God is love. God is our Father in heaven. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so God pitieth us." He has no will to harm us. "It is not the will of your father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." "God willeth that all men be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth." Why, then, should any one who strives to do the will of God fear to trust God with his life? God thinks more of his life than he thinks of it himself. Why should we be afraid to trust God with our business? He can handle it better than we. Why should we be afraid to trust Him with our future? It is safer in His hands than in ours. Why should we hesitate to trust Him with our children? He loves them with a love more tender and solicitous than ours can ever be. This does not mean that life is to be void of common sense, or empty of industry. It simply means that the sanest strategy for living is to try to do the will of God. It does not mean that

we should make less strenuous our program of work. But it is one thing to go to work in the morning praying: "Thy will be done," and another to go scheming how you can outwit your competitors. It is one thing to face your Calvary—and it is waiting for you somewhere down the road—praying: "Father, save me from this hour," and it is another thing to face the cross praying: "Father, glorify thy name."

I am afraid to have my own way, for I do not know what is best for me, or for my work, or for those I love best. I do know that God knows. I have always been afraid to pray for a certain field or place or position. I have tried to pray that God will take me where I can serve Him best. I have never dared to ask worldly success for my children. I have been afraid. I have seen too many ruined by prosperity. God knows what is best. And so for me and mine I have tried to pray the safest of all the prayers Christ has given us: "Father, glorify thy name."

The Great Secret

This is the great secret of victorious living. Have you learned it?

It is the secret of knowledge. Do you find it hard to know God? Does He seem far away, unreal, intangible? Are you sometimes tempted to become an agnostic, and conclude that He cannot be known? You will never know Him from books,

from sermons, from discussions. You need more than the stupid processes of dull reason. You need the lightning flashes of intuition which come in the experience of the life that is trying to do the will of God. This is the Saviour's way. "If any man will do my will, he shall know of the doctrine."

It is the secret of power. It is friction that eats up power. It is fighting God that makes us weak. Let God have His way. Let some of the silent and frictionless might of the Almighty God flow into your little life over the wireless line of a living faith, and then you will have power. This is the promise. "My people shall be willing in the day of my power." Surrender is the strategy of victory. Let God have His way in your life, and you become invincible.

It is the secret of peace. It was the secret of Christ's peace—of a peace the world could not wreck. Again and again the world tried to wreck the peace of Christ, but the storm of the world broke in vain on His serene soul. To His insolent persecutors, He said: "You can do nothing against me except it be given you of my Father." To His frightened disciples, He said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." And to God in the darkest hour of seeming defeat, He said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

"Father, glorify thy name." This is the great secret.

*"In the center of the circle
Of the will of God I stand,
There can be no other causes,
All must come from His dear hand."*

Where are you living your life?

Out yonder in the meadow runs a little brook, singing a brook's song to the beauty of the world, with current enough to cut a bed between green banks. By and by it drops into the big river, and towns come down and build themselves along its banks, and the boats which carry the trade of the land swim on its ample bosom. The brook has not lost itself. It has merely joined the river. And so with a soul that has surrendered itself to the will of God.

Years ago, I heard one day in the Bible Conference at Northfield the story of an old preacher who lived in London, whose name was Bishop Hall. He and his wife were deeply religious. They had no children, but they felt they could not live without each other, and the one thing they asked of God was that when the time came for them to go home, He would let them go together. They wanted their own way in this. But one day in his meditation the old bishop reached a point where he felt that even in this he could say: "O God, thy will be done." A few days later, his wife, probably somewhat under the influence of the experience the old bishop had had, reached the same point of self-surrender. Then, without warning, suddenly the

end came, and she went home. When they went to tell the bishop about it, they found him in his study, sitting in his big armchair, with a look of heavenly peace in his face. God had taken him, too. God did not want to separate them, but He did want their full surrender to His will, and when they gave it to Him, they had their way, and hand in hand they went through the gates into the city.

"Father, glorify thy name."

*"Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way,
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay,
Mould me and make me after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still."*

IV

OUR DAILY BREAD

"Give us this day our daily bread."—MATTHEW 6:11.

WHAT a sweep there is in the Lord's Prayer! It starts with a proclamation of the Fatherhood of God, and continues with a vision of the Kingdom of God. It then directs our thoughts to the throne of the Eternal, and bids us recognize in the will of God the supreme law of life. It then takes its seat at the board of kings, and around the table of the rich, and none the less at the table of the meanest hovel in the slums and the cheapest cabin in the hills, and makes there the humblest prayer that can fall from human lips: "Give us this day our daily bread."

Bread costs but a dime a loaf. It is the cheapest thing that goes on the table. It is the ration of the poor. When everything else is denied us, bread remains. It is the staff of life. It is the universal food. And so Christ bids His disciples pray for it. He taught them when He was here on earth to pray: "Give us this day our daily bread."

