

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

First Quarter 2014: *Discipleship*

Lesson 3 “Discipleship and Prayer”

Read for this week’s study

Dan. 9:2–19; Matt. 14:22, 23; 26:36; John 17:6–26; Heb. 2:17; 1 Pet. 4:7.

Memory Text

“ I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me’ ” (*John 17:20, 21, NKJV*).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Time-tested Compassion
- III. Time for Prayer
- IV. Timeless Teaching
- V. Timeless Compassion
- VI. Timeless Compassion Replicated
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Keith Corbett

1. How does our free will enter into our understanding of prayer?
2. Are we taking advantage of the gift God has given to us in prayer?
3. How often do we talk to the Creator of the Universe?
4. When was the last time you spent “an hour in thoughtful contemplation of God and His gifts to you”?
5. Some say God needed to come to this planet to learn how to relate to us. Why did He come? Was it to learn about us or for us to learn about Him?
6. Think about some of the practical life warnings and helps God gives to us. Can you give examples?
7. Some television evangelists claim that they often speak directly with God. Do you think that they really do? Did God tell Oral Roberts to raise 8 million dollars?
8. How do you relate to this kind of claim about prayer? How have these kinds of claims influenced your thinking about prayer?

9. How does the parable of the Good Shepherd (John 10) influence our expectations regarding prayer?

Prayer, conversation with God, is used by God to teach His children “The truth [about God that] will set you free.” (John 8:32) To “know God” is eternal life. (John 17:3) Prayer is calculated, by God Himself, to bring us, His children, into a fuller knowledge of Him so we will have a closer, more intimate relationship with our creator. This thrills His great heart of love beyond our comprehension. It also thrills our hearts with inexpressible joy and happiness and results in eternal life for us, allowing this relationship to continue throughout eternity. What a blessing God has given in prayer! Are we using it to our advantage?

“Thy will be done.” We need to be at peace with “Thy will be done”, but understanding of even times when “His will is not done.” Lucifer, and all who have rebelled with him, are God’s dearly loved children. He created them and wants them as His friends forever. Fortunately, for the universe, God does not violate our freedom of choice, even to accomplish His will. And we know that He will lose, against His will, even some of His own children! What an amazing God, who so values us—and respects our choices to love Him freely or to spit in His face!

“Jesus invested Himself in the lives of His disciples. He visited their homes, became acquainted with their relatives, spent leisure time in their company, and worked alongside them.”

(Wednesday’s lesson) Do you think Jesus did this “active engagement” with His disciples because He needed to get to know them before He could help them? Or did He do it to help them get to know Him and His Father? (See John 17; *Steps to Christ* Chapter 1; *Desire of Ages* Chapter 1)

God already knows all there is to know about humanity. He did not need to come here to learn how to identify with us. He came here, rather, to help us identify with Him. He came to make Himself known to us, not us to Him. That is why John 17 repeatedly states “I made You known to them.” (Verses 4, 6, 21, 22, 23 and 26.) Jesus came to help the hearer, and now the reader, understand the truth about God’s great love, concern and compassion towards us, His children. This revelation is calculated to help us see a caring God who wants us to know that He loves us supremely. He wants to live in us and have us live in Him, to be closer than a brother’s intimate relationship with his brother. In fact He wants us to have a relationship with Him like Christ had with Him, if that is possible. In order for His influence to be effective, He needed to mingle with us so we could learn to trust Him and His Father so that there could be life-changing results for everyone. But the mingling didn’t change God one iota.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

So now, imagine that the Father appears visibly among us here this evening. How would we speak to Him? Or to make it more personal, let us say that He is willing to meet us in the fellowship room. As many of us as could, would go over there and gather around Him, just as

the crowds did around Jesus; and Mary loved to sit there at His feet. Supposing we should have the inestimable privilege of talking there freely with God the Father for a whole hour. Would it be appropriate at the end for someone among us to arise and say, "This has been such a special occasion, don't you think we ought to close this meeting with a word of prayer?" Or would it be correct to understand that talking, conversing, having conversation with our God as with a Friend for that whole hour actually is real prayer, and we have been praying the whole hour long.

