

Prayerfulness

By John MacDuff

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"He continued all night in prayer to God."—Luke 6:12.

We speak of *this* Christian and *that* Christian as "a man of prayer," Jesus was emphatically so. The Spirit was "poured upon Him without measure," yet—*He prayed!* He was incarnate wisdom, "needing not that any should teach Him." He was infinite in His power, and boundless in His resources, yet—*He prayed!* How deeply sacred the prayerful memories that hover around the solitudes of Olivet and the shores of Tiberias! He seemed often to turn night into day to redeem moments for prayer, rather than lose the blessed privilege.

We are rarely, indeed, admitted into the solemnities of His inner life. The veil of night is generally between us and the Great High Priest, when He entered "the holiest of all;" but we have enough to reveal the depth of fervor, the tenderness and confidingness of this blissful intercommunion with His heavenly Father. No morning dawns without His fetching fresh manna from the mercy-seat. "He awakens morning by morning; he awakens my ear to hear as the learned," (Isa. 50:4). Beautiful description!—a praying Redeemer, wakening, as if at early dawn, the ear of His Father, to get fresh supplies for the duties and the trials of the day! All his public acts were consecrated by prayer—His baptism, His transfiguration, His miracles, His agony, His death. He breathed away His spirit in prayer. "His last breath," says Philip Henry, "was praying breath." How sweet to think, in holding communion with God—*Jesus* drank of this very brook! He consecrated the bended knee and the silent chamber. He refreshed His fainting spirit at the same great Fountain-head from which it is life for us to draw, and death to forsake.

Reader! do you complain of your languid spirit, your drooping faith, your fitful affections, your lukewarm love? May you not trace much of what you deplore to an unfrequented chamber? The treasures are locked up from you, because you have allowed the key to rust; the hands hang down, because they have ceased to be uplifted in prayer. Without prayer!—It is the pilgrim without a staff—the seaman without a compass—the soldier going unarmed and unharnessed to battle.

Beware of encouraging what indisposes to prayer—going to the audience-chamber with soiled garments, the din of the world following you, its distracting thoughts hovering unforbidden over your spirit. Can you wonder that the living water refuses to flow through obstructed channels, or the heavenly light to pierce murky vapors?

On earth, fellowship with a lofty order of minds, imparts a certain nobility to the character; so, in a far higher sense, by communion with God you will be transformed into His image, and get assimilated to His likeness. Make every event in life a reason for fresh

going to Him. If diffculted in duty, bring it to the test of prayer. If bowed down with anticipated trial, "fearing to enter the cloud,"—remember Christ's preparation, "Sit here while I go and *pray* yonder."

Let prayer consecrate everything—your time, talents, pursuits, engagements, joys, sorrows, crosses, losses. By it, rough paths will be made smooth, trials disarmed of their bitterness, enjoyments hallowed and refined, the bread of the world turned into angels' food. "It is in the closet," says Payson, "the battle is lost or won!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

(Taken from "The Mind of Jesus", 1870)

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