

PRAYER IN THE LIFE AND TEACHING
OF CHRIST

by
Robert C. Malcolm, B. Sc.

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the Divinity School
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

McMaster University

May 1957

The author holds the following degree:

B. Sc., Honour Mathematics, 1953 (McGill)

Thesis work under the supervision of professor H. W. Lang.

Scope and Contents of Thesis:

An examination of the Synoptic Gospels to discover the meaning of prayer in the life and teaching of Christ with special attention being given to the Lord's Prayer. An introductory chapter deals with prayer in first century Judaism. In the conclusion an attempt is made to relate the practice and teaching of Jesus to the life of the present-day Christian.

PREFACE

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed -
The motion of a hidden fire
That kindles in the breast.

- James Montgomery

The mystery of prayer has been the concern of mankind for centuries. There have been numerous attempts to define prayer and also to deny its validity. Only one Man fully fathomed its depths and grasped its meaning. That Man was Jesus Christ. Through His own life of prayer and through His teaching about prayer, mankind has within his reach the key to this mystery of prayer.

The writer of this thesis feels that a return to the simple, though profound, statements concerning prayer, as found in the Gospels, will solve man's problems about prayer.

Thanks are due to Professor Harold W. Lang for guidance in the choice of a subject and for encouragement and direction during the writing of the thesis. The writer would also like to thank his wife, Margery, for the typing of the thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
 Chapter	
I. PRAYER IN FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM.....	1
Prayer in Corporate Worship	
Prayer in the Home	
Private Prayer	
II. PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.....	8
Times and Places	
Types of Prayer	
The Reality of our Lord's Prayers	
III. PRAYER IN THE TEACHING OF CHRIST.....	19
The Lord's Prayer	
The Parables about Prayer	
The Sayings about Prayer	
CONCLUSION.....	44
APPENDIX.....	50
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	54

CHAPTER I

PRAYER IN FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM

A study of prayer as it was practised and taught by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, must include a consideration of the practice and teaching in the Jewish community. He inherited centuries of Hebrew practice and thought concerning prayer. We must try to see how much of this Jesus transformed into something new and how much He discarded.

Prayer in Corporate Worship

There were two daily public sacrifices in the temple, one in the morning and the other in the evening. This formed the basis of the Jew's worship but was by no means the whole of his religious life. During the presentation, in the temple, of the burnt offering by the priests, the Levites would sing and play on their instruments while two priests would blow silver trumpets. "While this was going on the people were also assembled in the temple for prayer. At the pauses in the singing the priests sounded a fanfare with their trumpets, and as often as they did so the people fell down and worshipped."¹ Thus we see that prayer is at the very centre of Jewish worship. In addition to this, there were set times for prayer, "(1) early in the / morning, at the time of the morning sacrifice; (2) in the afternoon, about the ninth hour (three o'clock),

¹ E. Schürer, A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, trans. S. Taylor and F. Christie (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), Div. II, Vol. 1, 290.

at the time of the evening sacrifice; and (3) in the evening at sunset."²

Prayer in the synagogue was another aspect of the corporate worship of the Jew. The elders of the synagogue were responsible for the general direction of the affairs of the congregation. Besides these, special officers were appointed for special purposes. "But the peculiarity here is, that just for the acts proper to public worship - the reading of the Scriptures, preaching and prayer - no special officials were appointed."³ Although this was the case in theory, it was necessary in practice to nominate an official "who should have the care of external order in public worship and the supervision of the concerns of the synagogue in general - This was the Ruler of the synagogue."⁴ Prayer was one of the chief parts of the synagogue service even though religious instruction in the law was considered the service's main object. The service usually closed with the blessing pronounced by a priest in the congregation to which the congregation responded. "If no / priest were present, the blessing was not pronounced, but made into a prayer."⁵

"In the synagogue service there were three prayers which were solemnly recited at every meeting - the Shema, the Kaddish, and the Eighteen Benedictions (Shemoneh Esreh)."⁶ The first two were not strictly

² Ibid., 290-291.

³ Ibid., Div. II, Vol. 2, 62.

⁴ Ibid., 63.

⁵ Ibid., 82.

⁶ E. F. Scott, The Lord's Prayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 42.

prayers but the third one was the chief Jewish prayer. The Shema was a confession of faith in the unity of God - the very foundation of the Hebrew religion. It consisted of Deut. VI:4-9; XI:13-21; Num. XV:37-41 plus certain benedictions inserted both before and after the Scripture passages and its name is derived from the first few words of the first verse. Thus we speak of "the 'reciting' not the 'praying' of the Shema."⁷

The Kaddish⁸ was divided into two parts, the first before the service as a whole and the second before the address which was usually delivered by a rabbi. "Its purpose was to ensure that those who prayed should wait on God in a mood of reverence."⁹ The Shemone Esreh¹⁰ was a lengthy prayer and the rabbis sanctioned various abridgements to facilitate its use. "In its final, authentic and fixed form it does not consist, as its name... denotes, of eighteen, but of nineteen Barachahs."¹¹ The first parts of the prayer contain personal prayers for knowledge, repentance, forgiveness and health while the last parts contain national prayers.¹²

Although the synagogue had this priority as a place of prayer, any clean and proper place was acceptable when attendance at the synagogue

⁷ E. Schürer, op.cit., Div. II, Vol. 2, 77.

⁸ See Appendix.

⁹ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 42.

¹⁰ See Appendix.

¹¹ E. Schürer, op.cit., Div. II, Vol. 2, 85.

¹² G. F. Moore, Judaism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), II, 213.

was not possible.¹³ On fast days the Jews offered their public prayers in an open space such as at the sea-shore and not in the synagogue.¹⁴ It was customary to stand while praying and only adult males participated in the synagogue service. The washing of the hands was obligatory before prayer. There were five requirements in all which had to be observed before and during prayer. "The cleanness of the hands, the covering of nakedness, the cleanness of the place where the prayer is uttered, the putting away¹⁵ of matters that dissipate the mind, and the fervour of the heart." When praying for the common needs of the group, the plural pronouns 'we' and 'us' were used, not the singulars 'I' and 'me'.¹⁶ "The prayer was not uttered by the whole congregation, but by some one called upon for this office ... by the ruler of the synagogue."¹⁷ The congregation, however, made certain responses. The Book of Psalms was used extensively in the synagogue; "their primary purpose was to express the wonder and exultation which filled the worshippers while standing in his presence."¹⁸ In a strict sense, the Psalms are not prayers but they provided the basis of praise from which prayer is the natural outcome. The essence of

¹³ Ibid., 222.

¹⁴ E. Schürer, op.cit., Div. II, Vol. 2, 72.

¹⁵ Index to Schürer's History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ, trans. J. MacPherson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1890), 93.

¹⁶ G. F. Moore, op.cit., II, 219.

¹⁷ E. Schürer, op.cit., Div. II, Vol. 2, 78.

¹⁸ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 40.

synagogue worship is in its solidarity and corporateness. A man comes to pray, not as an individual, but as a member of God's chosen people.

"Abroad, they turn their faces toward the land of Israel; in the land, towards Jerusalem; in Jerusalem toward the temple; in the temple they direct their thoughts to the holy of holies. Thus all Israelites, wherever they are, pray toward one place and in spirit in one place."¹⁹

Prayer in the Home

Education begins in the home, and there were not homes like those in Israel; it is imparted by influence and example, before it comes by teaching; it is acquired by what is seen and heard, before it is laboriously learned from books; its real object becomes instinctively felt, before its goal is consciously sought. What Jewish fathers and mothers were; what they felt towards their children; and with what reverence, affection, and care the latter returned what they had received, is known to every reader of the Old Testament.²⁰

The home education was started by the mother in early childhood but it was the responsibility of the father to teach the Torah. The Shema was usually the first passage committed to memory but gradually other scripture passages, short prayers and the sayings of the Hebrew sages were added to the course of study. Daily repetition of these made memorization easy. The whole family routine of private and corporate prayer, whether a part of the regular weekly observance or of festive seasons, would influence²¹ the mind and heart of all children.

¹⁹ G. F. Moore, op.cit., II, 222.

²⁰ A. Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1898), I, 227.

²¹ Ibid., I, 229, 230.

