

EXCERPTS FROM

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THE LINK

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF

North Road Chapel (Evangelical)

BIDEFORD

Internet Edition

PRAYER - Part 1.
(Its Nature)

Prayer is one of the great subjects of the Bible. It runs right through its pages, from Genesis to Revelation.

In the days of Enoch men began to call upon the name of the Lord - Gen. 4:26 - and this has continued down through history and will do so until the end of time. John, in his amazing book of the Revelation, gives us some little indication of the value and worth of the "prayers of saints" - cf. Rev. 5:8 and Rev. 8:3-4.

Prayer, in the dictionary, is defined as, "a turning of one's soul to the Supreme Being" - "That which constitutes the most direct expression of religious feeling and consciousness".

The true Biblical definition of prayer would be that it is evidence of a person being cast absolutely upon God - the proof of utter dependence upon Him. This is only wrought in a man by the Holy Spirit of God; for in his natural state man is arrogant, independent and self-sufficient: only when brought to the end of himself and regenerated by the power of God does he commence really to pray and commune. Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than in Acts Chapter 9 - the account of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. Immediately following his vital contact with the risen and glorified Saviour, it is recorded, "BEHOLD HE PRAYETH" (Acts 9:11).

Prayer and dependence upon God is the natural sequence to spiritual birth, just as breathing is to physical birth. Concerning Saul, Dr. John Gill writes: "God has no stillborn children: as soon as any are quickened by His grace, they cry unto Him; prayer is the breath of the regenerate man, and shows him to be alive. He, who before was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, now breathes after communion with Christ and with His people".

Because this matter of prayer is such a basic and vital element of 'THE FAITH', it is of the utmost importance that we know of its doctrine and principles. We should be fully grounded in our belief, both as to the nature of

prayer and the practice of prayer, and as is the case in all things spiritual, the Bible leaves us in no doubt whatsoever, for therein is the perfect guide to Faith and Practice.

THE NATURE OF PRAYER. (its character - essential qualities - elements - fundamental parts).

The prime characteristic of prayer is that of relationship. By virtue of sin, Adam, the federal head of the human race, was cut off from God and driven from Him - cf. Gen. 3:24. In consequence, all mankind inherit this state and condition: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" (Romans 5:12). Therefore, until spiritual life is restored and reconciliation between God and man effected, there can be no true communion. However, when by the grace of God regeneration is wrought in man, spiritual life is imparted by the Holy Spirit and reconciliation is made actual by virtue of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ
"...reconciled to God by the death of His Son..." (Romans 5:10). This is what is termed in the Scriptures, NEW BIRTH. It is a birth, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"; and when this takes place such become "THE SONS OF GOD" - cf. John 1:12-13. This is the point at which relationship is established; we receive "the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father" (Romans 8:15). It is because we are sons that we can then begin to address God in this way - cf. Gal. 4:6.

Indeed, when the Lord gave instructions on the subject of prayer to His disciples, He said, "When ye pray, say, OUR FATHER which art in heaven..." (Luke 11:2). Relationship is the essential element in prayer: we come as children (not adults) to our heavenly Father conscious of our dependence upon Him for all things, and always pleading the merits of Christ and His atoning work, for it is only through Him that we have this standing.

Other fundamental elements of prayer are, humiliation, supplication and adoration. The Biblical nature of prayer is not just that of intercession. Our communion with our heavenly Father demands humiliation and confession: "If we

say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9): This confession is not the 'prisoner - judge' aspect, rather is it the 'father - child'. It is paternal not judicial. The penal and judicial was dealt with once and for all, for every repentant sinner, by Christ the Mediator, at Calvary. By His "one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14); so that the believer is "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24).

Nevertheless, there is constant defilement along the way and often sin which causes us to cry out "O wretched man that I am" (Romans 7:24). These sins and shortcomings of believers mar communion with our heavenly Father and must be confessed to Him. It does not affect our eternal position, but it does affect our day-to-day communion with God. Full provision was made for this in the work of Atonement, and upon the honest confession of the erring child, our heavenly Father is faithful and just to forgive. This immediate confession keeps fellowship unbroken.

