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# Shield of Faith

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## *This Is Life Eternal*

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*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (John 17:1-3 KJV)*

Many, if not most Christians equate eternal life with “going to heaven.” It is something they look forward to and hope for. For many, it is something far off in the future. Often, their view of heaven is based more on imagination than on Scripture. Their expectation is to have in heaven all that they now desire on earth—health, wealth and happiness. It will be a place where all their loved ones are present and all their enemies absent, and, oh, by the way, Jesus will be there. In other words, their views are centered on “self” and Christ is only incidental to the situation.

Eternal life will, in fact, have its ultimate fulfillment in heaven. Heaven truly is a place of joy where all the family of God will be eternally blessed. Those who are waiting for eternal life to begin, however, miss many blessings here.

Scripture declares that eternal life is a *present possession* of believers. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:11-13 KJV).

Jesus said “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath ever-

lasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24 KJV). To *hear*, in this place, denotes not simply the outward act of hearing, but to receive in a proper manner; to allow the word to make its proper impression on the mind and to obey. The end result of hearing the word of Jesus and obeying is to believe on the Father.

Jesus said that he who hears and believes “**hath** everlasting life (emphasis added).” Hearing and believing is the evidence of life rather than requirements to be met in order to receive life. *Life* must precede thought or action.

In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul contrasts the believers condition according to his natural birth with his condition according to his spiritual birth. “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:1-2). The words “hath he quickened” mean, hath he made alive, or made to live.

They were dead in relation to that to which they afterwards became alive—to holiness. Of course, this does not mean that they had no animal life, or that they did not breathe, and walk, and act. Nor does it mean that they had no living intellect or mental powers. It simply affirms a fact—that in relation to real spiritual life they were, in consequence of sin, like a dead man in regard to the objects which are around him. A corpse is insensible. It does not see, does not hear, does not feel. The world is busy and active around it, but it is unconscious of it all.

So with the sinner in regard to the spiritual and eternal world, he sees no beauty in religion; he hears not the call of the gospel; he is unaffected by the

dying love of the Saviour; and he has no interest in eternal realities. In all these he feels no more concern, and sees no more beauty, than a dead man does in the world around him. Such is, in fact, the condition of a sinful world. There is, indeed, natural life and energy and motion in the natural realm but none of the gracious presence of God’s Spirit in the soul, and so no ability to think, will, or do anything that is pleasing to God. They were dead to God and holiness, and alive to this world and fleshly lust. They lived in trespasses and sins, and this is spiritual death.

This death is a state of separation from God, insensibility of that condition, an inability to recover ourselves out of it. Every unregenerate man is a dead man, and doubly so. He is dead legally, being under the condemnation of the law; a man under the sentence of death, a dead man. He is spiritually dead, as being destitute of a principle of spiritual life, a quickening principle to enable the soul to perform spiritual operations.

God, of his infinite mercy, when we were dead in sin, has quickened us together with Christ, and had raised us up to sit with him in heavenly places. He then states that this was not by human power, but was the work of Divine power, and that we are the workmanship of God. It was “...according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 1:19-20).

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son” (1 John 5:11 KJV). Eternal life is the gift of God “and this life is in his Son;” it comes by and through him; he is its author and its purchaser; it is only in and through HIM.

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It is treasured up in his Son, who has all the fullness of it in himself, to communicate to his body, the church. Without him, life is nowhere to be found. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6 KJV). Either of these statements is profound in itself, but here all three together are almost overwhelming. Jesus had called himself "the life" to Martha (John 11:25) and "the door" to the Pharisees (John 10:7) and "the light of the world" (John 8:12). He spoke "the way of God in truth" (Mark 12:14). He is the way to God and the only way, the personification of truth, the centre of life.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3 KJV). This life eternal is not mere conscious and unending existence, but a life of acquaintance with God in Christ

Eternal life contains the essence of all blessing: "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (1 John 2:25 KJV). Spiritual or eternal life consists in knowing, living on, having communion with, and enjoying endless satisfaction in the Triune God through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ.