The Jewish custom was that no food or drink should be consumed without thanksgiving to God. Grace was said both before and after meals²² with the latter one being the longer. Anyone in the home could say²³ grace, and this privilege was extended to women, children and slaves.

Private Prayer

The two prayers used most were taken from the synagogue service. The Shema was to be recited twice a day by every adult male Israelite. Women, children and slaves were not required to do this.²⁴ The Shemoneh Esreh, commonly called "the prayer", had to be repeated three times a day by everyone, including women, children and slaves.²⁵ There was a heavy emphasis on the externals of the religious life and "even prayer itself, that centre of the religious life, was bound in the fetters of a rigid mechanism."²⁶ The Pharisee of Jesus' day was typical of this extreme emphasis on legalism. In spite of this trend, there were many pious Jews who would seek a time of quiet prior to praying. To such a person, prayer comprised "attention, intention, concentration of mind, devoutness of spirit."²⁷ Prayer was the submission of one's desires to the wisdom of God.

²² G. F. Moore, op.cit., II, 216.

²³ E. Schürer, op.cit., Div. II, Vol. 2, 117.

²⁴ Ibid., 84.

²⁵ Ibid., 85.

²⁶ Ibid., 113.

²⁷ G. F. Moore, op.cit., II, 225.

There was a place for private petitions silently offered at the conclusion of the appointed daily prayers.²⁸ The individual was free to vary the phrasedology and also to extemporize upon its themes.²⁹ This freedom was limited as there was the command to be brief and to avoid long lists of titles for God. Thus we see that Jewish prayers were not just the repetition of a set form but had an element of spontaneity and were based on an inner desire to know God.

This was the environment in which Jesus was reared. Just as we use phrases from the Bible or from a well known hymn writer or poet in our daily conversation, so Jesus used the well known phrases of the religious life of His time. This is not to say that Jesus' prayers are just copies of the synagogue prayers. "Nothing can be more fatal than to leave Jesus himself out of his prayer and to lay all the stress on what he apparently borrowed from prayers already existing."³⁰ Jesus Christ used the language of His own day but He enriched its meaning so that it became new and vital and the very living Word of God.

²⁸ Ibid., 215.

²⁹ Ibid., 227.

³⁰ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 53.

CHAPTER II

PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Our Lord "believed in prayer, told men to pray, and prayed him-
self."¹

Jesus is our pattern in faith and prayer; but it cannot be too clearly understood that no act can be exemplary which is / not first of all dutiful. The human Christ prayed, not in order that He might furnish a model to His disciples, but because to Him prayer was an inward need and duty. So profound and un-manning was His fear in Gethsemane that like the children of men He took refuge under God's shadow, and was heard for His reverent trust.²

Times and Places

The first thing to be noted is the frequency of Christ's praying and the variety of places in which He prayed. A careful study of the Gospels will reveal this. It is common to think so much about Christ's miracles and teaching that one forgets the importance of prayer in His life. The secret of His victorious life is found in His moments of prayer. Most of our Lord's prayers referred to in the records can be called crisis prayers, because they were uttered at crisis points in His life.

The first instance is found in Lk. 3:21. This describes the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the Jordan river. We read that as Jesus came up out of the water, He was praying and that the Holy

¹ T. R. Glover, The Jesus of History (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1917), 106.

² H. R. Mackintosh, The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), 405-406.

Spirit descended on Him in the shape of a dove. According to the original Greek, the descent of the Spirit is made coincident "with the prayer of Jesus, not with His baptism, which has already been completed."³ This crisis point in Christ's life received the seal of God in the voice from heaven which said, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

Many times throughout the Gospel story we read of Christ dismissing the crowds and retiring to a lonely spot for prayer. This is a habit that we today would do well to cultivate in our society that finds expression in and seeks the excitement of crowds:

Here was the hidden spring of the authority and power which struck men with astonishment. With Jesus it was not time cut for prayer. It was time into him for the / re-creation of life, for fresh adjustment to the will of his Father, for replenishment with the life and power of God.⁴

In Lk. 5:16 we read of Jesus healing a leper and the reaction of the crowd in seeking more healings. Why did Jesus want to leave in the face of such an opportunity? The answer can be found in one or all of the following considerations. Jesus saw that the crowd was fickle and only sought physical health. Their motives were too shallow: they wanted something for nothing. Thus Jesus, not seeking to be a popular hero of the crowd, retired to a place of solitude. Another possibility is that Jesus felt His own need for a renewing of power. Therefore He went directly to the source of all life. A third possibility is that Jesus

³ J. H. Creed, The Gospel According to St. Luke (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1930), 57.

⁴ The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951), VIII, 664.

retired to pray because He believed that there was power in prayer itself.⁵

At Mt. 14:23 we read of Jesus going up into a mountain in the evening to pray, after He had fed the multitudes:

We see him there, a kneeling figure. The red gleam fades. He is silhouetted now against the wheels of stars. The silver wheel slowly turns, but still he kneels. His hands are raised in entreaty. His upturned face catches the dim light. Is he speaking now as if God were on the other side of that ledge of rock? Does the sky ever seem brassy to him, his only answer an echo? What is he saying? We may not know: the place is holy ground. We hear the words, "Thy will.... thy will."⁶

Thus we see that our Lord used the aids of nature in His prayer life.

Another example is found in Lk. 6:12 where we read that Christ spends the whole night on a mountain in prayer prior to choosing the twelve disciples. This momentous issue in His life was saturated with prayer. "There, alone and apart from all the distractions of the world below, Jesus let his mind and soul commune with God... He was revealing what prayer at its most intense can be: an undistracted listening to God."⁷

Another crisis point in Christ's life was His transfiguration, (Lk. 9:29). Here again, He was on a mountain in the act of prayer when⁸ "his face was so transfigured that his very garments were luminous." There is no exact analogy between Christ's praying and His transfiguration,

⁵ Ibid., VIII, 104.

⁶ G. A. Buttrick, Prayer (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), 30.

⁷ The Interpreter's Bible, VIII, 114.

⁸ G. A. Buttrick, op.cit., 30.

and our praying and our resulting experience. Yet, "it is in periods of prayer that we are most likely to witness, in whatever measure may be possible for us, the glory of God."⁹ A mountain-top experience is not just the act of going up a mountain: one must go up to pray.

It is also significant to note that Jesus was praying prior to the question He asked His disciples near Caesarea Philippi, (Lk. 9:18). Peter's answer, "The Christ of God," to the question, "But whom say ye that I am?" is one evidence that Christ's prayer was answered.

Luke seems to love to picture Christ at prayer and his Gospel has been called by some the Gospel of the prayer life of Jesus. In chapter eleven, we have the Lord's Prayer and find that it was not just a part of an independent lesson on prayer. We read in verse one that Jesus was in a certain place praying and when He had ceased, one of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Thus we see that this request was prompted by two things. The first was the example of Jesus. Prayer occupied such a central place in His life that the disciples wanted to know its meaning. They had seen the strength He derived from moments of prayer and desired to have the same experience. The second was the example of John the Baptist. John had given a prayer, or prayers to his disciples as a part of his instruction and help in their religious experience. In a like manner, Christ's disciples wanted similar aid from Him.

The tenderness of Jesus is seen in His dealings with children.

⁹ The Interpreter's Bible, VIII, 17b.

In Mt. 19:13, we read of Christ's desire to put His hands on them and to pray for them. The rebuke by the disciples shows that they had many lessons to learn in Christ's school of prayer.

In addition to the many stated instances of prayer, there are some passages in which the prayer of Jesus is implied. In Mt. 7:34 we have the story of Jesus healing the deaf man who had an impediment of speech. The words, "looking up to heaven, he sighed..." seem to refer to an inarticulate prayer, a groaning of the Spirit.¹⁰ Another example is found in Lk. 9:16 and parallel passages. The incident is the feeding of the five thousand when Jesus "took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake..." In view of the Jewish custom of grace at meals, it is only natural to infer that Jesus offered a prayer of thanksgiving here, which was the usual form of blessing.¹¹ There are similar occasions of implied prayer at the breaking of bread at the Last Supper, Mt. 26:26 and parallel passages, and at the meal with the two disciples in Emmaus, Lk. 24:30.

A great prayer of thanksgiving by Jesus is recorded in Mt. 11:25-27 and Lk. 10:21-22. Christ thanks God the Father that the common folk, those who had not been schooled in scribal wisdom, had received the good news. Christ also expresses His consciousness of His oneness with God, His unique Sonship.