Adoration. We come before our God, not just to receive, but also to give. The Father seeketh such to worship Him (John 4:23). In our communion we should rehearse the wonders of the One before whom we appear: "His eternal power and Godhead" (Romans 1:20) - "Who is like unto thee, O Lord ... glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" (Exodus 15:11). Ever extolling the marvels of electing grace - Cf. Eph. 1:3-5), prostrating ourselves before the risen Saviour, as did Thomas when looking upon the wounds of Calvary, saying, "My Lord and my God". Rejoicing always before Him with "a joy unspeakable and full of glory".

Intercession and supplication. This is a duty and a ministry incumbent upon us; "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;" (1 Tim. 2:1). In this matter of supplication there are two extreme views, and to be caught up in either will lead a person into error, and thus ruin their prayer life. There are those

that believe that if they pray long enough, and hard enough they can persuade the Almighty to alter course and change His mind. Others would argue that because God is immutable His goal is fixed, the end is determined, so why pray at all. There is a degree of truth in both lines; but when half of the truth is presented as all the truth, it becomes a lie.

It is perfectly true that the God of heaven works to a perfect plan and timetable, and that the eternal counsel will stand; but this pertains to the secret will of God. He has a number which no man can number, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, such were redeemed at Calvary by the Lamb of God and every one will, in their generations, be effectually called. God has never revealed who such individuals are to any man even those who are predestined know nothing of it until regeneration has taken place.

Therefore, the church is commissioned to preach the gospel to every creature, and to pray for all men. This is the mandate. When Abraham interceded for Sodom, he did not raise the technicalities of election and predestination. The apostle Paul, although he knew that it was God's purpose to blind and scatter the Jewish nation, did not hesitate to state that his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was, that they might be saved. Cf. Rom.10:1

As long as any person is alive, we are right in praying for their salvation, if burdened so to do. The very fact that God has spared their lives up to the present, is to be accounted by us as the longsuffering of the Lord to salvation - cf. 2 Peter 3:15. Hence, we are to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17), and as ambassadors for Christ beseech men to be reconciled to God - Cf. 2 Cor.5:20. The truth in all this is, that in the outworking of 'The Eternal Purpose', God has called His own into a relationship in which, although they do not know the end, yet, they become instruments as to the means: "workers together with Him" (2 Cor. 6:1) - "called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1:9).

In this we are to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know

that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

The plan will be infallibly worked out: nevertheless, we fervently pray to this end. "I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them" (Ezekiel 36:36-37): Here are the fundamental elements of prayer.

PRAYER - Part 2.
(Its Practice)

(The actual performance of - The customary action or procedure).

There is a sense in which one can live in the very environment of prayer: indeed, this is as it should be, not that one is praying all the time, rather that one is living in the constant knowledge that we are linked with the Throne, and have boldness and liberty to enter into the holiest at all times by the blood of Jesus. In consequence of this, although engaged in legitimate duties, one is constantly 'getting through' to heaven, sending a message of thanks, or a request for immediate help; or it could be a sudden overflow of heart resulting from one's meditation upon some glorious spiritual truth. This is right and proper; indeed, it is the norm if the soul is in a right and healthy condition. This is what the Psalmist meant when he spoke of "dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, and abiding under the shadow of the Almighty".

However, in the practice of prayer there is something more specific than this: the believer is to have a set time for private prayer. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matt. 6:6) This is an essential element in the practice of prayer, and probably the most difficult. It is then that we are alone with God in the fullest sense; it is here that we can have communion in its most intimate form. In this area as in no other, we need the Holy Spirit to help our infirmities - cf. Romans

8:26). Whilst engaged in this exercise we need to concentrate, persevere and strive; as one has aptly said "We learn prayer by praying".

In the practice of prayer there is also the corporate aspect; the coming together of God's people for public prayer. On this matter the Spirit of God has much to say concerning 'procedure' and the actual 'performance of', and there are clear instructions given as to conduct and order to be observed.

With regard to the priesthood of believers, all regenerate souls are priests and have direct access to God through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female. All are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ - Cf. Gal.3:26-28). Therefore, all alike engage in expressing their prayers individually, both in the momentary communion in the course of everyday life, and the exercise of private devotion.

However, this is not the case with corporate prayer, for within the church there is a Divine order regarding the sexes, to be observed. Considerable detail is given to this in the Pastoral Epistles and also in the first Epistle to the Corinthians. To say, as many do today, that the prayer meeting is a family meeting and does not constitute a church gathering, is to make a nonsense of Holy Scripture.