He taught them other things about bread. They must not waste it. It is wicked to waste bread. It takes God to grow wheat. It requires the Almighty

to array the prairies with waving stalks of corn. The government that burns its corn, that destroys its crops, that wastes its food supplies or resorts to any other artificial process in order to raise the price of bread, is doing not only a foolish but a wicked thing. It is a thing which the God Who grows the grain has more than once rebuked with gaunt famine and blasting pestilence.

God teaches that men must not steal bread. If anything could license theft, it would seem to be hunger. If there is aught that can tempt a man to steal from his neighbour, it would seem to be the hunger-stained faces of his wife and children around an empty table where they ask for bread and find none. But God never meant for one commandment to be kept by breaking another. When He said: "Thou shalt not steal," bread was included in the things forbidden. When Christ teaches us to pray for our daily bread, He does not mean that if we can get it no other way, we may steal it.

Some of the things which God gives us can be hoarded. But not bread.

You can hoard gold, if you have any. It may lose its lustre, but it will keep its weight. The miser can ring his dirty ducats on the table of a money changer, and despite the cankering touch of time gloat over the gold in his rusty chest.

You can hoard bonds with the legend of debt written on rawhide. Time may yellow the page and dim the ink, but the obligation will hold.

You can hoard land. The rains may wash it into gullies. The fields may turn to jungle, but the acreage will remain—yours—in fee simple.

But you cannot hoard bread. You must use it or lose it. If you try to hoard it, it will rot on your hands. Hence, Christ said: "Pray not for your weekly bread, your monthly bread, your yearly bread, but for your daily bread."

This was the lesson God taught the Israelites with the manna in the wilderness. It was to be gathered fresh each morning, and if some covetous person sought to hoard the heavenly portion, it stank in the vessel. The same curse will follow any nation that seeks to hoard its food supply from a starving world. Even the old story of mummy wheat found in the pyramids of Egypt has proved to be, it seems, a pipe-dream. Did the wheat really grow thousands of years later? Christ's prayer is: "Give us this day our daily bread," and He Who said it was the Bread of Life.

God would have us work for bread. With pangs of hunger, He would save the world from the curse of indolence. He would drive us into the fields of wholesome toil with a cry for wholesome bread. There is no charity—no loving kindness—in feeding people who refuse to work. "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." For if a man will not work, neither does he live a life worth living.

Bread is a thing to be shared. Christ taught hospitality. He taught the Golden Rule. If there

is somebody thirsty, a cup of water shared becomes sacramental. A loaf of bread shared is not less sacramental. If we have more wheat than we need ourselves, let us share it. Somewhere there are people too poor to buy and too proud to beg. It might not be a bad idea to practice the Golden Rule on a national scale. It would certainly be better than hoarding, vastly better than burning bread.

The World on Its Knees

But the greatest lesson Christ taught men about bread was beyond all this. True it is that bread must not be wasted, that it must not be stolen, that it must not be hoarded, that we must work for it and share it with others. But above all, we must pray for bread. "Give us this day our daily bread."

Jesus would keep the world on its knees with a prayer for bread. In this greatest prayer that was ever prayed, He places not only the Fatherhood of God, the Kingdom of God, the will of God, but man's daily need. He seems to say: "Do not stop with a prayer for righteousness, for holiness and saintliness, but pray for the material things that you need if you are to live your life."

Of course He wants us to be good, to obey the commandments, to abstain from lying and stealing and murder and adultery. But He also wants us to be fed. If children are hungry, He would have them given something to eat, and He says

the way to get this result, as all results, is to pray for it.

Have you ever done so? Have you ever said a prayer for a loaf of bread? Christ wants us to do that every day, to pray daily for our daily bread. He would not have us so richly provided with an overflowing locker that we can get along without such a sense of daily dependence. In our economic difficulties let us not forget Christ's prayer. Maybe this depression has been God's way of sending us to our knees. We get out of the habit of prayer. When we run out of bread, it is God telling us to go back to prayer. Even our physical wants preach to us. Our appetites nag at us, and say: "Down on your knees!"

If we are to pray for bread, it would seem that there is nothing too small or insignificant to make the subject of prayer. Let us live close to the throne. In everything let your requests be made known unto God.

Bread is thus God's way of staying in His world. He is back of every loaf, as much so as Christ was back of the miracle bread by Galilee. It is all miracle bread. God is as much in wheat and corn, in the growing fields of grain, as He was in the lad's loaves and fishes by the lake. And so God keeps us on our knees with daily bread.

No Argument Against Bread

There is no argument against bread. Certainly

none is needed with God. You do not have to prove to Him that you are worthy, that you belong to the Church, that you are a member of a good family, that you have always paid your debts and done your duty, before He answers prayer. This prayer for bread marches straight up to the throne of God and makes its demands. No words are wasted in introduction. No reasons are presented to prove that it should be answered. It assumes that God has sense enough to understand the situation. Somebody is hungry. Then give us this day our daily bread.

No argument should be needed with men. The mere fact that people are hungry is argument enough for something better than a soup kitchen. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." Don't wait to investigate. Go to it. All the proprieties have been met. There is no need for further delay.