¹⁰ A. E. J. Rawlinson, St. Mark (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1925), 102.

¹¹ Ibid., 87.

Earlier in this chapter, reference was made to the many retirements our Lord made for spiritual refreshment and power. The most significant of these was His retirement to the Garden of Gethsemane. Here, He left the disciples, even the three who witnessed the transfiguration, and went off alone to pray. This was the only effective preparation Christ could make for the loneliness of decision and crisis. His prayer as found in all Gospels (Mt. 26:39; Mk. 14:36; Lk. 22:41) can be paraphrased as: "Father, if it be Thy will, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done." This prayer which brought peace to Christ's agonizing soul can truly be called the "Lord's Prayer".¹² It is the heart of all prayer as resting and trusting in God.

Victory through prayer in the Garden was just the preparation for victory through prayer on the Cross. The cry of loneliness, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34) is a quotation from Ps. 22:1. In this cry we are brought face to face with the great spiritual distress which overcame Christ as He hung on the Cross. The agony of the Cross was not just physical pain. This was only a small part of it. The crushing load of man's sin upon Him caused Christ to cry out in this manner. In Lk. 23:34 Christ says, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This prayer of forgiveness shows us that Jesus not only taught us to pray for those who despitely use us, but He is

¹² A. H. McNeile, The Gospel According to St. Matthew (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1915), 390.

the supreme example of putting this into practice. In Lk. 23:46 we have Christ's last words from the Cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." These words from Ps. 31:5 are a fitting conclusion to a hard but victorious, faithful and true life. Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit, He lived a life of prayer in the Spirit and He died with a prayer on His lips. Truly our Lord was a man of prayer.

Types of Prayer

As we come to study the types of prayer Christ used, we are soon aware that He used a great variety. Christ was never at a loss when a situation called for prayer. In this study, His prayers will be grouped into four main types: praise and thanksgiving, petition, intercession and confession. Needless to say, there will be some overlapping.

It is interesting to note that all of His recorded prayers are brief and start with the single word "Father". There are no long introductions or prosy phrases. Each phrase is compact and explicit.

Each time Christ retired to a solitary place to pray, we may be sure that a proportion of the time was given to praise and thanksgiving. At His baptism and transfiguration, we have scenes which glorify God. Prior to the breaking of bread, either at regular meal time or on special occasions, Jesus always lifted His eyes to heaven and gave thanks. In His prayer of thanksgiving in Mt. 11:25-27 Jesus starts with a cry of praise, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou

¹³ It is interesting to note that Stephen followed his Lord in a similar experience, Acts. 7:60.

hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Christ praises God that some have received the good news of God's redemptive love. The fact that the untutored are more receptive than the tutored is cause for thanksgiving. The self-satisfied cannot be helped, but those who know they have a need and are willing to let God meet it bring joy to the Saviour's heart. The assurance that this is good in God's sight is Christ's possession. The prayer closes with a declaration of God's self-revelation in Christ. He is aware of the unique relationship as Son which He has to the Father. He is conscious of the fact that man can and must know God through Himself. This prayer reveals Christ's mission in the world besides being a prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Petition also has a real place in Christ's prayers. It cannot be said that He prayed for selfish reasons because His prayers as well as His actions brought Him to Calvary. "The fact remains that Jesus asked nothing for himself except daily bread, strength in the testing, and grace to reveal God to the world,"¹⁴ He spent a whole night in prayer asking God to guide Him in choosing the twelve disciples. Each prayer uttered while alone would undoubtedly include a petition for strength and guidance for the trials that lay ahead. The most familiar prayer of petition is that which was lifted heavenward in the Garden of Gethsemane. The fact that Jesus was calm and peaceful when He was taken prisoner is proof that His prayer was answered. The events of the following days only add to

¹⁴ G. A. Buttrick, op.cit., 36.

this certainty. Christ lived by prayer in the presence of God.

As we would expect, intercession also is present in the prayers of Christ. Every time He stretched forth His hand to heal a sick body or mind, He lifted His heart to God in prayer. He became the mediator between the sick person and the Great Physician. Through the medium of prayer, divine healing was directed to the afflicted. Jesus prayed for an individual by name only once, according to the Gospel record. This man was Simon Peter and the fact was revealed at the Last Supper. Christ knew that a time of great testing was awaiting His disciples, especially Peter, and so was impelled to pray for him. The coming scene of Peter denying Him three times was vivid in Christ's mind. Therefore He prayed that Peter's faith would not fail and when he had repented of his denials, that he would be used in the strengthening of his fellow disciples. History has proved without a doubt that this intercessory prayer by Christ for Peter was heard and answered. Among the last words of our Lord while on the Cross were those in which He interceded for the Roman soldiers. They were ignorant of the significance of the deed which they had been commanded to carry out. The loving Saviour lifted His heart to the Father and prayed for their forgiveness, "for they know not what they do." Christ also prayed for the children who gathered around Him. We have no record of the content of these prayers but it is likely that Christ prayed that these young lives would find their right place in God's will. Although this thesis is limited to the Synoptic Gospels, it is permissible to overstep the bounds here. Our Lord's great prayer in John 17 is a

classic example of intercessory prayer. Christ prays for His disciples and the Church and for her unity in this immortal passage.

It is surely significant that prayers of confession are nowhere found in the records of Christ's prayer life. It is stated in several places in the New Testament that Christ, although tempted as we are, did no sin, (see e.g., Heb. 4:15; I Pet. 2:22). In view of such statements it is not surprising that the Gospels record no prayer of confession from His lips. Since His life was without sin in thought and deed He had no need for personal confession.

The Reality of our Lord's Prayers

The question raised in the preceding paragraph merits further comment because of its importance to this chapter and even to this thesis as a whole. The question centres around the fact and nature of the Incarnation and can be stated as follows: Did Jesus really need to pray? Since Christ was God in the flesh, was His praying just an example to enforce His teaching, or was it a vital necessity to His life as a victorious and complete whole?

Our Lord's personal prayers were necessary and essential to His earthly ministry. This is a rather abrupt statement but it is by no means a rash one and it is one that is justified by the evidence of the Gospels. Our Lord's awful struggle in the Garden of Gethsemane "is in no sense incongruous with the power that dwelt in Him; for prayer is the one source of power. He is so great amongst men because of that secret communion.

Apart from God, He has no thoughts, no desires, no will.¹⁵ In other words, "No Christology is true which makes a Christ for whom prayer is either unnatural or impossible."¹⁶

We must admit that the secret of Jesus' power lay in His unceasing trust in God. This trust was born of communion with God and was nourished by a life of prayer. We cannot separate Christ's praying from His life. This is not obvious to a great many people. The majority today hail Christ's Golden Rule as the answer to our problems. "But do they pray?"¹⁷ Humanitarians proclaim Him as the champion of the outcast and the poor. But do they pray? Poets and writers see in Him a master of the language. But do they pray? Strong men see in Him a virile Christ. But do they pray? "It has become a fashion to acknowledge his sovereign character, his white and gleaming ethic, his courage to expose and resist the heavy lies of trade and statescraft, his love unto death - and meanwhile ignore his praying."¹⁸ We cannot rightly proclaim Christ in these varied ways if we ignore His prayers.

Jesus is the only fully rational soul, for he only is fully delivered from the insanity of selfishness. He is mighty... He is creative... He is eternal... With the pigments of time and on the stucco walls of earth he has painted God for all men to see. The open secret is: His days were steeped in prayer. The missing word is God, and only by prayer can we find it.¹⁹

¹⁵ H. R. Mackintosh, op.cit., 399.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ G. A. Buttrick, op.cit., 30.

¹⁸ Ibid., 31.

¹⁹ Ibid., 40.