The apostle Paul makes it quite clear in verse 2 of chapter 1 of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, who is being addressed: it is "the Church of God which is at Corinth", and the errors which he is correcting in chapters 10 to 15, are errors taught and practised within the church and much of this correction centres around prayer.

Dr. John Gill states: "Under the New Testament dispensation prayer was always a part of public worship in the several churches, as in that of Jerusalem, the first Christian church ... after our Lord's ascension, they continued in prayer and supplication with the women and others who constituted that first church ... following Pentecost it is observed with commendation that those who

were added to the church continued steadfastly in prayers; that is the public prayers of the church ... So, in Corinth public prayer WAS A PART OF DIVINE WORSHIP, for it is with respect to that the apostle gives directions".

Pertaining to a church gathering a woman is forbidden to take any part. "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (1 Tim. 2:12). The reason for this is given in the next verse (13): "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." Headship and authority was vested in the man; a truth which runs right through Scripture, and the husband-wife relationship is analogous of Christ and His Church. Paul expands upon this in Ephesians chapter 5: "The husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the Church... Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." (Verses 23-24-) - "I speak concerning Christ and the Church" (Verse 32). The analogy is important, but it is the doctrine which lies behind the analogy which is ALL important: says Paul, it is "Christ and the Church". There must be no infringement upon this territory, for the headship of Christ is at stake: therefore, this matter is of vital consequence. The church must not usurp any authority over her Head.

Now, because the husband-wife relationship typifies this high doctrine, it is laid down, that within the church gatherings women are to be in silence, for to take part, either in teaching or to lead in prayer, would be to usurp authority - an infringement of headship. But, some may argue that verse 12 of 1 Timothy chapter 2 refers to teaching. What then of verse 8? ("I will therefore that men pray every where...") The word 'men' is preceded in the Greek text by the definite article: hence, it reads 'THE MEN' as distinguished from women. To quote Dr. Gill again: "Not but what it is both the duty and privilege of women as well as men to pray in their houses and closets, but because he is speaking of public prayer in the church which only belongs to men ... Women are not to lead in prayer or to be the mouth of the church, which would be indecent."

Further objections are raised by some who contend that in the light of such verses as Acts 2:17, women did both pray and prophesy. This, however, was in the age of

extraordinary gifts prior to the New Testament having been written. Such as are mentioned in this connection were directly inspired. John Calvin states: "Extraordinary acts done by God do not overturn the ordinary rules of government by which He intended that we should be bound." Barnes goes further: "As the presumption is, however, that they were inspired, their example is no warrant now for females to take part in public services of worship, unless they also give evidence that they are under the influence of inspiration". This age, we know, to have ceased.

What then of the first half of 1 Corinthians chapter 11? Can it not be proved here, that a woman can pray or prophesy provided she has her head covered? No, indeed it cannot. Scripture never contradicts itself, and already we have seen that women are wholly prohibited from engaging in prophesying or leading in prayer. The truth being set out in 1 Cor. 11:1-16 is an expansion upon the demonstration of the HEADSHIP OF CHRIST within the church. "I would have you know", states God the Holy Spirit, "that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." (Verse 3)

This then is the subject. Therefore, "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head" (Verse 4). The man is to uncover his head he typifies Christ and must give evidence to this. "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head" (Verse 5) - The reverse; why? Because she is NOT HEAD: she typifies the Church: her head is not to be in evidences she demonstrates this by a covering and this denotes subjection. To defy this is to discount the authority of Holy Scripture; but more, for the uncovered heads of both men and women within the church denotes equality - a common standing - lack of the required distinction. The material aspect of differentiation itself would be of no consequence, but says Paul, concerning this analogy: "I speak of Christ concerning His Church". Whenever churches ignore this plain direction of the Word of God, they are saying in effect, we own no subjection to any Head, we are on one common level. Could there possibly be a greater affront to the Lordship of Christ?

To answer yet another question often raised» How can it be said here in verse 5, that a woman prayeth or prophesieth if she is forbidden to speak? The answer, surely, is clear: this is a church gathering; it is the corporate voice of the gathered body. When the Word of God is preached, only one speaks, yet, it is the voice of all present: it is the testimony of the body. Therefore, all prophesy, including the women: so also, in prayer. One brother after another may lead in the prayer meeting and, as they do, so all the church is being led in intercession and thanksgiving; but in all these holy exercises, the sisters remain quiet, and EVERY man has his head uncovered, and EVERY woman has her head covered (verses 4-5): thus setting forth in the God ordained manner the Lordship of Christ and the subjection of His people to their glorious Head.