There is an eloquence about the cry of hunger that is irresistible. It may be the cry of a starving child, as in Miss Edwards' poem, begging his mother for three grains of corn.

*"Give me three grains of corn, mother,
Only three grains of corn,
It will keep the little life I have
'Til the coming of the morn.
I am dying of hunger and cold, mother,
Dying of hunger and cold,
And half the agony of such death
My lips have never told.*

*"It has gnawed like a wolf at my heart, mother,
A wolf that is fierce for blood,
All the livelong day and the night beside,
Gnawing for lack of food.
I dreamed of bread in my sleep, mother,
And the sight was heaven to see,
I woke with an eager, famishing lip,
But you had no bread for me."*

Surely no mother with a heart could deny such a prayer. It may be the cry of the starving peasants of Paris, storming the gaudy palace at Versailles, smashing the windows, and asking their king for bread. No man deserving to wear the cheapest crown would be indecent enough to turn a deaf ear to such a cry. It may be the cry of some wounded and starving derelict on the roadside, left there by his butcher to die. Surely God would be less than God to turn away from such a prayer. And we have His word for it. 'I have been young and now I am old, but I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.'

Bread and a Friendly World

Bread is God's way of building a friendly world. It costs but a dime a loaf, and yet back of war is the hunger for bread. How the streets resound with riot and run with blood when the people have no bread! Back of wars, whether national or industrial, political or commercial, is some sort of lust for what our enemies have. We may not call it bread, we may call it land, power, wages, but in

the last analysis it may be expressed in terms of necessities of life. We want Germany's bread, Japan's bread, England's bread, labour wants capital's bread, and capital wants the bread of labour.

And so the row starts. Dogs fight for a bone, men for a loaf. In both cases, it is a selfish struggle for existence. We must live, whether we be dogs or men, whether the war be economic or national. Back of the battle line is someone who is hungry or afraid he is going to be. Whether we fight with pens or guns or fists, we must live. Back of the battle line is the bread line. Napoleon used to say that armies fight on their stomachs, and there can be no peace until our stomachs are satisfied.

Christ would settle the bread question with prayer. He would have hunger drive us not to arms, but to our knees. He would build peace on prayer. He would remind us that beyond the bread line and the battle line, looking down upon us, is One Whose eye slumbers not nor sleeps. His fields are not battlefields but harvest fields. He sends the sunshine and the rain. He makes the seed, the bud and blossom. He breaks the bread beside the sea. Therefore, pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." It is a common, not an individual prayer—not "Give me," but "Give us." Share the loaf, and be friends, learning that no man liveth to himself, and none of us dieth to himself. Bread is a great leveler. Let bread conciliate.

The bread question is more than a prayer ques-

tion. It is a question of fellowship also. It not only keeps the world on its knees, it keeps the world together. It takes more than the farmers to make bread. It takes more than God and the farmers. It takes God and the farmers and all of us working together to keep the wolf from the door.

Mr. Frank Vanderlip, formerly president of the National City Bank of New York City, tells in a recent article of a midnight service he once attended in St. Isaac's Church in St. Petersburg. It was the night before Easter. He entered in almost total darkness. Only a few candles revealed the thousands of devout people assembled for the service. Soon at a signal the vaulted darkness began to blaze with candle lights, each person present lighting his candle from his neighbour's, and all faces seemed to lose all trace of coarseness and to take on a gilded effulgence like that of an icon.

Then suddenly a robed figure touched a candle flame to a fuse, and the enormous dome was soon ablaze with galaxies of golden stars. One by one, the great ring of candles took fire from the fuse. In a moment it had become Easter morning in St. Isaac's. And then the people began to eat their bread. Each one had a loaf. The great throng began to throb with kinship. Mr. Vanderlip says that "prayers for bread in a world where there are so many crowded cities would have to embrace not only agriculture, but the functions of banking as well. It is by a series of steps in credit that grain

in the shape of bread reaches the tables of the most of humanity's two billions. All statesmanship is simply an effort to answer that prayer for daily bread."

And so, though it cost but a dime a loaf, Christ would, with the cheapest thing in the world, keep us together.

There are other things Christ would teach us with our daily bread. Somewhere in the Bible we read: "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord."¹

Again, we read: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall return unto thee after many days."

And still again: "Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not meat and your labour for that which satisfieth not?"

But the greatest thing the Bible has to tell us about bread is that Jesus is the bread of life. He is God's imperishable loaf for the spiritual hunger of the world, and when we pray for our daily bread, we must never forget that in our prayer is included the indwelling Presence of Him Who is the sustenance of the soul.

¹ Deuteronomy 8:3.

V

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

—MATTHEW 6:12.

THE Lord's Prayer opens with a recognition of the Fatherhood of God. "Our FATHER which art in heaven." It also opens with a recognition of the brotherhood of man. "Our Father which art in heaven."