CHAPTER THREE

PRAYER IN THE TEACHING OF CHRIST

Prayer is a necessity of the spiritual life. Jesus knew this well and, therefore, He consciously and deliberately taught His disciples the meaning of prayer. His teaching bore weight because His own experience of prayer lay behind all He said. Jesus knew man and his makeup and could see his weak points. He thus directed His teaching toward the fulfilling of these wants in man's life. In the prayer life, these wants are three: the want of ideas, of words and of faith.¹ Jesus had the solution and gave it to His disciples so that they became men of prayer. These faithful disciples handed on their experience and so we today may possess the solution to the same wants in our prayer life. Jesus answered the first two of these wants in the Lord's Prayer. Note, however, that the thoughts and words contained in this prayer were "meant to be an aid to inexperienced disciples, not a rule imposed on apostles."² They were to learn to use this as a pattern. Then,

Filled with / the Spirit, enlarged in heart, mature in spiritual understanding, they should then be able to pray as their Lord had prayed when He was with them; and while the six petitions of the model prayer would still enter into all their supplications at the throne of grace, they would do so only as the alphabet of a language enters into the most extended and eloquent utterances of a speaker, who never thinks

¹ A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1877), 52.

² Ibid., 54.

of the letters of which the words he utters are composed.

Thus we see that the Lord's Prayer was not meant to be a stereotyped prayer, although it is of permanent value as an integral part of Christ's teaching. Take for example the petition, "Thy Kingdom come". Here we have a great idea expressed in the simplest of words. Many people have written volumes trying to expand these words. How difficult it is to find acceptable terms for these profound thoughts! Only those, who through much prayer and study have formed for themselves a clear conception of the spiritual realm, can teach us further about this petition. Even these thoughts leave something to be desired and we are once more thrown back on the simple but profound words, "Thy Kingdom come".

The third want, that of faith, was answered in Christ's teaching that God hears and answers prayer. The lesson of perseverance sought to remove one of the main obstacles on the road to faith in prayer. This chapter will deal with Christ's answers to the problems that face men in their prayer life.

The Lord's Prayer

Here, in one compact package, are the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, and of the stories and parables Jesus told in the homes and fields of Galilee and on the street corners of Jerusalem; here can be found the convictions and beliefs that made him the servant of mankind, gave him the power to heal and to save, led him to the victory of Easter. And the beauty of it is that it is given to us, not in cold and formal theology of a carefully considered creed, but in the warm and devotional

³ Ibid., 54-55.

terms of spontaneous prayer.⁴

In one sense, the Lord's Prayer is not strictly a prayer. "It is rather the expression of absolute trust in God, who reigns in heaven and is yet our Father, who is ever mindful of us and whose will we are meant to live by."⁵ Prayer "is not a method of obtaining from God certain benefits which he is withholding. It is an effort, rather, to learn what he wishes to give, so that we may accept it willingly."⁶ This, according to Christ, is the real essence of prayer. The Lord's Prayer is a concrete example of Christ's whole conception of what a prayer should be, including its petitions and framework and the right attitude of mind.⁷

It is individual in its spirit and purpose, as a study of the petitions will reveal. However, it is at the same time communal because "it touches what is deepest in the hearts of all men, and is therefore most personal to each one of them."⁸ There is no room for selfishness in the heart of the praying Christian. "This feeling of sympathy with those around us, even when we pray for ourselves, was for Jesus one of the primary conditions of true prayer."⁹

⁴ J. F. Scott, The Religion of the Lord's Prayer (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946), 7-8.

⁵ E. F. Scott, The Lord's Prayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 76.

⁶ Ibid., 77.

⁷ Ibid., 8.

⁸ Ibid., 81.

⁹ Ibid., 82.

In chapter one, we concluded that our Lord's prayers were coined in the language of the market-place. In this way, all who heard His teaching would readily understand to a certain degree. If this is the case, then how can we speak of Christ's teaching, and in particular the Lord's Prayer, as being original? Originality is not the breaking away from the old or an innovation. It is a deeper understanding of the old or a return to the purity of the past. The great reformers of the Christian Church were original in this sense. Of them it was said:

They have turned away from later novelties to the word of scripture, to the example / of the primitive church, to the teaching of Jesus himself. Their aim has been to recover a truth which has always been present beneath the errors which have crept in from time to time. This has been their originality - They gave something new because they had a deeper insight into that which was old.¹⁰

Christ was original in this sense but He went beyond it. He transformed the meaning of prayer as He went back to the very root of true prayer. He removed the shadows of time and corruption. Jesus had no desire to teach the disciples an entirely new prayer. Man's need is always the same and so He used the familiar language and some of the familiar phrases of the day. The Lord's Prayer is not a collection of old Jewish prayers yet it includes some of them. Christ took these, remoulded them with His own unique ones, and made the prayer an indivisible unit. The Lord's Prayer is so called because it is our Lord's prayer.

¹⁰ Ibid., 50-59.

11

Our Father. Jesus gives a new meaning to this well-known

Jewish phrase. Never again can it be used just by the Hebrew Nation.

It has no racial or national boundaries. Christ uttered this simple yet profound phrase "out of a glowing experience and out of a settled conviction."¹²

God is Father in three senses. Firstly, He is Father of all creation and thus plays no favorites. He is objective reality and the pulse of the universe. He is both transcendent and immanent. Our Lord means for us to declare our faith in such a Father whenever we pray these words. Secondly, God is the Father of all those who come to Him through faith in Christ. As Christians we address God as Our Father, not Our

13

First Cause. God is personal, He is not an abstract idea. It is in this sense that the Lord's Prayer is to be prayed. Only a Christian can truly pray Our Father, even Our Father of Creation.

The knowledge of God's Father-love is the first and simplest, but also the last and highest lesson in the school of prayer. It is in the personal relation to the living God, and the personal conscious fellowship of love with Himself that our prayer begins. It is in the knowledge of God's Fatherliness, revealed by the Holy Spirit, that the power of prayer will be found to root and grow.¹⁴

Thirdly, God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This unique Father

¹¹ For the purpose of this thesis, the longer version of the Lord's Prayer, as found in Mt. 6:9-13, will be used rather than the shorter one in Lk. 11:2-4.

¹² J. F. Scott, op.cit., 12.

¹³ Ibid., 14.

¹⁴ A. Murray, With Christ in the School of Prayer (New York: The Merckon Co., n.d.), 36.

and Son relationship is found in Christ's prayer of thanksgiving. It is because of this relationship that our relationship with Christ enables us to pray "Our Father".

Who art in heaven. "God is also the Lord of Heaven and / earth,¹⁵ holy and righteous, demanding justice and obedience to his moral laws." In other words, God is not just like a loveable and sentimental grandfather. He is transcendent as well as near; He is love, but He is also holy and just. Jesus saw that a one-sided view of God was prevalent and so in this prayer, He balances the scales between God's mercy and holiness. The question has been asked concerning Christ, "Was he unlike God when he drove the money-changers out of the Temple, scathingly denounced the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, demanded sacrifice of his would-be followers,¹⁶ and told the parables of the barren fig tree and the last judgment?"¹⁷ We can only answer this question in the negative in the light of the Lord's Prayer. The Father "in heaven" is transcendent and we need to approach Him in reverence, i.e., in awe, adoration, love and devotion. We need to bow down before the high and holy God.

Hallowed be thy name. The first thing that strikes us here is the order that the prayer is taking. Jesus reverses the usual order we use in bringing our personal requests first. He tells us to pray "Thy name, Thy kingdom, Thy will; then, give us, forgive us, lead us, deliver

¹⁵ J. F. Scott, op.cit., 21-22.

¹⁶ Ibid., 24.

¹⁷ Ibid., 29.

¹⁸ us." God must be first in all is the lesson here. The word "holy" had no moral meaning in the beginning, it had the idea of separation from the world. God worked in many ways in the world, some of them were inexplicable and so God came to be called holy. The chief attribute of God, however, was His righteousness. This situation caused the word holy to take on an ethical meaning. "But while holiness became another name for saintliness it still denoted a separation."¹⁹ Men can only share in God's holiness if they separate themselves from all evil. The word "name" also needs some explanation. In ancient thought, the personality of a man was bound up with his name. "God himself was in his Name... the name of God means God in his divine office."²⁰ The new name which Christ gives us in the Lord's Prayer is Father. This name Father includes the Old Testament name, Holy, in its all-inclusive meaning of Love. Now let us see what the phrase as a whole means. On the one hand, it means that God Himself hallows His name. He is His own revelation. On the other hand, it means that God is hallowed through His people.²¹ "The Spirit of the Father is the Holy Spirit; it is only when we yield ourselves to be led of Him, that the name will be hallowed in our prayers and our lives."²² This hallowing of God's name is the responsibility of all Christians.