Alas, today, many Christians are told that this is unimportant; that it has a cultural application and must be viewed against the times and background of that part of the world in which these events took place: such teaching is pernicious. It should be noted that the apostle Paul is very abrupt, almost scathing, as he concludes this section in 1 Cor. 11:16: "If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God". Ministers and elders who have misguided God's people in this way are to know that they are outside the mandate of Holy Scripture, for any church of God in any place.

In the second verse of chapter 1 of this epistle, the Holy Spirit completely brushes aside any idea of cultural interpretation, for these instructions were written to "all that in EVERY PLACE call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord". To disregard this sacred teaching, Calvin says: "such persons Paul does not reckon worthy of being replied to, inasmuch as contention is a pernicious thing and ought therefore to be banished from the churches ... For in this matter the honour of Christ is infringed upon".

In conclusion mention should be made of praying in tongues. What of this practice? This is a common procedure by many today, both in private and public. Those who thus engage, claim to be out of themselves and in the Spirit; some even speak of a private prayer tongue, or of a

heavenly language in which they speak mysteries. This can amount to nothing more than a useless exercise and is totally unbiblical. In all the instruction given to us on prayer in the Word of God, and there is a great deal, nowhere, either in the Old or New Testaments are we told we must pray to the Almighty in tongues.

It is contrary to Holy Scripture to engage in prayer which is unintelligible: "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathens do" (Matt. 6:7): Such incoherent expression is pagan in origin, and Christians are forbidden to use vain or meaningless repetitive speech. We are always to pray with the understanding. When guided by the Spirit of Truth, this will always be so, and as we pray we shall express ourselves in understandable language, and be understood by God and men.

In Gethsemane, when Deity communed with Deity, was it in some unknown heavenly language? At the grave of Lazarus, did the Lord utter some mysterious gibberish? Study carefully John chapter 17, in which are recorded the intimate breathings of the Son to the Father; did He resort to tongues? Yet, He was the one upon whom the Spirit came in all His fulness, but He never spoke in tongues, as so many claim a man should do who comes into the fulness of the Spirit.

This performance of ecstatic utterances in which men and women claim to have reached such an elevated spiritual condition that they can now commune with the Eternal in their own private language, is a gigantic delusion.

In the light of the terrible departure from the true practice of prayer over the past twenty to thirty years, let all who are of a true and stout heart cause their voice to be heard in contending for the truth of these matters.

W.H.Molland.

A WORD ABOUT CONTROVERSY.

MANY religious persons have a dread of controversy, and wish truth to be stated without reference to those who hold the opposite errors. Controversy and a bad spirit are, in their estimation, synonymous terms, and strenuously to oppose what is wrong is considered as contrary to Christian meekness. Those who hold this opinion seem to overlook what every page of the New Testament lays before us. In all the history of our Lord Jesus Christ we never find Him out of controversy. From the moment He entered on the discharge of His office in the synagogue of Nazareth, until He expired on the cross, it was an uninterrupted scene of controversy. Nor did He with all the heavenly meekness which in Him shone so brightly, treat error and truth without a reference to those who held them, or study to avoid giving its proper appellation to those corruptions in doctrine or practice that endangered the interests of immortal souls. His censures were not confined to doctrines but included the abettors of false principles themselves.

And as to the apostles, their epistles are generally controversial. Most of them were directly written for the express purpose of vindicating truth and opposing error, and the authors of heresies do not escape with an abstract condemnation of their false doctrine. Paul again and again most indignantly denounces the conduct of opposers of the gospel and by name points out those against whom he cautions his brethren. When Hymenaeus and Alexander erred concerning the faith and when he delivered them unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme, he did not compliment them as amiable and learned persons. Even the apostle who treats most of love, and possessed so much of that spirit which was eminently manifested in the divine Master, does not avoid controversy; nor in controversy does he study to avoid severity of censure on the opposers of the truth.