But it is not only in the opening sentence that we come upon the brotherhood of man. We find it more fully in the heart of the prayer, in the fifth petition where we pray: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

The two doctrines—Fatherhood and brotherhood—are inseparable. One day a certain lawyer asked Christ a question. He said: "Master, which is the great commandment?" He was not asking for information. He knew perfectly well which was the great commandment. He was like some other people who ask for information not to get it but to give it. But he got plenty of information before the conversation closed.

Jesus said unto him: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul

and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." But He did not stop there. This was not enough. It was a great deal, but it was not enough.

Jesus went on to say: "The second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." And so the Fatherhood of God cannot be separated from the brotherhood of man. You must have either or both, and you cannot leave out one without sacrificing the other. It would be like having an engine with no power to run it.

Peter gives us the arithmetic of the redeemed life. He presents Christian virtues in groups. They do not flourish in solitude, but together. They produce each other. He says: "Give all diligence to add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness." But he does not stop there. He seems to have reached the climax in godliness, but he goes on. He says: "Add to your godliness brotherly kindness."

He means, of course, that if godliness does not produce brotherly kindness, it is spurious. If piety does not make one a better neighbour, it is mere piosity. If religion fails to lead to a more decent treatment of people, it is a wretched counterfeit, no matter how long it may pray, nor how much it may give.

The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man must go together. The ideal Christian is not a recluse, but a friend of man who lives in a house by the side of the road, and keeps an open door. He not only asks God to forgive his debts, but himself also forgives his debtors.

A Grand Religion

Together, these two doctrines make a grand religion. They sweep the whole horizon, and cover the sum total of privilege and duty.

Religion is vastly more than a ritual. It is an experience of right relations with God and with our fellowmen. So long as our relations with our fellowmen are wrong, there is something lacking in our relations with God. And so long as we are out of right relations with God, we are likely to stay in wrong relations with men.

We may subscribe to the Fatherhood of God as a creed, but until it becomes an experience, it serves only to make us self-righteous. We may subscribe to the brotherhood of man as a creed, but until it becomes an experience, it serves only to make us hypocrites.

But pack them both into the life of a man, let him claim God as his Father and take his place in the family of God, let him treat his fellowman as a brother and live the Golden Rule, and you have a grand religion, one that makes this life worth while and heaven a sure heritage.

Hence, collectivism and regimentation are not enough. The brotherhood of man is not a draft, it is not adding names to a roll, it is an experience. The heart must be changed. One must have discovered that God is a Father if one is ever to join the brotherhood. A man can never be in the full sense a social unit until he has been cured of selfishness by salvation.

Not that individualism is enough. It is not enough to have your sins forgiven, to be born again, to claim God as your Father. If you are a good son, you must also be a good brother. The two things go together.

Each Incomplete Without the Other

Hence, these two great doctrines of the Christian religion must go together. The Fatherhood of God cannot greatly glorify God if it fails to produce the brotherhood of man, and the brotherhood of man cannot richly bless mankind if it be atheistic and taboo the Fatherhood of God. The Fatherhood of God is a poor doctrine if it fails to reach down to man, and the brotherhood of man is a poor doctrine if it fails to reach up to God.

When God forgives our debts, the prayer for the Fatherhood of God is answered, and when we forgive our debtors, the prayer for the brotherhood of man has been answered. Hence Christ teaches us to pray: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." The Lord's Prayer not only proclaims

the Fatherhood of God and gives us the vision of the Kingdom of God, it not only reveals the will of God as the supreme law of life and keeps us on our knees with a prayer for our daily bread, but it builds the hope of humanity not on education, science, law, government, statesmanship, war, but on brotherhood.

"Forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors." He is not telling us what to do with our debts, but with the debts of others, not with what we owe to God, but with what others owe to us. Elsewhere, He has made it plain what we are to do with our debts. We are to pay them. We are to meet our obligations to society. To the Apostle Paul every duty was a debt. "I am debtor," said he, and he spent his life trying to pay his debts. Every Christian must do as much.

Christ has also told us what to do with our debtors. We are to forgive them. Forgiveness may not necessarily mean cancellation. It may mean putting our debtors in the position to pay their debts. But we must practice forgiveness before we can hope to experience it. We must forgive our debtors if we are to expect God to forgive our debts.

Sometimes "trespasses" are mentioned instead of debts, and that makes the prayer somewhat easier to practice. It is so much easier to forgive trespasses than it is debts. Goodspeed speaks of offenses, and that is still more euphemistic. We

seem always readier to adopt a translation of the sayings of Jesus that takes the sting out and costs less to put into practice. Two of our little daughters had been out in the yard playing, and one came in to her mother. She said: "Mother, doesn't the Bible say if any one strikes you on one cheek, to turn the other?" Her mother said: "Certainly." "Well, I struck her on one cheek, but she won't turn the other!" When Christ says: "Forgive your debtors," does He really mean it?