Or could we only converse so freely with Jesus the Son? Is it even thinkable that we could converse with the Father, the awesome One as with a friend? You remember the disciples wondered about this. They were comfortable with Jesus, and how He had impressed them by saying that He wanted them to regard themselves as His friends. He said this more than once. One place I've included on the list is John 15:15.

"I have called you friends." (RSV)

They loved that so much that it prompted Phillip to say, "Could the Father be like you?" And you remember Jesus' answer; we have looked at this on more than one previous occasion. Jesus said in John 14:7, 9:

"If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well....Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." (NIV)

So once again, back to the fellowship room. There our heavenly Father waits and we begin to speak. What language should we use? Should we look at our Heavenly Father respectfully in the face, and say, "We privy Lord that Thou wouldst bestow unctions upon us from on high?" I think He would smile so sweetly and say, "Please relax, you can talk a little more plainly, if you wish." Unless, of course, you are used to talking that way all the time. Does everyone here know what an "unction" is? I think some think it is something tasty to eat. But did the disciples talk to God that way? Did Moses? Did Abraham? No, they all used up to date, modern speech. They wanted to be clear. It was the language of their times.

So, I believe if we began to speak to God, we surely would be reverent, and yet, we would be conversing with a Friend and we should use appropriate language. But this is a personal matter. Conversation with a friend; who could dictate how that should be? But surely we would use the best possible language that we could to make clear our convictions, our feelings, our desires, our admirations and our worship as we converse with our Heavenly Father, as with a friend. So, what language would you use?

Then, how would we address Him? Jesus addressed His Father as 'Abba, Father'. Abba is Aramaic for father. So it is almost like saying, "Father, Father", although it is a term of endearment. Some versions translate 'Abba, Father' as 'Dear Father', the way some of us like to start our public prayers, and private too; Dear Father. You remember Paul, in Romans and Galatians, invites us to do precisely that. He says that when the Spirit of Truth dwells within us, we will address the Father as "Dear Father".

But of course, most important, what would we talk about? Could you on such a precious occasion say, "Thank you, God, for today's groceries and here is my list for tomorrow. Amen"; and then go on about your business? Or more seriously, right there with the Father, might you say, "Bless the missionaries as they carry the truth to the far-flung corners of the earth. Remember the colporteurs as they take our truth filled literature from door to door." The Lord might say, "How sweet. How is it that you only think of these things when you are at the time of prayer?" Of course, if you are the wife of a colporteur, the mother of a missionary, how appropriate for you to talk to God about your loved ones. And colporteurs and missionaries, above all people, deserve and need our prayers. But if we are not thinking about them the rest of the time, just when we talk to God, do we feel that we should only mention the most lofty themes and not the things we have been really thinking about all day?

You see, for some of us, those well-worn phrases about the missionaries and the colporteurs, the sort of thing we understand we ought to mention when we pray, might seem rather empty when we are talking face-to-face with God as with a friend. Or, if we should leave the meeting and walk through a garden in the community, wouldn't it be natural, walking with God, to comment with admiration on the beauty and fragrance of a rose, and the beautiful sounds of the mockingbirds? Aren't they magnificent right now? And then that lovely, lonely sound of the mourning dove. Why couldn't we tell Him how beautiful it was to create things that way? Or walking through the garden, would we simply say, "We thank thee, Lord, for the beauties of nature that surround us", and move on to some other topic? We do have well-worn phrases to cover these things. It seems to me that if God really were our Friend, we'd take time to talk about these things and to be more specific about them, as we would with other members of the family. We might even venture to ask Him about the thorns on the rose. "Did you put them there? If so, why?" Or is it all right to ask questions of our God? Job did, and he honored God with his confidence. You remember how boldly, but reverently, Job agonized with God; to the consternation of his friends. They worried that God would surely smite Job for daring to talk to the Father like this. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, session 15, "Talking To God As A Friend" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

http://www.pineknoll.org/resources/audio/cag/cag_15.mp3

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

LV: In this matter of praying for others; the matter of intercessory prayer, does that really do any good?