In the examples of opposing error left on record for our imitation, we perceive nothing of that frigid spirit of indifference which smiles on the corrupters of the Word of God, and shuns to call heresy by its proper name. With what holy indignation do the apostles denounce the subtle machinations of the enemies of the gospel.' In vain shall

we look among those faithful servants of the Lord for anything to justify that trembling reserve which fears to say decidedly that truth is truth or that error is error. In what style, indeed, should perversions of the truth of God be censured? Ought they to be treated as mere matters of opinion on which we may innocently and safely differ? Or ought they to be met in a tone of solemn strong and decided disapprobation? Paul warned Christians against men who arose from among themselves, 'speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them', and instead of complimenting false teachers in his day, denounced an angel from heaven on the supposition of his preaching another gospel. And if an apostle was withstood to the face when he was to be blamed, are the writings of those who subvert the gospel to be passed without rebuke?

While a spirit of lukewarmness and indifference to truth is advancing under the mask of charity and liberality, there is a loud call on all Christians to 'stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel', to present a firm and united phalanx of opposition to error under every name, from whatever quarter it may approach, and not to 'stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up; to make their land desolate,' (Jer.18:15). 'Thus saith the Lord. Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Should believers become unfaithful to their trust, and be seduced to abandon their protest against false doctrines, they may gain the approbation of the world: but what will this avail when compared with the favour of God? But if with prayer to God, in the use of the appointed means, they contend earnestly for the truth, then they may expect the gracious fulfilment of that blessed promise, 'When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him'.

Robert Haldane.

"Through thy precepts I get understandings therefore I hate every false way."

Psalm 119:104.

WHY DOCTRINAL PREACHING DECLINES.

During the last two or three generations the pulpit has given less and less prominence to doctrinal preaching, until today, with very rare exceptions, it has no place at all. In some quarters the cry from the pew was, We want living experience and not dry doctrine; in others, We need practical sermons and not metaphysical dogmas; and yet others, Give us Christ and not theology. Sad to say, such senseless cries were generally heeded; 'senseless' we say, for there is no other safe way of testing experience, as there is no foundation for practicals to be built upon, if they be divorced from Scriptural doctrine; while Christ cannot be known unless he be preached (1 Cor. 1:23), and he certainly cannot be 'preached' if doctrine is shelved. Various reasons may be given for the lamentable failure of the pulpit, chief among them being laziness desire for popularity, superficial and lop-sided 'evangelism', love of the sensational.

Laziness. It is a far more exacting task, one which calls for much closer confinement in the study, to prepare a series of sermons on say the doctrine of justification, than it does to make addresses on prayer, missions, or personal-work. It demands a far wider acquaintance with the Scriptures, a more rigid disciplining of the mind, and a more extensive perusal of the older writers. But this was too exacting for most of the ministers, and so they chose the line of least resistance and followed an easier course. It is because of his proneness to this weakness that the minister is particularly exhorted, "Give attendance to reading... take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine: continue in them" (1 Tim. 4: 13, 16); and again, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Tim. 2:15).

Desire for popularity. It is natural that the preacher should wish to please his hearers, but it is spiritual for him to desire and aim at the approbation of God. Nor can any man serve two masters. As the apostle expressly declared, "For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10): solemn words are those! How they condemn them whose chief aim is to preach to crowded churches. Yet what grace it requires to swim against the tide of public opinion, and preach that which

is unacceptable to the natural man. But, on the other hand, how fearful will be the doom of those who, from a determination to curry favour with men deliberately withheld those portions of the truth most needed by their hearers. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it" (Deut. 4:2) O to be able to say with Paul, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you...I am pure from the blood of all" (Acts 20:20, 26).

A superficial and lop-sided 'evangelism'. Many of the pulpiteers of the past fifty years acted as though the first and last object of their calling was the salvation of souls, everything being made to bend to that aim. In consequence, the feeding of the sheep, the maintaining of a Scriptural discipline in the church, and the inculcation of practical piety, were crowded out; and only too often all sorts of worldly devices and fleshly methods were employed under the plea that the end justified the means; and thus the churches were filled with unregenerate members. In reality, such men defeated their own aim. The hard heart must be ploughed and harrowed before it can be receptive to the gospel seed. Doctrinal instruction must be given on the character of God, the requirements of his Law, the nature and heinousness of sin, if a foundation is to be laid for true evangelism. It is useless to preach Christ unto souls until they see and feel their desperate need of him.

The above was written in December 1939 by A.W.Pink. If such words were relevant then, how much more so now, 45 years later.