The knowledge spoken of here is not merely intellectual, speculative. It is practical, experimental, and spiritual. Any with normal intelligence can know *about* God. A theologian may know much about God, but not necessarily be born again.

What is this knowledge? It is a personal encounter with God in which, because of His holiness, we become aware of our sin and consequently of our deep personal need and then, by His grace, are turned to Christ who is our Savior. This knowledge occurs only where God's Holy Spirit is at work beforehand to make it possible.

Man can know God only because He is pleased to reveal Himself to us. God has revealed Himself in history. This special revelation is in addition to that general revelation of Himself in nature of which all have an awareness but to which none

will respond. This revelation consists of direct supernatural interventions in earthly affairs. In the Old Testament this was centered in God's actions on behalf of the nation of Israel, in their deliverance, guidance, and preservation. In the New Testament it centers primarily in Jesus, the fullness of God's personal revelation. This One died for us. He paid the price of our sin. He shows the nature of God to be love, while at the same time He satisfies God's justice. This knowledge of God is so closely tied to His revelation of Himself in Jesus that Jesus can link the two absolutely, when He says: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

God has also revealed Himself in Scripture. He has revealed Himself this way so that we might know what God has done and that we might understand it. We would not even know what Jesus had said, as in the case of this particular text, for example, if God had not caused these things to be put down on paper and be preserved throughout the years of church history to our own generation. Nor would we understand these things, even if they were recorded, had God not given an interpretation along with the facts.

Finally, God also reveals Himself to us personally, applying these truths to us by the work of His own Holy Spirit. So great is our sin, so warped our knowledge, that even with the interpretation of His acts in Scripture we would not know God or understand His ways, apart from this activity. What light does this throw on our knowledge? It shows it to be God's gift, for notice that in John 17:2-3, Jesus speaks, first of all, of His gift of eternal life to as many as God has given Him and then, secondly, that this eternal life is to be found in spiritual knowledge. This makes knowledge itself God's gift. And so it is, for no one would ever know God in the fullest sense unless God first revealed Himself and then made the reception of this knowledge possible.

Can we have evidence that we are truly acquainted with him, that we have eternal life? Can we be assured that our knowledge is not merely that of the intellect and

not of the heart? Do we truly have experiential acquaintance and communion with him as our Father and Friend? John tells us how we can have this evidence and assurance. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. **And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.** He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (1 John 2:1-5, emphasis added). The true knowledge of God consists in keeping of the word of God, the whole word of God, and because it is his.

*Keep* is a favorite word of John's. Instead of *do*, John uses *keep*, literally, "watch," "guard," and "keep safe" as a precious thing; observing so as to keep. So Christ Himself. He does not mean a faultless conformity, but hearty acceptance of, and willing subjection to, God's whole revealed will. Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:21 KJV). True love to Jesus will produce obedience. Those who love him will be loved of the Father, and by Jesus.

Jesus will also manifest Himself to him, and be known by him. This manifestation of Himself is not bodily, but spiritual, yet so plain that no other showing could be more evident. Jesus will so show himself to his followers in such a way that they will see and know that he was their Saviour.

Blessed beyond words are they who have been given eternal life and great is the responsibility that goes with it. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Timothy 6:12). "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Hebrews 2:3 KJV).

*Bible Quiz*

Altars have played important roles in worship throughout history. Match each person with the proper altar name or location.