¹⁸ A. Murray, op.cit., 37.

¹⁹ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 88.

²⁰ Ibid., 87.

²¹ Ibid., 89.

²² A. Murray, op.cit., 38.

There are no ceremonies or customs or rites that have to be enacted, just the living of a holy life before God and man. "So the petition, in the last resort, is one of self-dedication."²³

Tny kingdom come. The kingdom of God was one of the constant emphases of Christ's preaching. The key to the Sermon on the Mount is found in one of its phrases, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mt. 6:33). "It seems strange that no mention is made in any of the traditional creeds of what was so important a feature of Jesus' teaching."²⁴ This is probably one of the reasons why so many people today know so little about the kingdom of God.

The idea was not new. It was found in Judaism where it meant political freedom, material prosperity and military might in the Promised Land where everything was to be under the rule of God.²⁵ Christ gave the idea its true interpretation when He preached about the kingdom. When He came to earth, the kingdom of God began to exist. All those who trusted in Him became subjects in the kingdom. The kingdom of God on earth is not a realm but a reign of God on earth. Wherever He is allowed to reign supreme in men's hearts, there is the kingdom of God.

This present idea of the kingdom, however, is not to be equated

²³ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 90.

²⁴ J. F. Scott, op.cit., 34.

²⁵ Ibid., 35.

with any ecclesiastical body. Truth, as it is found in the Bible, is usually given in paradoxes and there is no exception here. With the idea of the kingdom's being here and now amongst us, there is the future idea of the kingdom. The hope in a future kingdom of God as a cataclysmic event in history seems to be the main idea here in the Lord's Prayer. Christ bids us to pray for the coming of the kingdom. Our hope in this future event fills the present with a new significance. In this sense, we are saved by hope in the fulfilment of God's promises, (Ro. 8:26).

The coming of the kingdom is the one great event on which the revelation of the Father's glory, the blessedness of His children, the salvation of the world, depends. On our prayers, too, the coming of the kingdom waits. Shall we not join in the deep longing cry of the redeemed: "Thy kingdom come?"²⁶

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. This petition can mean on the one hand that God will assert His will whatever the forces that oppose or hinder it. Or, on the other hand, it can mean that we ought to pray to know and obey His will and so become agents for its fulfilment.²⁷ Too often we apply this petition to the endurance of the will of God. Every time tragedy strikes unexpectedly, we say, "Thy will be done", without thinking whether it is or is not God's will. If we were to think many of these things through, we should be compelled to say that it is often man's rebellion against God's will that causes them. This petition means not only something to be borne but also something to

²⁶ A. Murray, op.cit., 39.

²⁷ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 95.

²⁸
 be done. In heaven, God's will is done and Christ urges His disciples to follow the example of heaven. Angels and ministering spirits fulfil God's will in heaven. The only way it can be done on earth is through God's servants. We need to pray with our lips and our lives. "As the will is done, the kingdom of heaven comes into the heart. And wherever faith has accepted the Father's love, obedience accepts the Father's will."²⁹

The sequence of the petitions are such that one leads into the other. The kingdom and will of God are just the two sides of the same coin. We see in this petition the true spirit of obedience which is in childlike prayer. The Christian should be ready "to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do thy will."³⁰

Give us this day our daily bread. From this petition to the end of the prayer, man and his needs become the centre. It is not a division of the prayer but just a natural progression. "Consecration to God and His will gives wonderful liberty in prayer for temporal things; the whole earthly life is given to the Father's loving care."³¹ This petition is not a magic formula for anything we desire but it means that "God is

²⁸ J. F. Scott, op.cit., 45.

²⁹ A. Murray, op.cit., 39.

³⁰ J. F. Scott, op.cit., 111.

³¹ A. Murray, op.cit., 40.

concerned about how people get bread and how much they have." ³² It primarily refers to our daily meals but can be extended to include spiritual food. Jesus gave a sacred significance to ordinary bread. "At the Last Supper, when he wanted a symbol of his own great act of sacrifice, 'he took bread and blessed it, giving thanks'." ³³ Our Lord was not an ascetic who despised the body and its material needs. "He bade us pray for them, acknowledging that they came from God." ³⁴ We should ask for a sufficient supply day by day and never ask for an excess. ³⁵ The following three thoughts will help to bring the preceding discussion to a focus. Firstly, whatever concerns us concerns God. Christ never had a distinction between sacred and secular needs. He is interested in every facet of our life. Secondly, all things in the world really belong to God. He only allows us to use them as labourers in His vineyard. Thirdly, the words of this petition are "us" and "our", not "me" and "my". ³⁶ No man lives unto himself.

³² J. F. Scott, op.cit., 59.

³³ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 97.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ The Greek word, ἐπιούριον, which is commonly translated "daily", is unknown in Greek literature outside of Mt. 6:11 and Lk. 11:3. The word does not mean 'daily' but its precise meaning is uncertain. It is found in a document from Egypt in a context which suggests the meaning 'daily rations'. Scholars, however, are not agreed whether in the Gospels it means 'for today' or 'for tomorrow'. The best translation would seem to be 'for the coming day'. Therefore the petition would say, "Give us this day our bread for the coming day."

³⁶ J. F. Scott, op.cit., 60.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. "To feel ourselves right with God is just as necessary as to be sustained in life, and we must ask for his forgiveness from day to day as we ask for our bread."³⁷ Debts or trespasses are our sins of commission and omission, our deliberate acts, not our inherent sin. The important and significant fact here is that God is a forgiving God. His forgiveness, however, is a conditioned forgiveness. The first condition is the repentance of sin. This "means a change of heart and mind, a turning away and cutting loose from the evil (whatever it may be), squaring ourselves with God and starting off anew."³⁸ The second condition follows from the first. "Such forgiveness as a living experience is impossible without a forgiving spirit to others; as forgiven expresses the heavenward, so forgiving the earthward, relation of God's child."³⁹ We really pray that we may have the forgiving spirit in us. There is no idea here of bargaining with God for so much of His forgiveness to us for so much of ours to another man. It is the spirit of true forgiveness for which Christ bids us to pray. He is speaking to the individual within the Christian community in the Lord's Prayer. Christ is not calling on a church or a nation to exercise some vague corporate forgiveness. He requires us to examine our own feelings and actions and then ask ourselves whether we have the right to be forgiven.⁴⁰

³⁷ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 99.

³⁸ J. F. Scott, op.cit., 75.

³⁹ A. Murray, op.cit., 40.

⁴⁰ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 30.

And lead us not into temptation. This does not imply that God tempts us and leads us into evil ways and that we are pleading with Him not to do it. God does not entice us to do evil. Better wordings of this phrase, from the Aramaic spoken by Christ, are, "Let us not yield to temptation", or "Grant that we fail not in the time of testing".^{l1} "Thus it is a prayer for strength to overcome rather than a begging of God not to plague us."^{l2} Temptation means trial, any experience which is hard to bear. This petition is not to be used as a licence to sin in the time of trial but is a plea to God to help us to break away from sinful habits. God does not tempt man nor cause him to stumble.^{l3} Temptation can be like a chastening rod which purifies the child of God. No man should be so sure of himself that he dismisses this petition as irrelevant for himself. It is just when we presume too much on our own strength that we fall and fall hard. Christ is not only thinking of the lower passions of greed, self-interest and sensuality but also of misfortunes, bereavements, ingratitude of friends and the like.^{l4} These latter very often are the cause of many failures in Christians who do not put Christ first in everything. I Cor. 10:12 is very appropriate here, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

^{l1} J. F. Scott, op.cit., 90.

^{l2} Ibid.

^{l3} In the Epistle of James we have this thought, plus the one that whoever endures temptation without yielding shall receive the crown of life.

^{l4} E. F. Scott, op.cit., 106.

This petition has two important implications. The first is that temptation is universal. Both individuals and groups, in all types of life, are subjected to trials of some sort or another. The picture would indeed be bleak were it not for the second implication which says that temptation can be overcome.