I have a summer home on top of the Blue Ridge, four thousand feet above sea level, at Blowing Rock, North Carolina, where I have spent some of the happiest days of my life. Just in front of our cottage, the skyline highway from the Shenandoah and the new scenic road into the Great Smokies meet and merge. One day an old mountaineer came around to the rear where I was chopping wood. After watching me in silence for a few minutes, he said: "Are you Dr. Vance?" I said: "That is what they call me." "Well," he said, "do you practice here or in Nashville?" I replied: "I don't practice, I just preach."

He looked at me a while longer, and then, without another word, turned on his heel and departed. Enough had been said. A man who does not practice what he preaches was not what we was looking for.

Christ expects us to practice as well as pray the

Lord's Prayer. He expects us to "forgive our debtors."

Christ's Solution for the Problems of Society

This is Christ's method for solving the problems of society and abating the troubles of nations. It is His way to end depression, to alleviate unemployment, to wipe out war, to heal the hatred of races, the bitterness of class slaveries, and despotisms and inequalities of every kind. His remedy is not the accumulation of wealth, not the manufacture of armaments, not the artifices of diplomacy; it is the brotherhood of man.

And the way to bring about the brotherhood of man is more than a trick of trade, a treaty, a tariff concession; it is forgiveness, it is to forgive our debtors as God forgives us our debts.

He proposes that we pay the debt we owe God by cancelling the debts men owe us. That will bring the millennium. That will produce heaven on earth. That will relate us aright to God as well as to our fellowmen. It will end wars—industrial, economic, civil and national. It will build a friendly world. It will bring in the Kingdom of God, and be the glorious consummation of the will of God.

It seems so simple, and yet so difficult; so easy, and yet so costly; so foolish, and yet so wise; so futile, and yet so dynamic. We would rather the world would keep on going to the devil than for-

give our debtors. Any other way than that for arriving at Utopia! We ask for Christ to return in person and, indeed, He would be welcome. But not in order to do for us what He wants us to do for ourselves. We spend time speculating about the meaning of unfulfilled prophecies. Why not assist that fulfilment by forgiving our debts? It is so much easier to discover the brotherhood of man through the smoked glass of dispensations than to find it waiting for us just outside our door.

How little do we relish the idea of forgiving debts, whether they be national or individual! How ready are we to protest against such an idea! It is so costly to forgive. Is any debt worth another war? In God's name and in the name of humanity, may I not put the question? There is a foolishness of God that is wiser than men.

Forgiveness of debts is God's plan for curing the ills of society, for ending depression. His method of alleviating unemployment is not to vote a dole, it is to forgive a debt. His plan for preventing war is not to make a new loan, it is to forgive an old debt.

If you keep the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man together, forgiveness of debts is not as crazy as it seems. The plan only fails to work if you leave either out. It is hard to practice the brotherhood of man with people who repudiate the Fatherhood of God. It is hard to forgive the debts of a nation that is atheistic, that has no inner

restraints, that taboos religion, that can furnish no guarantees of behaviour. But if the brotherhood of man is built on the Fatherhood of God, if a nation seeks its daily bread on its knees, there can be confidence on both sides.

Nor let us ever forget the promise. God will forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Is that of no value as collateral security? God is still alive. He has not abdicated. It is much to have Him on our side. His friendship is worth more to a nation than any foreign obligation. Forgiveness may prove to be the highest strategy.

The keyword in the prayer is forgiveness. What is forgiveness? The other day, while confined to my room, I was reading a book to pass the time, and suddenly a line flashed from the page. "Forgiveness is not forgetting, it is trusting." I think that is what Christ means by the brotherhood of man. If so, they are mistaken who dismiss Him as an idle dreamer who somehow found Himself on the wrong planet. Forgiving is having faith, faith in God and faith in man, and faith has power to remove mountains. That kind of forgiveness is mightier than the sword, than battleships and airplanes. It is not hate, but love, that the world needs, and goodwill is the only insurance against future war.

One Sunday morning I went to attend service at a mountain church. I found the preacher and about twenty people present. He insisted that I preach, but I said: "I have come especially to hear

you." We discussed the crops and the farmers' troubles for a while, for he was a farmer during the week and a preacher on Sunday. Finally, he said: "Well, if you won't, as the saying is, I must," and mounting the pulpit he announced his text: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." I said to myself: "With such a text, I am going to hear something good." He began: "All I can tell you about this text is, it was writ after the captivity and before the exile." Then he passed on to David, and said: "David was a man after God's own heart, and for two reasons. First, he always went to church; and second, he hated his enemies." The exegesis seemed to give satisfaction.

Hate is not the strategy of the gentle Christ Who was son of David. It was not the music of the Twenty-third Psalm. Jesus said: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." It is love alone that is after God's own heart.

Jesus is on the cross. They have driven the nails through His hands. They have pressed the thorns down on His brow. They have driven the spear into His heart. He is dying. He has breath for but a word. What shall He say? Listen to the prayer: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Did He make a mistake? That prayer declared Him to be the world's Redeemer!

VI

TEMPTATION AND EVIL

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

—MATTHEW 6:13.