1. Abraham (Gen. 12:6-7)
  2. Jacob (Gen. 35: I)
  3. Moses (Ex. 17:15)
  4. Reuben and Gad (Josh. 22:34)
  5. Isaac (Gen. 26:23-25)
  6. Balak (Num. 23:14)
  7. Joshua (Dent. 27:4-5)
  8. Gideon (Judg. 6:24)
  9. Samuel (1 Sam. 7:17)
  10. Saul (1 Sam. 14:2-35)
  11. David (2 Sam. 24:18-19)
- a. Araunah's threshing floor  
 b. Beersheba  
 c. Ebal  
 d. Ed  
 e. Bethel  
 f. Gibeah  
 g. Jehovah-nissi  
 h. Jehovah-shalom  
 i. Ramah  
 j. Sichem  
 k. Pisgah

*Answers on page 4.*

We that are Christians have been trained by His Son in His school for a long time, and we have been told what a God our Father is, what an arm He has, and how loud His voice can thunder; how He can dress Himself with majesty and excellency, and adorn Himself with beauty and glory; how He can work His destruction on the earth and bring low those who are high. Haven't we talked about what He did at the Red Sea and in the land of Ham, many years ago-and have we forgot what He is like now? Haven't we boasted about our God, at church, from the pulpit, and in books, praising those who attempted to drive Christ's enemies from the world with their lives and their blood instead of with stones-and do we truly respect our God? He was God, a Creator, then isn't He still God now? Don't you think He will be as good to us today as He once was to those who have gone before us? Or would we limit Him to appearing only in the ways that are easy for our human minds to comprehend, asking Him not to show Himself in His heart-shaking aspects until we are dead and gone? What if it is time for us to go to heaven, and what if He comes to fetch us to Himself, wearing a face that is frightening to our humanity? If we have been as wise as serpents and innocent as doves-if we can say, through Christ, that we are innocent-then why should we be afraid? Let heaven and earth come together; I dare say they will not hurt us.

John Bunyan

*No Crown, But By The Cross*

Thus religion fell from experience to tradition, and worship from power to form, from life to letter; that instead of putting up lively and powerful requests, animated by the deep sense of want, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, by which the ancients prayed, wrestled and prevailed with God; behold a byrote mumpsimus, a dull and insipid formality, made up of corporal bowings, and cringings, garments and furnitures, perfumes, voices and music, fitter for the reception of some earthly prince, than the heavenly worship of the only true and immortal God, who is an eternal, invisible spirit.

But thy heart growing carnal, thy religion did so too; and not liking it as it was, thou fashioned it to thy liking; forgetting what the holy prophet said, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord," and what James says, "Ye ask, and receive not," (why?) "because ye ask amiss "; that is, with a heart that is not right, but insincere, unmortified, not in the faith that purifies the soul, and therefore can never receive what is asked: so that a man may say with truth, thy condition is worse by thy religion, because thou are tempted to think thyself the better for it, and are not.

Well; by this prospect that is given thee, of thy foul fall from primitive Christianity, and the true cause of it, to wit, a neglect of the daily cross of Christ, it may be easy for thee to inform thyself of the way of thy recovery.

For look, at what door thou went out, at that door thou must come in: and as letting fall, and forbearing the daily cross lost thee; so taking up, and enduring the daily cross, must recover thee. It is the same way, by which the sinners and apostates become the disciples of Jesus. "If any man [says Christ] will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Nothing short of this will do; mark that, for as it is sufficient so is it indispensable: no crown, but by the cross; no life eternal, but through death: and it is but just, that those evil and barbarous affections, that crucified Christ afresh, should, by His holy cross be crucified. Blood requires blood; His cross is the death of sin, that caused His death; and He the death of death, according to that passage, O death! I will be thy death!

William Penn (1644-1718)

Here is a simple illustration that expresses a great spiritual truth: If we look through a piece of red glass, everything is red; through blue glass, everything is blue; through yellow glass, everything is yellow, and so on.

The glorious truth is that when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, God looks at us through the Lord Jesus Christ. He sees us in all the white holiness of His Son. That is the great New Testament doctrine of the imputation of our sin to the account of Christ and His righteousness to our account.

Donald Grey Barnhouse

## *Knowing, brethren, beloved, your election of God*

by Elder C.H. Cayce in Vol.VII, pp. 376--379, of his Editorial Writings. (This article was originally published August 6, 1942.)