On Compromise:

"It is an inexpressible grief to me to see the church spending its energies in a vain attempt to lower its testimony to suit the ever-changing sentiment of the world about it."

B.B.Warfield.

"Taking the line of least resistance makes rivers and men crooked".

Anonymous.

LAURENCE SAUNDERS

Laurence Saunders was born of good parentage, educated at Eton, later King's College Cambridge, appointed Reader at the Minster at Litchfield, then he ministered at Leicester and Allhallows, London. Because of his stand against Romanism he was charged with abominable heresies and false doctrine. Following imprisonment, he was burnt at the stake in Coventry on 8th February 1555. Whilst awaiting death he writes the following letter to his wife in which he forbids her to sue for his release:

"Grace, mercy, and peace in Christ our Lord, entirely beloved wife, even as unto my own soul and body, so do I daily in my hearty prayer wish for you; for I do daily, twice at least, in this sort remember you. And I do not doubt dear wife, but that both I and you, as we are written in the book of life, so we shall together enjoy the same everlastingly, through the grace and mercy of God our dear Father, and his Son our Lord Jesus Christ. For this present life let us appoint ourselves to the will of our good God, to glorify Him either by life or death: ... I am cheerful, I thank my God and my Christ, in whom and through whom I shall be able to fight a good fight, and finish a good course, and then receive the crown which is laid up in store for me, and all the true soldiers of Christ. Wherefore wife, let us, in the name of our God, fight lustily to overcome the flesh and the devil, and the world. What our weapons be in this kind of fight, look in the sixth chapter unto the Ephesians and pray, pray, pray. I would that you make no suit for me in any wise ... The blessing of God be with you all, Amen.

A prisoner in the Lord, L. Saunders".

"They loved not their lives unto death".
Revelation 12:11.

"Of whom the world was not worthy".
Hebrews 11:38.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Visiting preachers for this quarter.

Thursday 26th April - 7 pm.

Mr. John Roberts - General Secretary of the LORD'S DAY OBSERVANCE SOCIETY - will report on the work.

Sunday 6th May.

Mr. John Thackway - Minister of Maryport Street Baptist Chapel, Devizes.

Sunday 13th May.

Mr. Malcolm Watts - Minister of Emmanuel Church, Salisbury.

Thursday - 7:15 pm - 3rd May, 7th June, 5th July

Mr. F. Stanbury, Bow.

Preliminary Announcement.

Annual Bible Convention - Saturday 21st July.

Speaker:- Mr. S. Scott-Pearson (Minister at Maulden Baptist Church, Beds.

Anonymous Gifts.

We have recently received through the Post two separate amounts of £200 for the work at North Road Chapel. Although we do not know the person or persons concerned, we wish to express our gratitude and deep appreciation, praying that our heavenly Father, who is no man's debtor will graciously bless the one, or ones, who have thus given, as unto the Lord - Matt. 6:3-4.

Sick Visitation.

Every day in the week this work goes on by the steadfast continuance of Mr. Bennett and Mr. & Mrs. Potter. All the hospitals, nursing homes and eventide residences being visited with regularity. This has proved a great blessing to many.

Cassettes.

During the course of the regular ministry of this church, sermons dealing with the following subjects have been recorded:

The Attributes of God	18	Sermons
Spiritual Union	31	"
The Holy Spirit	36	"
The Atonement	72	"
The Life of David	182	"
The Church	50	"

The following are currently engaging our attention:

The Prayers of the Apostle Paul	20	Sermons available
The Covenants	38	" "
The Book of Genesis	95	" "

The series on Genesis includes sections on: Creation, Marriage, The Sabbath, Sin, Early Civilisation (both pre and post Flood) and the life of Abraham.

All cassettes are available on free loan, subject to the borrower paying postage. They may also be purchased at £1.25 per cassette, each cassette containing two sermons.

EDITORIAL

It would appear that there are many who are perplexed as to certain aspects of prayer, such as: How can Divine sovereignty and the believer's intercession be reconciled? Should women pray in public? What do the scriptures teach as to headcovering? What has the Bible to say regarding praying 'in tongues'? These all need to be faced up to at the present time, and examined in the light of the Word of God. It is with this in mind that the article on Prayer has been included in this issue of the Link.

One feels that those in positions of leadership, such as Ministers and Elders, have too often failed to give sufficient attention to subjects of such vital importance. Consequently, unsound practice and unbiblical conduct abound.