AGM: That's an interesting phrase, "Does it do any good?" That's a very good way to put it. See, you know we always want to not miss out on any good thing. We want to get our money's worth here, you know.

LV: Isn't that the wrong way to put that. Did I put that poorly?

AGM: Well, that doesn't seem like prayer is conversation with God as with a Friend. It seems to me, to be specific, here's a mother with a son who has chosen to go his own way. She loves her son. And so every night she talks to God about her son. If she didn't, she wouldn't be normal. She loves her son. So you talk with God about the things that are on your mind, and we don't say, "God, force my boy back." And we know that if God would pour out His Holy Spirit with one hundred-fold greater intensity on the son, it would not make him a Christian. He could still say, "No." So we're still saying, "God, You choose the time. You choose the way. Help me to be patient. Help me to do what I can do, and maybe bring every influence possible to bear, but I know my son can still say 'No,' as Lucifer said 'No' to Your very face." See, we understand that as we pray, but I'm not going to say it does no good to talk to God. I'm going to talk to Him anyway. This is my son. I'm going to talk to Him about my son.

LV: But, for example, if there is a particular need. I remember from years ago when there was a situation in one of the countries of Europe where people were suffering persecution and doors were being closed to churches. And we had a day of fasting and prayer.

AGM: I remember that!

LV: Now if we were to join together to pray, does our joining in a kind of special movement of prayer, does that mean special power to bring about?

AGM: So long as it wouldn't mean the more of us who twist God's arm, the more likely we are to get what we want. The time that this occurred, a whole group of theology majors at PUC (I was still up there in the 1950's when this happened), said, "Let's meet for lunch every Monday noon and discuss this until we're satisfied." And we agreed finally that within the limitations of the great controversy, with an enemy there accusing God of interfering and manipulating things, and with angels deserving to understand, I believe our united requests set God free to do things He had been longing to do. Because when we all together said, "Please, will You open the churches in Romania," or wherever it was, God could say to the adversary, "Step aside. I'm

on My way.” And He could say to the angels, “Is this interference? Is this manipulation? Do you hear them all asking Me?” I think the great controversy is very much involved here, and I wonder then, if more of us would unite in asking God for these things, if we might not set Him free more frequently to be able to say to the adversary, “Step aside, I’m being asked to do this.” And He could do it. So I believe our prayer set Him free to do this. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, session 15, “Talking To God As A Friend” recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: http://www.pineknoll.org/resources/audio/cag/cag_15.mp3*

You remember Jesus said (and this is in John, you want to really look it up, it’s in the sixteenth chapter of John), “It is right to pray in my name, but don’t do it for the wrong reason.” He said, “You will pray in my name, you will ask in my name, but don’t think that means that I’m going to go to God and plead with Him for you—because the Father loves you Himself!” And you say, “Well, if the Father loves us as much as you do, why should we pray in your name?”

Well, let’s think about what it *doesn’t* mean. It doesn’t mean if I’ve prayed a nice long prayer tonight, say you kneel down, say your prayers at night just before you get in. . . My parents made sure that we did that every night. And my mother used to come by the boys’ bedroom, there were four beds in there and she’d come by the beds and say, “Did you say your prayers? Did you study your lesson? Did you brush your teeth? Did you wash your neck?” (You know, the front might be clean but she wanted to know about the rest of it.) And if you’d say, “Yes, I washed, I washed thoroughly” and she’d say, “Well how come the wash cloth is so dry?” And there might be a little wet spot in the middle. You know, children can sometimes do that. They can wash themselves all over and just have one little wet spot in the middle of the wash cloth. . . you wouldn’t do that. But anyway, my mother would be rather suspicious if that was the case. So we got used to saying our prayers.