"In our last issue (July 16) we promised to write some more on this subject. So we will try to comply with that promise. There are so many passages in God's Word treating upon this matter that we hardly know which passage to introduce first. Suppose we start by reading the following: "Knowing, brethren, beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake" (I Thessalonians 1: 4,5).

Please bear in mind that the beloved Apostle Paul penned this language by inspiration of God--that he was moved by the Holy Spirit to pen the language in the original which is translated as above. Paul said, "Knowing, brethren, beloved, your election of God." If he did not know it, then he was moved by the Holy Spirit to say he knew what he did not know. If he was not moved by the Holy Spirit to say he knew what he did not know, then he did know their election of God. Remember, too, that the Thessalonians were not apostles. It has been said by some that the Lord did choose or elect the apostles, but not others. But the Thessalonians were not apostles, and Paul said he knew their election of God. Their election was of God. As it was of God, then it was not of themselves. God is the one who did the choosing or electing; hence their election was of God. Since Paul knew their election was of God, then he knew that the doctrine of election was the truth.

As we said in a previous article, this doctrine may not suit our carnality, or the doctrine of men, but Paul knew it was the truth. If it was the truth then, it is the truth now. Principles are eternal and never change.

How did Paul know their election of God? He tells us how he knew it: "For

our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." The gospel comes to unregenerate persons in word only, it does not come to them in power; nor does it come to them in much assurance. The unregenerate man may hear the words uttered by the minister as he proclaims the riches of God's grace, and as he tells of God's work in the salvation of poor lost sinners, but it is an idle tale to such persons. True gospel preaching is foolishness to them. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness" (I Cor. 1:18). The gospel comes to such persons in word only. But to the Thessalonians the gospel did not come in word only, but there was a power in it to them. There was a sure evidence to the apostle that they were of the elect of God. They were not the elect of God because the gospel came to them in power, but the fact that the gospel came to them in power was proof to the inspired apostle that they were the elect of God.

This same inspired man said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). Please take notice of the fact that Paul *did* not say, "it is the power of God in order to salvation"--but unto *salvation*. How under heaven could the gospel of Christ be the power of God unto salvation if salvation did not already exist in the person before the gospel got there? How can one thing be unto another thing if the other thing is not already in existence? The gospel is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is not the power of God unto salvation to one who is not a believer. A believer is one who has already been born of God. "Even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1: 12,13). Those who now believe, in the present, were born of God, in the

past. So the gospel coming to one in power proves that such a one was born of God before the gospel came to him, and one who has been born of God was chosen of God before he was born of God. Being born of God and the gospel coming to him with power is inspired proof of the fact that such a one was embraced in the election of God.

The gospel does not bring assurance to those who have not been born of God, or who are not of the elect of God. But it does bring much assurance to some. To whom does it come with much assurance? It comes with much assurance to those who are of the elect of God, who have been born into the heavenly family. If the gospel has come to you with much assurance, it is an infallible proof, according to the inspired apostle, that you are embraced in the number of God's elect. The same which was said to the Thessalonians by the inspired apostle in our text may just as truly be said to you, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." The eternal God, in His mercy and grace, made choice of you, elected you to salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord; and the apostle has said that he knew this fact, and knew it to be a fact.

Well, we have only brought out one leading text in this article, but we feel that we have taken enough space for this time, and will stop for the present, with the promise that we will try to write more on this subject for next issue.

C.H.C.

### Answers to Bible Quiz

1-j, 2-e, 3-g, 4-d, 5-b, 6-k, 7-c, 8-h, 9-i, 10-, 11-a

Devotions:

## *Psalms In Reflection*

From the book of the same title by Elder Len Dalton

Hymns and Hymn Writers

## *His Eye Is On the Sparrow*

### THE ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-SIXTH PSALM

<<A Song of degrees.>> *When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them. The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.* (Psalms 126:1-6 KJV)

It is true, and it has always been true, that some who have been in exile will sometimes go back into exile. This psalm rather celebrates the bringing back of the exiled from his exile. Jehovah has a way of bringing back those who have gone away into exile. Jehovah has wonderful ways of leading them back. They return with the consciousness in their hearts that it has been of the leading of the Lord that they have come. They have looked on, and praised Him for their hope and present hope of security. Now they break forth into an expression of their glad experience.