But deliver us from evil. No man is sinless, therefore this petition cannot be overlooked by any man. Every man must pray this prayer because every man has already yielded to temptation. It is not a plea to God to protect us from the rough edges of life but to keep us from doing evil. Christ "meant that His followers should do something about this problem of evil - not discuss how evil came into the world and why it is here."⁴⁵ We should all know that the origin of evil or sin was in man's rebellion against God's sovereignty. How and when this took place does not alter the fact of sin here and now. Philosophising on the origin of sin only adds to its problem. Christ wants us to be part of the answer, not part of the problem. Elsewhere in His teaching we find how we can become part of the answer. We must give ourselves to God and let His Spirit fill us with the courage and strength needed to overcome evil in our life and in the world. The evil Christ speaks of here is both physical and spiritual. In many ways these are interrelated. Physical evils like sickness, poverty, disaster and oppression all too often crush the spirit in us and leave us defeated totally. Christ went about healing the sick in His earthly ministry because He saw the close connection between man's

⁴⁵ Ibid., 107.

body and spirit.⁴⁶ In the light of this, surely we shall be compelled to pray more urgently, "Deliver us from evil". But we are to remember that:

The prayer for bread and pardon must be accompanied by the surrender to live in all things in holy obedience to the Father's will, and the believing prayer in everything to be kept by the power of the indwelling Spirit from the power of the evil ones.⁴⁷

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

⁴⁸ Amen. This doxology or hymn of praise was not in the original prayer as Christ taught it. It was added by the early Christians as "a solemn ascription of praise to God".⁴⁹ When praying in a public service of witness, it served as a declaration of faith in the living God. The kingdom of God is the kingdom of righteousness; it shall endure for ever. The power of God is the power of love; it is the power unto victory. The glory of God is the glory of service, not the glitter of gold, nor the pomp of power, nor the pride of learning.⁵⁰ Great as these words are, the key word is "Thine". It is God's kingdom, power and glory which He shares with us in Christ, not ours in our own right. It is very probable that this doxology was derived from David's farewell prayer found in

⁴⁶ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 107, 108.

⁴⁷ A. Murray, op.cit., 41.

⁴⁸ The doxology does not appear in the following manuscripts: Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Bezae. The fourth century Latin version of Jerome - the Vulgate - does not have it either.

⁴⁹ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 109.

⁵⁰ J. F. Scott, op.cit., 114, 115.

I Chr. 29:10f. " 'Amen' was the Hebrew word for certainty, and was used⁵¹ to express a full assent to a statement made." The response which Christ wants of all men is that of personal faith in Himself.

Children of God, it is thus Jesus would have us to pray to the Father in heaven. Oh, let His Name, and Kingdom, and Will, have the first place in our love; His providing, and pardoning, and keeping love will be our sure portion. So the prayer will lead us up to the true child-life; the Father all to the child, the Father all for the child. We shall understand how Father and child, the Thine and the Our, are all one, and how the heart that begins its prayer with the God-devoted THINE, will have the power in faith to speak out the OUR, too. Such prayer will, indeed, be the fellowship and interchange of love, always bringing us back in trust and worship to Him who is not only the beginning, but the end...

⁵²
LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY

The Parables about Prayer

"Jesus was not a scholastic carefully framing philosophic definitions of the Godhead. He was an artist painting on the glowing canvass of His parables unforgettable pictures to quicken our dull spirits to a sense of the Divine."⁵³ This is nowhere more true than in the three parables concerning prayer. The pictures portrayed are vivid scenes which easily become engraved in our minds.

The first of these parables is found in Lk. 11:5-8. It is about a man who unexpectedly has a friend come to his home near midnight. He

⁵¹ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 110.

⁵² A. Murray, op.cit., 41.

⁵³ G. A. Buttrick, The Parables of Jesus (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1931), 170.

does not have any provisions with which to feed his friend and so he goes next door to his neighbour to ask for some food. As he knocks on the door he hears a gruff voice, "Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee." The friend continues to knock shamelessly until his neighbour opens the door, even if he does it just to stop the noise. Once the door is open the neighbour willingly gives to his importunate friend all that he needs. This parable is in direct contrast to the story of the Good Samaritan; the former pictures a "neighbour" who is not a neighbour while the latter pictures a "foreigner" who is a neighbour.⁵⁴ "The parable teaches its lesson by contrasting the reluctance of the selfish friend who has to be roused by importunate asking with the willingness of the bountiful God."⁵⁵ As children of the loving Father in Heaven we have the utmost liberty in approaching Him for our needs and also in intercession for others.⁵⁶

In Lk. 18:1-6 another parable on prayer is found. Christ pictures for us the "dogged resolve of an unbefriended widow pleading before a heartless judge".⁵⁷ The situation is real and practical and far from being idealistic. The judge who is of unprincipled character "feared not God, neither regarded man". He acts on the basis of self-love.

⁵⁴ J. A. Findlay, Jesus and His Parables (London: The Epworth Press, 1951), 64.

⁵⁵ J. McNICOL, The New Bible Commentary, ed. F. Davidson (Chicago: The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, 1953), 852.

⁵⁶ A. Murray, op.cit., 68.

⁵⁷ G. A. Buttrick, Prayer (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), 33.

Everything he does is twisted so that it is advantageous to himself.

On the other side of this magistrate's bench is a widow - friendless, destitute, weak and poor. She depicts a person with the least possible prospect of success in her plea. Thus she represents the "people of God in their most forlorn plight, overborne by an unbelieving, godless world, and apparently forgotten even of their God."⁵⁸ The parable tells us that there is hope even here. There were three ways to deal with these corrupt judges in the East. For obvious reasons the widow could neither intimidate nor bribe him. She was left therefore, with one course of action - to bother the judge with continuous pleading. The judge tried to put her off with smooth words, but in vain. It became apparent to him that he might lose face over this incident, besides becoming weary of hearing the widow's pleas. Thus, in spite of justice, he is won to the widow's side and vindicates her in some trumped up charge against her. The argument of the parable can be summed up as follows: "If an unrighteous judge will give a just judgment in the case of a helpless widow in whom he has no interest, because of her ceaseless pleading, how much more will the holy God answer the unwearied cry for justice of His own chosen people?"⁵⁹ Once again, therefore, we have Christ's teaching presented by contrast.

A parable is an illustrated story meant to give spiritual truth in ordinary language. Ordinarily a parable had one point and therefore

⁵⁸ A. B. Bruce, The Parabolic Teaching of Christ (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1882), 160.

⁵⁹ J. McMichael, op.cit., 857.

should not be pressed for lessons in every detail. The two parables on prayer discussed already have one and the same point. Their specific purpose is to teach that God will honour patient, persistent and persevering prayer. Sometimes God may appear to us as a sleeping neighbour or as an unjust judge when our faith is being tried. "We dimly / discern that the delays of Heaven are for our sake. While we plead with importunity our patience is perfected, our humility deepened, our purposes clarified and purged of dross. While the door is closed we learn 'to desire earnestly the best gifts'."⁶⁰

It is when the answer to prayer does not come, and the promise we are most firmly trusting appears to be of none effect, that the trial of faith, more precious than of gold, takes place. It is in this trial that the faith that has embraced the promise is purified and strengthened and prepared in personal holy fellowship with the living God to see the glory of God. It takes and holds the promise until it has received the fulfilment of what it had claimed in a living truth in the unseen but living God.⁶¹

The third parable concerning prayer is found in Lk. 18:9-13. Here we overhear the private prayers of two men in the temple, one a Pharisee and the other a publican. Both men are sincere in what they say, there is no adulteration of the truth. The Pharisee, proud and bold, does not seek forgiveness but tells God what a fine fellow he is. First he lists the vices from which he abstains; then he lists his positive pious acts. His problem was his wrong attitude to God. "He thought of Him as a Taskmaster, and of religion as a profit and loss account in the Bank of Heaven. He

⁶⁰ G. A. Buttrick, The Parables of Jesus, 174-175.

⁶¹ A. Murray, op.cit., 73.

was piling up an accumulation of 'good deeds'." ⁶² The tax collector, "standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." This was more of a cry than a prayer. "Both men were alike in going up to the temple to pray, but quite different in the spirit and purpose of their prayers." ⁶³ The Pharisee in his self-sufficiency was not heard by God, but the publican in his humility was heard and answered. Crashaw sums up the parable in a poem:

Two went to pray! O rather say
One went to brag - the other to pray:
One stands up close and treads on high,
Where the other dare not send his eye;
One nearer to God's altar trod,
The other to the altar's God. ⁶⁴

The Sayings about Prayer

Our Lord urged His disciples to pray. He impressed on them the fact that God hears and answers prayer, (Mt. 7:7f). Prayer was a real source of power to Him. It was anything but auto-suggestion, devotional ritual, and the like. ⁶⁵

Jesus spoke both negatively and positively concerning prayer. He told His disciples to beware of the practices of the scribes and Pharisees.