And I still have that feeling now. My mother’s been gone for fourteen years, and I wish she’d come tonight when I go to bed, I wish she’d come by my bed and say, “Did you wash your neck? Did you say your prayers? Did you study your lesson? Did you brush your teeth?” I’d love it, I didn’t mind at all.

But when we say our prayers, say tonight, and you pray a beautiful prayer, you might remember some of the things we’ve talked about. You might remember Moses, you might remember the thief on the cross, and you might thank God for some of these things, and then you might ask Him for something. It’s a beautiful prayer. And up in Heaven God is saying, “Now that’s a good prayer! Now angels, get ready to go down and answer that prayer. Right, are you all ready to go?” And then you say, “Amen” and get into bed and God says, “He didn’t end it right! He forgot to say ‘In Jesus’ name’ so wipe it all out, angels, you can go back to bed.

There's no need." Do you think He'd do that? If you don't end a prayer saying "In Jesus' name" He won't answer the prayer?

Well, what if you don't say "Amen" on the end?

COMMENT: He doesn't care. He just wants you.

He doesn't mind! In fact, who says you have to say "Amen" on the end?

COMMENT: Nobody.

You know when they said amen in the Bible? Often in the beginning. When Jesus said, if you know the older Bible, "Verily, verily I say unto you" you know what 'verily, verily' is? Amen, amen. Amen is translated verily. So you can start at the beginning. But if you pray in church next week, say any one of you is asked to pray in the University Church this Sabbath, say the pastoral prayer and you kneel there in front of that mike and you start out and you say "Amen", that's dangerous because the choir will start right away. You know, they have learned to start when the person praying says "Amen". The one who's praying says "Amen", and then the one who's leading the choir thinks it's time to begin the response—so don't start with amen. See, unfortunately 'amen' now means for the choir to get started. And then what it says to the choir to get ready to get started is, "For we ask in Jesus' name". When they hear that, they know to get ready, and then you say "Amen" and the director says, "Hit it" and they all start singing, see. So you've got to be very careful not to put it at the beginning, but that's too bad because that was never the meaning at all. Jesus often said, "Amen, amen I say to you".

I remember one time I had a wedding down in Forest Lawn in that beautiful chapel and there was a lady there who was in charge of all the weddings. And the organist was not a member of our group, that's the way they do it down there. So I was marrying two medical students and the lady in charge said, "I need to have a signal from you as to when the organist should start." And I said, "Well when I say at the end of my prayer 'for I ask this in Jesus' name, amen' that'll be the signal." I was sorry to have to do that but the lady went to the organist and said, "When the minister says 'In Jesus' name, amen' then you start in on the organ." That's all it meant. It's time to play the organ.

Oh, it means a lot more than that! Amen means "I mean it!" see, I mean it, I really mean what I'm saying. You can put that in the beginning or in the middle. And then when you say, "In Jesus' name" what that means is God, if Jesus had not come and revealed the truth and told us what you're like we'd be scared. We wouldn't want to pray. We wouldn't know how to pray. So you might not say the words "In Jesus' name" but inside your head you're saying "thank you for coming. And because Jesus came we are not afraid to come and pray to you."

But it would be too bad if it just became the way of ending a sentence, the way of ending a prayer. It really is an expression of gratitude—God thank you for sending your Son. Thank you for coming, really, yourself in human form because now we know what God is like we're not afraid to pray. We're not afraid to talk with God as to a friend. So really to pray in Jesus' name is to pray to God as a friend and not just to use the words.

So that's its real meaning. If we make it the other way then it's too bad. Like one of my girls came home from school one day and she said "The teacher told us that if we didn't close our eyes during prayer we'd be lost." There are a number of places in the Bible where important people lifted their eyes heavenward and prayed. Now I'm not encouraging you all to leave your eyes open during prayer. The only reason why we close our eyes is we're all such curious people. You know, if you leave your eyes open during prayer we see too many things and it's hard to concentrate. So we close our eyes just to help us think. It isn't that God will answer your prayer if you close your eyes and He won't answer if you open it. I mean, that makes God silly doesn't it. You don't have to close your eyes.