AS the Lord's Prayer proceeds, it seems to plunge deeper down into the gloom and tragedy of human suffering and sin. Christ starts in the prayer with the Fatherhood of God. There we are on the radiant heights. From such glory heights He bids us behold the rapturous vision of the Kingdom of God. If perchance we should be in doubt as to the possibility of translating this vision into reality, He would strengthen our hope and reinforce our courage with a vision of the will of God. Then He lifts the veil on poverty, and we hear the cry of want, and see the gaunt line of hungry people, as He sends us to our knees with a prayer for daily bread. He shows us a world torn with strife and stained with war, and bids us find our way into the brotherhood of man by forgiving our debtors. Now at last we have come where the night is darkest and the problem most acute. It is not a starving body, but a starving soul that confronts us. It is not the riots of a vicious social order, but the ills of a world in re-

bellion against God. It is not the cry of starving children, but the dismay of souls in the toils of sin, and on the verge of hell. From the sixth petition it seems an immeasurable distance to the Fatherhood of God. But the prayer still holds, and this is the prayer Christ would have us pray as we stand on the verge of destruction. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Temptation

There are two prayers in this sixth petition and the first has to do with temptation. "Lead us not into temptation."

Does this mean that God actually does lead us into temptation? Can it be possible that our Heavenly Father has deliberately set the stage for the fall? It would seem so from the language of this petition. Why should we pray God not to lead us into temptation, unless He is leading us into temptation?

We think of the great temptations of the Bible, and it seems as if God had something to do with them. There was the fiery furnace of temptation into which the three Hebrew children were cast. They went there because they refused to give up their faith in God. There was the temptation of poor old Job whom God delivered into the hands of Satan to buffet that he might prove Job could withstand temptation. There was the threefold temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, all of Whose

tragic experiences on earth came to pass, we are told, by the deliberate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Hence, it looks as if God has a good deal to do with our being tempted.

In addition to this, there is our own mortal frame into which has been built a place for the fires of temptation. Human nature is packed with explosives. It can be tempted. We are what we are not altogether by our own choice. We are the victims of both heredity and environment. We are subject to the appetites of the flesh.

Then, to crown it all, here in the Lord's Prayer Jesus Himself seems to admit the fact that God does lead us into temptation. He goes so far as to urge us to ask God not to do it.

If God does lead us into temptation, He is responsible for the existence of evil. The problem of the ages has been solved. We know where sin came from. It came from God. When evil knocked at the door of the world, why did not God keep it out? The answer seems to be that instead of doing so, He opened the door to let it in.

But this would seem to be a crazy creed. Why should God tempt us when He is trying to keep us from temptation? Why should He permit evil to enter the world when He is trying to keep it out? Why should He use His omnipotence to build barriers, and then Himself tear them down? Why should He urge us to avoid every appearance of evil, and then coax us into its hottest fires? There

must be something faulty with our interpretation. Somewhere or other our exegesis of Scripture must miss the mark.

God does not lead us into temptation. We are told so in language the meaning of which is unmis-takable. James says: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." So far from leading us into temptation, God seems to use every effort to protect us against temptation, and when at last it does overtake us, He promises not to suffer us to be tempted beyond that we are able to stand. "There hath no temptation taken you," says Paul in First Corinthians 10:13, "but such as is com-mon to man; but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." So far from leading us into temptation, God promises to keep us from the hour of temptation.¹

God is not the author of sin. However evil entered the world, it entered against the fiat of Jehovah. God has always been at war with evil, and still is. He is eternally on the side of the good, and because He is, goodness is bound to conquer in the end.

But while God does not lead us into temptation,

¹ Revelation 3:10.

He does permit us to be tested by temptation, not that we may fall, but that we may stand triumphantly against temptation, and proclaim the glory of His victorious grace. This is why the three Hebrew children were tested. It was to show that God could keep them from the fires. It was why Job was tested. It was to prove that God is greater than Satan. It was why Christ was tested. It was that He might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. It is not necessary for us to fall before temptation. God is able to make us stand. Therefore we are told: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

But there is no sin in being tempted. Christ was tempted, but He was sinless. Job was tempted, but he maintained his integrity. There is no sin in being tempted, but there is danger. We must be on our guard against temptation. We must avoid even the appearance of evil. One cannot play with fire without running the risk of a conflagration. We cannot afford to argue with the devil, or with ourselves, as to the harmlessness of this or that indulgence that offers a temptation. We may fall. It is never safe to take the first step in sin. We may take the second, and the third, and soon evil will have built a trunk line through our nerves, weakening our resistance and making it easy for evil to hypnotize us. The peril of the

first drink is that it makes the second easier. Instead of God leading us into temptation, we lead ourselves. We pitch our tent toward Sodom. We build our camp too close to hell. And then we fall, and the problem is not the problem of temptation, but the problem of evil.

Evil

Evil is the second part of the sixth petition, and this is the prayer: "Deliver us from evil."

Evil starts with wrong choice. There is no sin in being tempted. There is sin in yielding to temptation. Evil entered the world through the wrong choice of those who had been dowered with freedom that they might achieve growth, and who used their freedom not to do the will of God, but to disobey it. Evil has been entering the world the same way ever since.