They seem to wonder in amazement that Jehovah could and would bring them back. To them it seemed as though they had only been dreaming. Laughter and singing seemed the only fitting celebration. Even the nations seemed to be compelled to recognize the doings of Jehovah on their behalf. In the consciousness of the wonders of the deliverance wrought by their Lord is created a deep sense of their own imperfections.

Both the consciousness that their present deliverance is not complete, and the fact that they may be in exile again seemed to be the causes of their continued pleading that the Lord would still deliver them from exile. The inspiration of the prayer seemed to be the blessings they had already received. The song ends in a note of confidence.

### *Let No Man Take Thy Crown*

Have you become discouraged? Have you allowed something to keep you from being what you know you should be? Have you allowed depression or disaster to make you lose heart and to slacken your effort? If so, remember the Word of the Lord: "That no man take thy crown." Be diligent; in season and out of season. Be faithful in the face of storm, as well as in times of sunshine, for if there is "no battle, there will be no victory; no cross, no crown."

-Henry J. Westermeyer, in *Christian Observer*

*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. (Matthew 10:29)*

Most people have a hobby of some sort to provide a healthy diversion from the rigors of work. Long ago, there was a woodworker in Nazareth who may have counted bird-watching among His diversions. We can make that assumption, because Jesus later referred frequently to bird-life in His Sermons, saying things like:

- *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. (Matthew 10:29)*
- *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? (Matthew 6:26)*
- *Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? (Luke 12:24)*
- *But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. (Luke 12:7)*

It was this theme that caused the author of "God Will Take Care of You," to write, a year later, another great hymn on God's care: "His Eye Is on the Sparrow." Civilla Durfee Martin was a Canadian by birth, born on August 21, 1869, in Nova Scotia. She became a school and music teacher, but when she married Dr. Walter Martin, an evangelist, she gave up teaching to travel with him and assist in his meetings.

This is her account of the writing of this song:

Early in the spring of 1905, my husband and I were sojourning in Elmira, New York. We contracted a deep friendship for a couple by the name of Mr. and Mrs. Doolittle—true saints of God. Mrs. Doolittle had been bedridden for nigh twenty years. Her husband was an incurable cripple who had to propel himself to and from his business in a wheel chair. Despite their afflictions, they lived happy Christian lives, bringing inspiration and comfort to all who knew them. One day while we were visiting with the Doolittles, my husband commented on their bright hopefulness and asked them for the secret of it. Mrs. Doolittle's reply was simple: "His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me." The beauty of this simple expression of boundless faith gripped the hearts and tired the imagination of Dr. Martin and me. The hymn "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" was the outcome of that experience.

The day after writing the song, she mailed it to the famous Gospel composer, Charles Gabriel, who penned the music.

## The Ten Primitive Persecutions

Peter, a eunuch belonging to the emperor, was a Christian of singular modesty and humility. He was laid on a gridiron, and broiled over a slow fire until he expired.

Cyprian, known by the title of the magician, to distinguish him from Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, was a native of Antioch. He received a liberal education in his youth, and particularly applied himself to astrology; after which he traveled for improvement through Greece, Egypt, India, etc. In the course of time he became acquainted with Justina, a young lady of Antioch, whose birth, beauty, and accomplishments, rendered her the admiration of all who knew her. A pagan gentleman applied to Cyprian, to promote his suit with the beautiful Justina; this he undertook, but soon himself became converted, burnt his books of astrology and magic, received baptism, and felt animated with a powerful spirit of grace. The conversion of Cyprian had a great effect on the pagan gentleman who paid his addresses to Justina, and he in a short time embraced Christianity. During the persecutions of Diocletian, Cyprian and Justina were seized upon as Christians, the former was torn with pincers, and the latter chastised; and, after suffering other torments, both were beheaded.