In fact, you could close your eyes and think about the baseball game just as well with your eyes closed. The main thing is, well the Bible says you know, rend your hearts and not your garments. I mean don't do things that are outside, things that are inside are important. So anything that will help us really think and concentrate while we talk to God as with a friend is most appropriate.

Have you ever had a conversation with somebody and while you're talking to the person he's always looking around and doing other things—and how do you feel about that? You know, say you and I were having a chat and all the time I'm doing other things and I'm not looking at you. I'm looking over there. Would you think that was much of a conversation?

COMMENT: No.

It's not very polite, even, is it?

COMMENT: You'd feel like they don't care.

You feel they don't care, you see? And so when we pray to God we do everything we can to shut out everything else, we even kneel when it's appropriate to kneel. Proud people can kneel too. But it may help us; it's become a custom among us. So we close our eyes and we kneel, we bow our heads, but it would be better to be bowing inside, that's what really counts.

COMMENT: Could we pray even just lying in bed?

Blanket prayers? Yes, my mother tried to cure us of that because if it meant we'd forgotten, say, our prayers and we'd hopped into bed—in England it got very cold. The glass of water beside your bed would sometimes freeze by morning. They didn't have any of the central heating systems we have now; there'd be a fireplace in certain rooms. So we'd get very, very cold. So when Mother would come by, "Did you say your prayers?" "No." Then Mother would say, "Out." That even helped us say them before, you know, because it's very hard to get out once you've warmed the sheets and then have to get out and get back in.

However, that was just to help us form a good habit. Is it okay to pray in bed? Have you ever done it? Did you ever wake up at two in the morning and have conversation with God as with a friend? And God says, "Look, until you get out of bed I won't talk to you"?

COMMENT: No.

Would He talk to you in any position?

COMMENT: Yes!

How about poor Jonah in the whale? I mean you can be in all kinds of funny places and have conversations with God. The main thing is what's going on in your head. But if blanket prayers mean, you know, you don't have to be very respectful toward God, that's what's bad. So it all depends what you're thinking about while you're in there. It could be very lovely while you're there. The Bible talks about people standing to pray, all kinds of positions. It's what you're thinking that counts. How do you feel about that? The same? Do you feel that's right?

COMMENT: Kind of, but somehow I get so tired, you know?

Yes. When a person's very tired who's the first one to say you need a rest? Come and have a rest?

COMMENT: God.

Sure! Remember the disciples were tired and He said, "Come, come apart for awhile and have a rest." That's the way He is. When people were hungry He fed them. When they were sick He made them feel better. When they were tired He rested them. He's the one who made us. And if parents want their children to be comfortable, you think God doesn't want us to comfortable? So, this isn't an encouragement to cheat and be careless and irreverent, on the contrary. But if prayer is conversation with God as with a friend you can do it in all kinds of ways, all kinds of ways.

Well, to end on this, if Jesus really is God then we know what God is like and so to pray to the Father in Jesus' name is to pray feeling very grateful that we know what God is like.

I'll never forget one day a tall man, six-foot-four, great big man he was, he came up to me in the book store at the University of Chicago, and he said, "When you pray do you have the feeling there's anybody listening?" Before I replied (because he knew I believed there was somebody listening), he said, "I used to, but I can't anymore." And he felt very sad and very lonely. He was a very wonderful man I was sorry that happened. He even went to the mission field and he died there of a disease in the mission field. When you pray do you sense there's somebody listening?

COMMENT: Yes.

Is He a friendly person?

COMMENT: Yes.

Is He a very, very powerful person?

COMMENT: Yes.

But is there any need to be scared of Him?

COMMENT: No.

That's pretty wonderful, isn't it?

COMMENT: Yes!