⁶² H. Martin, The Parables of the Gospels (London: S. C. M. Press, 1953), 198.

⁶³ J. McMichael, op.cit., 857.

⁶⁴ H. Martin, op.cit., 195.

⁶⁵ H. Branscomb, The Teachings of Jesus (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1931), 268.

They prayed, not always from their hearts, but often from a desire to be seen publicly in this act, (Mt. 23:5). Their long prayers were full of vain repetitions and babble. "Jesus condemns their enjoyment of publicity",⁶⁶ as well as their idle sayings to lengthen their prayers. Jesus, on the other hand, teaches us to enter into our room and then pray sincerely and simply to our Father who is in heaven, (Mt. 6:6). True prayer is a cry from the heart, not rhetoric. It is brief and to the point.

Jesus bids men to pray for others and on a particular occasion He singled out their enemies, abusers and persecutors as subjects for prayer, (Mt. 5:44). Intercession is a real privilege in prayer. It is a time when God can be petitioned on behalf of others in need. "Intercession has mighty power; it is the channel chosen by God for raising up leaders in the Christian cause."⁶⁷ There is only one place in the Gospels where Jesus asks His disciples to pray directly for His work. He asks them to pray that God will raise up reapers to help in the harvest for the kingdom of God, (Mt. 9:38). The disciples were not only to be harvesters themselves but also to pray for more labourers. A full life consists of work and prayer blended into a perfect unity. Prayer is in no sense a substitute for work but a supplement to it.

Jesus quoted from Is. 56:7 and Jer. 7:11 in His saying concerning

⁶⁶ A. H. M'Neile, The Gospel According to St. Matthew (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1915), 75.

⁶⁷ G. A. Buttrick, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951), VII, 362.

the temple as a house of prayer, (Mt. 21:13). This was a new concept since the temple was chiefly linked to ritual sacrifice. God had made it a house of prayer but man made it a den of thieves.

There is a place for both individual and corporate prayer. Neither is given priority but circumstances make private prayer more practical in most cases. This is probably one reason why Jesus spoke definitely concerning corporate prayer. In effect He said, "You can pray with My full endorsement because you are Mine, especially when two to you are united as Mine; the Father will hear you, because when you pray, I pray." (Mt. 18:19).⁶⁸ The disciples were encouraged to pray corporately because there was virtue and power in spiritual unity.

Jesus said in Mt. 18:20, that where two or three are gathered together "in His name", He is present with them in His Spirit. This by no means denies the personal communion of one person with his Lord. The underlying truth in this saying is that a person must pray in humility and in the very nature of Christ. "Any request which is consistent with His character and office, as represented by His name, may be made to His Father, with confidence that the prayer will be heard."⁶⁹ When the disciples prayed in the name of Jesus they claimed and used His authority in approaching God the Father. They made their requests in accordance with the will of God. This asking in a deeper sense was the essence of

⁶⁸ A. H. M'Neile, op.cit., 268.

⁶⁹ A. Plummer, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, ed. J. Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), II, 393.

the teaching of Jesus. He also assured them of the joy of receiving an answer, (Mt. 18:19).⁷⁰

Thus was given... not a mere devotional form, but a new ground on which the worshipper stands; a new plea for the success of his petitions; and, in fact, a wholly new character to prayer, since it must be brought into unison with the mind of Him in whose name it is presented.⁷¹

This idea received fuller treatment in the Gospel of John and is included here only because the seed of the complete teaching is found in the Synoptics.

The spirit and attitude of the believer in prayer is all-important. He must have a forgiving spirit and, in a sense, he can only fully know God's forgiveness if he possesses this and forgives others, (Mt. 6:14,15). The forgiving spirit in the believer is God's forgiving Spirit. This, however, does not make God's willingness to forgive the repentant sinner dependent on the sinner's forgiveness of others.

Jesus said many things concerning prayer and faith and their interdependence, (Mt. 21:22).

Of all the mysteries of the prayer-world, the need of persevering prayer is one of the greatest. That the Lord, who is so loving and longing to bless, should have to be supplicated time after time, sometimes year after year, before the answer comes, we cannot easily understand. It is also one of the greatest practical difficulties in the exercise of believing prayer. When, after persevering supplication, our prayer remains unanswered, it is often easiest for our slothful flesh, and it has all the appearance of pious submission, to think that we must now cease praying, because God may have His secret reason for withholding His answer to our request.⁷²

⁷⁰ A. J. MacLeod, The New Bible Commentary, 892.

⁷¹ T. D. Bernard, The Central Teaching of Jesus Christ (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1900), 155.

⁷² A. Murray, op.cit., 133.

There is only one remedy for such a situation. It is faith which is grounded "in His name", faith which feeds on the Spirit of God.

It knows from Scripture that the power of believing prayer is simply irresistible; real faith can never be disappointed. It knows how, just as water, to exercise the irresistible power it can have, must be gathered up and accumulated, until the stream can come down in full force, there must often be a heaping up of prayer, until God sees that the measure is full, and the answer comes.⁷³

A great danger is to think that a prayer is not according to God's will and to stop making that request. In our own interest God sometimes takes time to answer prayer. This danger can be avoided by the exercise of great faith. Jesus told His disciples that, if they had faith as a grain of mustard seed, they could remove mountains, (Mt. 17:20). On another occasion Jesus said that if they believed God could answer their prayers, He would, (Mt. 21:22). Jesus thus taught in a straight forward manner that it is the prayer of faith that will be answered. This kind of prayer makes available to the believer powers that exist in the unseen world. It is "not that 'faith can do anything', but that one who has faith will set no limits to the power of God."⁷⁴ This fact is borne out in the many healing miracles recorded in the Gospels, (Mk. 9:23).

One of the most common and well-known sayings of Jesus is on this theme of persevering faith in prayer. It is, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,"

⁷³ Ibid., 134.

⁷⁴ A. E. J. Rawlinson, St. Mark (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1925), 124.

(Lk. 11:9). There is an emphasis on the imperatives, i.e., on the asking, seeking and knocking. The idea is continuing action. Jesus bids His disciples to keep on asking, seeking and knocking until the answer is won.⁷⁵ They as "men of prayer must knock and knock - sometimes with bleeding knuckles in the dark."⁷⁶ Just as the crude ore needs to be refined in order to get pure gold, so man needs to be prepared before he can receive God's good gifts. In all true prayer, God answers the man, not just the request. God answers prayer not because of the believer's importunity,⁷⁷ but because of his faith in God as Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷⁵ The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952), VIII, 204.

⁷⁶ G. A. Buttrick, Prayer, 34.

⁷⁷ The Interpreter's Bible, VIII, 204.

CONCLUSION

It is always profitable to look back at the completion of a study and retrace briefly the path which has been trod. The whole study is thus brought before us as an integrated whole.

Heredity and environment are the words given to the factors which guide and shape our twentieth century lives. In the first century, these factors were as much at work as they are today in human life but no doubt under different names. Jesus was raised in a first century Jewish home in Palestine. His Hebrew heritage was of the finest. It was inevitable that the words which He was taught as a child to use in His religious life would enter into His practice and teaching. This is readily seen, for example, by a comparison of the Lord's Prayer with the ¹Kaddish or Shemone Esreh. On the other hand, Jesus transformed certain Jewish practices into something new and vital. Fixed hours or places of prayer were no longer as binding. Whenever or wherever a person approached God 'in His name', Jesus promised that God would hear and answer him. In Judaism, the Law and sacrifice were primary. In the new religious community created by Jesus, the emphasis was on the spiritual life of the individual, based on the humble prayer of faith. "On the one hand the will of God is imposed on us from without; on the other we desire ourselves to know it and make ²it our own." The message and mission of Jesus was aimed at men's hearts.

¹ See Appendix.

² E. F. Scott, The Lord's Prayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 56.

He sought to change them so that they would worship and serve God from a willing heart.