Eulalia, a Spanish lady of a Christian family, was remarkable in her youth for sweetness of temper, and solidity of understanding seldom found in the capriciousness of juvenile years. Being apprehended as a Christian, the magistrate attempted by the mildest means, to bring her over to paganism, but she ridiculed the pagan deities with such asperity, that the judge, incensed at her behavior, ordered her to be tortured. Her sides were accordingly torn by hooks, and her breasts burnt in the most shocking manner, until she expired by the violence of the flames, December, A. D. 303.

In the year 304, when the persecution reached Spain, Dacian, the governor of Tarragona, ordered Valerius the bishop, and Vincent the deacon, to be seized, loaded with irons, and impris-

oned. The prisoners being firm in their resolution, Valerius was banished, and Vincent was racked, his limbs dislocated, his flesh torn with hooks, and he was laid on a gridiron, which had not only a fire placed under it, but spikes at the top, which ran into his flesh. These torments neither destroying him, nor changing his resolutions, he was remanded to prison, and confined in a small, loathsome, dark dungeon, strewed with sharp flints, and pieces of broken glass, where he died, January 22, 304. His body was thrown into the river.

The persecution of Diocletian began particularly to rage in A. D. 304, when many Christians were put to cruel tortures and the most painful and ignominious deaths; the most eminent and particular of whom we shall enumerate.

Saturninus a priest of Albitina, a town of Africa, after being tortured, was remanded to prison, and there starved to death. His four children, after being variously tormented, shared the same fate with their father. Dativas, a noble Roman senator; Thelico, a pious Christian; Victoria, a young lady of considerable family and fortune, with some others of less consideration, all auditors of Saturninus, were tortured in a similar manner, and perished by the same means. Agrape, Chionia, and Irene, three sisters, were seized upon at Thessalonica, when Diocletian's persecution reached Greece. They were burnt, and received the crown of martyrdom in the flames, March 25, A. D. 304. The governor, finding that he could make no impression on Irene, ordered her to be exposed naked in the streets, which shameful order having been executed, a fire was kindled near the city wall, amidst whose flames her spirit ascended beyond the reach of man's cruelty.

Agatho, a man of a pious turn of mind, with Cassice, Phillippa, and Eutychia, were martyred about the same time; but the particulars have not been transmitted to us.

Marcellinus, bishop of Rome, who succeeded Caius in that see, having

strongly opposed paying divine honors to Diocletian, suffered martyrdom by a variety of tortures, in the year 324, comforting his soul until he expired with the prospect of those glorious rewards it would receive by the tortures suffered in the body.

Victorius, Carpophorus, Severus, and Severianus, were brothers, and all four employed in places of great trust and honor in the city of Rome. Having exclaimed against the worship of idols, they were apprehended, and scourged, with the plumbetae, or scourges, to the ends of which were fastened leaden balls. This punishment was exercised with such excess of cruelty that the pious brothers fell martyrs to its severity.

Timothy, a deacon of Mauritania, and Maura his wife, had not been united together by the bands of wedlock above three weeks, when they were separated from each other by the persecution. Timothy, being apprehended as a Christian, was carried before Arrianus, the governor of Thebais, who, knowing that he had the keeping of the Holy Scriptures, commanded him to deliver them up to be burnt; to which he answered, "Had I children, I would sooner deliver them up to be sacrificed, than part with the Word of God." The governor being much incensed at this reply, ordered his eyes to be put out, with red-hot irons, saying "The books shall at least be useless to you, for you shall not see to read them." His patience under the operation was so great that the governor grew more exasperated; he, therefore, in order, if possible, to overcome his fortitude, ordered him to be hung up by the feet, with a weight tied about his neck, and a gag in his mouth. In this state, Maura his wife, tenderly urged him for her sake to recant; but, when the gag was taken out of his mouth, instead of consenting to his wife's entreaties, he greatly blamed her mistaken love, and declared his resolution of dying for the faith. The consequence was, that Maura resolved to imitate his courage and fidelity and either to accompany or follow him to