There is no sin in being tempted to lie, but to yield to the temptation to lie is to become a liar, and to deserve the fate of Ananias and Sapphira. There is no sin in being tempted to steal, but to yield to the temptation to steal is to become a thief, and to deserve the penitentiary. There is no sin in being tempted to murder, but to yield to the temptation to murder is to become a murderer and to be branded with the mark of Cain. There is no sin in being tempted to covet, but to yield to the temptation to covet is to kindle lust.

Evil is the destructive force of the world. It

destroys God's masterpiece, the soul, and it is the soul, the spiritual part of us, that is at stake in the greatest war waged this side of eternity. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. It makes comparatively little difference as to what becomes of the gold in the world, or the soil, or the sea, or the air. Probably the future is not to be permanently made or marred by what country owns the most of these. But it makes a tremendous difference what becomes of the spiritual life of the world. The evil and the good are in deadly conflict, and the battlefield is in every soul. If evil wins, we are doomed.

God does not desert us in this conflict. He labours to keep us from temptation, and if we fall, and evil gains the ascendancy, God fights on. This second battle with evil is more difficult and dangerous than the first with temptation. But God fights on to deliver the soul from the power of evil, to keep us out of hell and destruction.

Was there ever such a conflict as this between the evil and the good for the mastery of the soul? All the forces of the universe are in the field. The fighting is with garments stained with blood. The issue turns on prayer. The victory is to be won on our knees. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Calvary is God's campaign against evil. It is

the glory of the cross. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and let us not forget it when the temptation to sin would hurry us on toward destruction. Let us remember that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. The high hour in Godhood was when God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The sublimest of the Divine decrees is that Jesus shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. God is marching on. He will not leave us to defeat, but we must keep on praying. This is the prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Against that prayer, all the devils in hell cannot prevail.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

VII

THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."—MATTHEW 6:13.

THE Lord's Prayer closes with a victory parade. The transition from the sixth to the seventh petition is sudden, striking, startling, complete. In the sixth petition we pray: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." In the seventh petition we shout: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever!" Instead of a battlefield on the edge of hell and a conflict on the verge of destruction, where the combatants are contending against the forces of the underworld, we have the redeemed of the Lord delivered from all their foes, marching along the glory heights and chanting praises to the God of their salvation. Instead of garments stained with blood, they wear the white robes of the saints. The tumult and the shouting have ceased and given way to hallelujahs.

The war is over. The weary marches, the cries of a hungry world, the crushing burden of debt, the fierce lash of temptation, the hideous faces of

evil—they are all behind us. The courts of the Lord are around us. The summits of redemption are beneath our feet, and we are joining with the celestial choirs in chanting the praises of our Heavenly Father.

The days of evil are numbered. Do we dare believe it? The things which hurt us cannot last forever. If that be true, we can stand the strain a while longer. We can even stand another war, if righteousness and honour demand war. We can stand famine and pestilence and starvation. We can stand the long night. It cannot last forever. The morning cometh. The stormy sea will quiet down. The fields will change again from brown to green. The flowers will come back with their beauty and fragrance. Listen! Even nature is singing in an undertone of peace and good will. The stars are still shining with a light all darkness cannot dim. Hallelujah! "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."

The Seventh Petition

The seventh petition is not a petition. It is an ascription.

But it is none the less a prayer. It is prayer on the sublimest heights, for prayer is more than petition, it is more than submission to the will of God, it is more than longing for the Kingdom of God, it is more than seeking our daily bread on our knees, more than forgiving our debtors, it is more than

resisting temptation and conquering evil and routing hell. Prayer in its loftiest experience is communion with God. The Lord's Prayer comes to its victory parade with communion, ascribing to God the kingdom, the power, and the glory. That is the shout of the conquerors.

Nevertheless, we do not find this matchless finale of the greatest of all prayers in some of the oldest manuscripts of the Bible, nor in some of the best versions. Hence, we do not find it in some of our modern translations. It is omitted from the Revised Version, from Moffatt's Bible and Goodspeed's New Testament. But these do add a marginal note saying: "Many authorities, some ancient, but with variations, add: 'Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.'" The King James Version, the noblest and best-loved of all the English translations of the Bible, has it in the text itself.

Not only so, but the teaching itself is abundantly found in both the Old and the New Testaments.

It is found in David's thanksgiving when he blesses God before the great congregation and says: "Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, forever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O God, and thou art exalted as head above all."¹

It is found in Paul's charge to Timothy when he

¹ I Chronicles 29:10, 11.

says: "Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen."²

It is found in Peter's letter to the Church at large. "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strenghten, steady you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."³

It soars through the heavens in the Apocalypse from a great choir of angels, beasts, and elders, numbering ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing."⁴

Therefore, whether the second part of Matthew 6:13 is authentic or not, it is Scriptural and inspired, and paints the skyline of God's future as given us in the closing line of the Lord's Prayer: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." This is the glory song of the Bible. It is the victory song of heaven. It is the marching song of redemption.