And that's what we know to be true about our God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Questions Young People Are Asking About God, number 2-3, recorded August, 1983, Loma Linda, California}

Further Study with Ellen White

Communion with God encourages good thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, and lofty purposes of action. Those who thus connect themselves with God are acknowledged by Him as His sons and daughters. They are constantly reaching higher and still higher, obtaining clearer views of God and of eternity, until the Lord makes them channels of light and wisdom to the world. {MYP 247.1}

All who seek of Him shall find. All who knock will have the door opened to them. The excuse will not be made, Trouble Me not; the door is closed; I do not wish to open it. Never will one be

told, I cannot help you. Those who beg at midnight for loaves to feed the hungry souls will be successful. {COL 148.3}

In the secret place of prayer, where no eye but God's can see, no ear but His can hear, we may pour out our most hidden desires and longings to the Father of infinite pity, and in the hush and silence of the soul that voice which never fails to answer the cry of human need will speak to our hearts. {Pr 182.6}

Those who seek God in secret telling the Lord their needs and pleading for help, will not plead in vain. "Thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly." As we make Christ our daily companion we shall feel that the powers of an unseen world are all around us; and by looking unto Jesus we shall become assimilated to His image. By beholding we become changed. The character is softened, refined, and ennobled for the heavenly kingdom. The sure result of our intercourse and fellowship with our Lord will be to increase piety, purity, and fervor. There will be a growing intelligence in prayer. We are receiving a divine education, and this is illustrated in a life of diligence and zeal. {Pr 183.2}

We may commune with God in our hearts; we may walk in companionship with Christ. When engaged in our daily labor, we may breathe out our heart's desire, inaudible to any human ear; but that word cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard. {Pr 188.1}

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him. {Pr 8.4}

When Jesus was upon the earth, He taught His disciples how to pray. He directed them to present their daily needs before God, and to cast all their care upon Him. And the assurance He gave them that their petitions should be heard, is assurance also to us.—(Steps to Christ, 93.) {Pr 8.5}

We come to God by special invitation, and He waits to welcome us to His audience chamber. The first disciples who followed Jesus were not satisfied with a hurried conversation with Him by the way; they said, "Rabbi, . . . where dwellest Thou? . . . They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day." John 1:38, 39. So we may be admitted into closest intimacy and communion with God. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psalm 91:1. Let those who desire the blessing of God knock and wait at the door of mercy with firm assurance, saying, For Thou, O Lord, hast said, "Everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 131.) {Pr 9.1}

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. “The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son. {SC 100.1}

Jesus said, “Ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you.” “I have chosen you: . . . that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.” John 16:26, 27; 15:16. But to pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning and the ending of a prayer. It is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works. {SC 100.2}.

Every earnest petition for grace and strength will be answered. . . . Ask God to do for you those things that you cannot do for yourselves. Tell Jesus everything. Lay open before Him the secrets of your heart; for His eye searches the inmost recesses of the soul, and He reads your thoughts as an open book. When you have asked for the things that are necessary for your soul’s good, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. {ML 16.4}

The way to the throne of God is always open. You cannot always be on your knees in prayer, but your silent petitions may constantly ascend to God for strength and guidance. When tempted, as you will be, you may flee to the secret place of the Most High. His everlasting arms will be underneath you.—(Counsels on Health, 362.) {Pr 179.4}

Living amid these opposing forces, we may through the exercise of faith and prayer, call to our side a retinue of heavenly angels, who will guard us from every corrupting influence.—(Our High Calling, 23.) {Pr 256.2}

He cares for our necessities, and His love and mercy and grace are continually flowing to satisfy our need.—(Signs of the Times, October 28, 1903.) {Pr 34.5}

“Abide in Me, and I in you.” Abiding in Christ means a constant receiving of His Spirit, a life of unreserved surrender to His service. The channel of communication must be open continually between man and his God. As the vine branch constantly draws the sap from the living vine, so

are we to cling to Jesus, and receive from Him by faith the strength and perfection of His own character. {DA 676.2}

The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual strength to every believer. So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay. {DA 676.3}

Even Your Sages Say

(Submitted by Moderator)

Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays. (Soren Kierkegaard)

Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart. (Mahatma Gandhi)

To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Prayer is simply a two-way conversation between you and God. (Billy Graham)