*(Continued on page 8)*

## PRAYER

I feel that this book must contain a few notes on this very important subject, though I shall attempt to write but little hereon. I think the poet fully understood true and spiritual prayer when he wrote,

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Unuttered or expressed;  
The motion of a hidden fire,  
That trembles in the breast." Etc.

A prayer may be fervently spiritual though asking for temporal blessings. But today much that is called prayer does not really have this spirituality, and consequently is often mere formalism, and sometimes plainly mockery. To boastfully pray for anything that the need of is not actually felt, is surely mocking the great and merciful Giver of every good and perfect gift.

If I know anything about a truly spiritual prayer, it is an earnest petition or request for any kind of sincerely felt needs and mercies, whether of a spiritual, temporal or earthly nature. It is an offering up, or making known to God, the real desires of the heart by the help of the Spirit, and humbly begging in the name, and for the alone sake, of Jesus Christ, that the Father may in His tender mercy be pleased to hear and grant our requests, if agreeable to His holy and sovereign will. We should always acknowledge our sins, unworthiness and obligations to our Lord while supplicating His wonderful throne of grace and mercy. Also, we should always try to thankfully acknowledge the many blessings we have and are now enjoying from His free favor, and beg that He may be graciously pleased to fill our hearts with praise and gratitude to His great name for these mercies. Prayer and praise are quite closely related and connected, and are so well fitted and becoming the lips of those who have indeed "tasted that the Lord is gracious."

Our blessed Savior used the parable of the importunate friend (Luke xi. 5-10) to encourage our asking, and the parable of the unjust judge (xviii. 1-8) to illustrate the blessed fruits of the continuance and importunity of the prayer of the helpless, and the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (9-14) to describe the very great difference in

the feelings between those who from a deeply felt sense of sin, really desire and earnestly beg (though in few words) for mercy, and those who are entire strangers to heart-felt sin and guilt. The proud Pharisee in his formality and hypocrisy, made a very boastful show of himself at prayer, but in his self-righteousness and conceit, really did not pray at all. I have heard some pretended prayers that were plainly commands and orders to the Lord. It seems to me that it is about the same as blasphemy for a poor, weak "worm of the dust" to give orders to the Great Jehovah. But the spiritually poor and needy publican, painfully feeling guilt burn in his breast, made indeed a genuine prayer, because it was an acceptable one.

We should surely feel encouraged to continue in prayer by the many examples and tender nature of Jesus Christ, who is our great High Priest, and the sinner's Friend. Our real needs are so many that there are indeed very many things to pray for. How sweetly comforting Paul writes, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."--Heb. iv. 16. The Lord's people are always needy, though sometimes feeling their needs more keenly than at others. It seems to me that the wrestling souls live nearer their blessed lord and are more reconciled to His will.

While we cannot, nor should we dare try, to command heaven's blessings upon our unworthy heads, we should indeed feel that it is a most blessed privilege that in mercy is allowed us, and also a solemnly sweet obligation laid on us, to make known our wants in humble prayer to "the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort," and patiently wait His blessings, though it may often seem that He will not hear, and we feel much discouraged and cast down, and fail in any degree to feel the truthfulness of the poet's words,

"'Tis well when at His throne,  
They wrestle, weep and pray,  
'Tis well when at His feet they groan,  
Yet bring their wants away."

We surely have need of much patience and strengthening grace to continue to

pray and trust in the name of the lord when all seems dark and our path hedged in.