The day is coming when Christ's triumph will be complete, when the prayer He taught His disciples to pray will be fully answered. More and more,

² I Timothy 1:17.

³ I Peter 5:10, 11.

⁴ Revelation 5:12, 13.

the world is coming to believe in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, to hallow God's name and to long for the coming of His Kingdom and the supremacy of His will. Every day it is seen more clearly that it is Godlike to forgive. It is finding that there is bread enough and to spare. It is seeing that temptation is defeat, and evil, destruction. A friendly world is nearer. The Kingdom is coming, and some day the nations will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruninghooks, and learn war no more.

Some day:

*"War drums will throb no longer,
And battle flags be furled,
In the Parliament of man,
The Federation of the world."*

Robert Burns was prophet as well as poet when he wrote:

*"It's comin' yet, for a' that
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brithers be, and a' that."*

When that day comes, there will be heard the noise of victory pounding on the golden pavements of the celestial city, and the voices of marchers shouting: "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."

The Two Greatest Symbols

Probably the two greatest symbols of the Chris-

tian faith are the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. One is uninspired, and the other is inspired. It is interesting to compare them. First, the Apostles' Creed:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he arose again from the dead, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen."

In many churches this Creed is recited every Lord's Day. It is a custom worth observing. But the Apostles' Creed has come to us out of theological controversies and church rivalry.

It deals in doctrines and dogmas and dates, and reaches its climax in personal redemption. It is great, but there is something greater. The Lord's Prayer is greater.

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

This prayer comes to us out of holy meditation and communion. It enshrines the faith of heaven and earth, the hopes of God and man. It deals with the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the transformation of society, the triumph of the Divine will, the conquest of nature, the defeat of temptation, the overthrow of evil, and the kingdom, power, and glory of God Himself. Man's imagination can go no further. His prayer can climb no higher. The ages can offer no more inspiring achievement.

The Three Chief Problems

From the dawn of history, there are three chief problems man has been seeking to solve—the problem of government, the problem of production, and the problem of character. Man has been seeking to discover how to be secure, how to achieve, and how to grow. The Lord's Prayer gives him the answer to all three.

First, there is the problem of government. How shall the safety of life and property be secured? Man has sought to make himself secure by destroying his enemies. He has sought to solve the problem of government by creating a powerful state, sometimes a democracy, sometimes a republic—in later days, sometimes communism, sometimes socialism, sometimes fascism, but always a government that could bid defiance to its foes. But man has never been satisfied with his experiments in

government, and never will until he adopts God's way.

God's way is to conquer foes by making them friends, by substituting friendship for force, and goodwill for guns, by giving to the world a Messiah Who is also a Saviour, Whose name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. The government shall be upon the shoulder of this Messiah, and His Kingdom shall be a friendly world. Under His benign sway all men shall be brothers.

The second problem is that of production. How shall man do his work? How shall he conquer not the people of the world, but the world itself? How shall he produce? By what strategy can he match his weakness against impossible tasks that are nevertheless imperative? He has sought to succeed by harnessing physical forces to machines. He has sought to produce and achieve with the help of gravity, steam, electricity, radium, and all the aids which chemistry and the laboratory afford. But he ever falls and fails at his task, until he looks up to God for strength.

God would solve the problem of production also with power. This was Christ's great promise to His disciples. "Ye shall have power." He taught that all power is of God, and that the powers which be are ordained of God, but He would have man achieve and produce not with the help of physical forces and utility companies, not by damming up

rivers and inventing dynamos, but by the use of spiritual forces. Steinmetz, the great wizard of electricity, regarded this as his greatest discovery, and said: "Man's master achievements wait on his use of spiritual forces. When he turns his laboratories over to the use of the spiritual, real human progress will begin." We are coming more and more not only to admit but to seek this solution for the problem of production. Man's master achievements will come to pass when by faith his little life taps Omnipotence. Then the impossible will be achieved.

The third problem is the most important of all, the problem of character. How can man become? How can he develop himself? How can he become glorious?

He seems to have tried everything, every religion, every science, every art, every philosophy, but at the end of it all he has had to confess with Paul: "Oh, wretched man that I am!"

God would solve the problem of growth for man with salvation. He would have him acquire glory by becoming a partaker of the Divine nature. God's glory is His character. Glory is not so much the lustre of the soldier or the statesman or the scholar as it is of the servant. "I am among you as one that serveth," said the greatest Man Who has ever lived in our world. The path God marks out to greatness is to do something that will bless mankind and fill the earth with happiness. When

we adopt this standard of glory, we shall produce heroes who are immortal. This is the glory that is recited as the Lord's Prayer approaches its great Amen!

What a day that will be! What a world is waiting for us at the end of the road when we rise from our knees and see Him face to face and know as we are known! Then will be the new heaven and the new earth. It is coming as certainly as tomorrow, this holy city, this redeemed society "coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

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