While I see nothing wrong in any one, though they may be a stranger to God's pardoning love, but simply as one of His weak and dependent creatures, asking Him for any needed earthly blessing, but this certainly should be in a way far from being a command and should always be conditioned upon the petition being in accordance with their Maker's will. No doubt it sometimes may be a great mercy to the petitioner that God does not answer his prayers. Yes, sometimes to do so may not be best even for His regenerated people; and often worldlings in ignorance of their real needs, make such very unbecoming and foolish supplications. The poet Moore when writing of the condition of fallen man, so truthfully says,

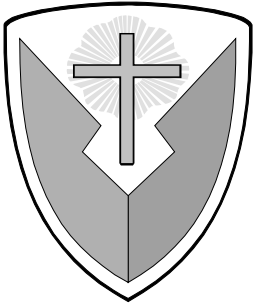
"O sad state  
Of human wretchedness! So weak  
is man, So ignorant and so blind,  
that did not God sometimes withhold  
in mercy what we ask, We  
would be ruined at our own request."

Elder W. S. Craig (1867-1961)  
*In Short Articles on Primitive Baptist Faith and Practice*

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### *Why Prayer Is Different*

I shall never forget what the late Dr. A. C. Dixon of Spurgeon's Tabernacle once said when speaking upon this theme of prayer. I cannot quote him verbatim, but the substance was this: "When we rely upon organization, we get what organization can do, when we rely upon education, we get what education can do; when we reply upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do; and so on. Nor am I disposed to undervalue any of these things in their proper place. "But," he added impressively, "when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do,"---*The European Harvest Field.*



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And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, Hebrews 10:24

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glory. The governor, after trying in vain to alter her resolution, ordered her to be tortured, which was executed with great severity. After this, Timothy and Maura were crucified near each other, A. D. 304.

Sabinus, bishop of Assisium, refusing to sacrifice to Jupiter, and pushing the idol from him, had his hand cut off by the order of the governor of Tuscany. While in prison, he converted the governor and his family, all of whom suffered martyrdom for the faith. Soon after their execution, Sabinus himself was scourged to death, December, A. D. 304.

Tired with the farce of state and public business, the emperor Diocletian resigned the imperial diadem, and was succeeded by Constantius and Galerius ; the former a prince of the most mild and humane disposition and the latter equally remarkable for his cruelty and tyranny. These divided the empire into two equal governments, Galerius ruling in the east, and Constantius in the west; and the people in the two governments felt the effects of the dispositions of the two emperors; for those in the west were governed in the mildest manner, but such as resided in the east felt all the miseries of oppression and lengthened tortures.

Among the many martyred by the order of Galerius , we shall enumerate the most eminent.

Amphianus was a gentleman of eminence in Lucia, and a scholar of Eusebius; Julitta, a Lycaoman of royal descent, but more celebrated for her virtues than noble blood. While

on the rack, her child was killed before her face. Julitta, of Cappadocia, was a lady of distinguished capacity, great virtue, and uncommon courage. To complete the execution, Julitta had boiling pitch poured on her feet, her sides torn with hooks, and received the conclusion of her martyrdom, by being beheaded, April 16, A. D. 305.

Hermolaus, a venerable and pious Christian, of a great age, and an intimate acquaintance of Panteleon's, suffered martyrdom for the faith on the same day, and in the same manner as Panteleon.

Eustratius, secretary to the governor of Armina, was thrown into a fiery furnace for exhorting some Christians who had been apprehended, to persevere in their faith.

Nicander and Marcian, two eminent Roman military officers, were apprehended on account of their faith. As they were both men of great abilities in their profession, the utmost means were used to induce them to renounce Christianity; but these endeavors being found ineffectual, they were beheaded.

In the kingdom of Naples, several martyrdoms took place, in particular, Januaries, bishop of Beneventum ; Sosius, deacon of Misene ; Proculus, another deacon; Eutyches and Acutius, two laymen; Festus, a deacon; and Desiderius, a reader; all, on account of being Christians, were condemned by the governor of Campania to be devoured by the wild beasts. The savage animals, however, would not touch them, and so they were beheaded.