The best way to teach is to practice what you teach. Unless a teacher has experienced for himself the things he seeks to teach, he has failed. Jesus taught by example in prayer before He did by precept. This is obvious from a reading of the Gospels which tell of the many times and places of our Lord's praying. In addition to these recorded instances, there must have been many more which were not recorded. As varied as the needs of His life were, so varied were His types of prayer. For purposes of this thesis, the prayers were divided into four groups: praise and thanksgiving, petition, intercession and confession. Special note was taken of the fact that Jesus did not use the prayer of confession because He "did no sin", (I Pet. 2:22). Jesus prayed because He needed God's help in His daily walk. It was a real and vital experience to Him. His praying was more than an example. It was His life.

The more one studies the teaching of Jesus, the more one is convinced that He came from God for, "Never man spake like this man", (Jn. 7:46). The Lord's Prayer can be looked upon as the core of Jesus' teaching on prayer. There are laid out for us "the topics, proportion, and order of all prayer."³ In these petitions, we find those things for which we should pray. Jesus taught further, concerning prayer, by parables. The lesson from the two parables, the Friend at Midnight and the Importunate

³ E. R. Bernard, A Dictionary of the Bible, ed. J. Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), IV, 13.

Widow, is the value of the persevering prayer of faith. The lesson from the parable of the Pharisee and Publican is humility of spirit in prayer. In addition to these parables, Jesus spoke many sayings concerning prayer. Some condemned existing practices while most dealt with the conditions of true prayer and the right objects of prayer.

The best way to bring this study to a conclusion is to find out what Jesus Himself sought in prayer. The ends which He sought are the same ones He bids us to seek. Primarily Jesus sought fellowship with His Father. He wanted God Himself, not only His gifts. The unity of the Father and Son relationship was maintained by this close companionship of prayer. Jesus also sought illumination for His daily task. He wanted to have a clear insight into the will of God and the path which He would walk. Another end Jesus sought in prayer was power for His task. The records concerning Gethsemane and the Cross show how Jesus found all of these through prayer. Calvary, a defeat in the eyes of some, was really the great victory of God through Christ.⁴ In this one event, there is evidence of all three needs being fulfilled; fellowship, illumination and power. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," (II Cor. 5:19).

If to this general conclusion, the various instances of our Lord's praying and teaching concerning prayer are added, a very good idea of what to pray for today will be the result. All prayer should be in simple

⁴ The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952), VIII, 79.

language, brief, insistent and importunate. This involves unquestioning faith. The prayer of thanksgiving should be on the lips of all Christians continually. This theme pervaded all of our Lord's thought and should pervade ours too. The prayer for the necessities of life was not belittled by Jesus as unworthy. He included it in His great prayer that covers our whole experience. The prayer for forgiveness was also included in the Lord's Prayer. The attitude of true prayer is humility. Man asks God for forgiveness of sins and is forgiven upon repentance of those sins. In like manner, the forgiven man should possess God's forgiving spirit and exercise this toward others. The prayer for deliverance which is included in the Lord's Prayer, bids the Christian to pray for strength in the time of testing. Evil is so widespread that the Christian needs to pray that God will deliver him from its sweeping power. The prayer of intercession is also commended by example. As Jesus prayed for those who followed Him and those who put Him to death, so the Christian should intercede before God for all men. There is no man for whom the Christian should not pray, not even his enemies. The prayer of petition for help and guidance in the hours of perplexity and despair is a part of the practice of Jesus. He bids the Christian to pray for the way to walk whenever he is uncertain. When meaningless tragedy strikes and hope has all but disappeared, the Christian is to lift up his spirit to God in prayer and receive His hope and peace. The prayer for the coming of the kingdom of God sums up all the preceding types of prayer. The praying Christian seeks to live the life of the

⁵ E. F. Scott, op.cit., 16, 17.

kingdom, to extend its rule and to assist in bringing about its final consummation. Thus all his aims and activities lead up to this great petition which our Lord included in His prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done".⁶ It is readily seen that the goal of a praying life is a godly life, a life wholly dedicated to the purpose of reconciling the world to God through the Lord Jesus Christ.⁷ "The more the Christian is truly filled with the Spirit of Christ, the more spontaneous will be his giving himself up to the life of priestly intercession."⁸

The danger of asking amiss can be averted only when the true meaning of prayer is known. Even the twelve disciples had to learn this lesson from their Master.

They have asked for a stone, thinking it bread and hence the true bread seems a stone; for a shadow, thinking it a substance, and hence the substance seems a shadow. The kingdom for which the twelve / prayed was a shadow, hence their disappointment and despair when Jesus was put to death: the egg of hope, which their fond imagination had been hatching, brought forth the scorpion of the cross, and they fancied that God had mocked and deceived them. But they lived to see that God was true and good, and that they had deceived themselves, and that all which Christ had told them had been fulfilled. And all who wait on God ultimately make a similar discovery, and unite in testifying that 'the Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him'.⁹

⁶ H. Branson, The Teachings of Jesus (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1931), 273-282.

⁷ T. R. Glover, The Jesus of History (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1917), 113.

⁸ A. Murray, With Christ in the School of Prayer (New York: The Meridian Co., n. d.), 268.

⁹ A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1877), 65-66.

Prayer, whether private or corporate, must originate in a humble heart. It must be grounded in faith which perseveres until the answer is given. The eye of prayer must ever be watchful for God's answer, which may come in an unexpected manner. In addition, the spirit of forgiveness is essential in intercessory prayer and also for a victorious Christian life.

The disciples of Jesus truly were privileged to have walked the ways of Palestine with Him and heard from His lips these great words. We too are privileged because the records of these events are ours.

The disciples had been with Christ and seen Him pray. They had learned to understand something of the connection between His wondrous life in public, and His secret life of prayer. They had learned to believe in Him as a Master in the art of prayer, - none could pray like Him. And so they came to Him with the request, "Lord, teach us to pray." And in after-years they would have told us that there were few things more wonderful or blessed that He taught them than His lessons on prayer.¹⁰

Finally, let us take a panoramic view of the teaching of Jesus. We look in vain for passages in the Gospels which tell of Jesus teaching His disciples how to preach. On the other hand, we see many instances of Jesus teaching His disciples how to pray. Why is this? It is because Jesus knew that fellowship with God is the key to truly successful ministry to men. Prayer, as it is found in the life and teaching of Christ, is the gateway to life and life more abundant.

¹⁰ A. Murray, op.cit., 11.

APPENDIX

The Kaddish

May his great name be magnified and hallowed in the world, which he has made according to his will, and may his kingly rule be established in your life-time - in your time and in the time of the whole house of Israel. May the name of the Lord be praised from now on and forever. May the prayer and petition of all Israel find acceptance before our Father who is in heaven.¹

Upon Israel and the Rabbis and their scholars and those who learn from their scholars and all who study the Law in this place and everywhere, may there be grace and mercy and compassion and deliverance from our Father who is in heaven.²

The Shemoneh Esreh

1. Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God and the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the great God, the mighty and tremendous, the Most High God, who bestowest gracious favours and createst all things, and rememberest the piety of the patriarchs, and wilt bring a redeemer to their posterity, for the sake of Thy name in love. O King, who bringest help and healing and art a shield. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the shield of Abraham.

2. Thou art mighty for ever, O Lord; Thou restorest life to the dead, Thou art mighty to save; who sustainest the living with beneficence, quickenest the dead with great mercy, supporting the fallen and healing the sick, and setting at liberty those who are bound, and upholding Thy faithfulness unto those who sleep in the dust. Who is like unto Thee, Lord, the Almighty One; or who can be compared unto Thee, O King, who killest and makest alive again, and causest help to spring forth? And faithful art Thou, O Lord, who restorest the dead.

¹ E. F. Scott, The Lord's Prayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 42.

² Ibid., 43.

3. Thou art holy and Thy name is holy, and the saints daily praise Thee. Selah. Blessed art Thou, O Lord; the God most holy.

4. Thou graciously impartest to man knowledge, and teachest to mortals reason. Let us be favoured from Thee with knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who graciously impartest knowledge.

5. Cause us to turn, O our Father, to Thy law, and draw us near, O our King, to Thy service, and restore us in perfect repentance to Thy presence. Blessed art Thou O Lord, who delightest in repentance.

6. Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, our King, for we have transgressed; ready to pardon and forgive Thou art. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, most gracious, who dost abundantly pardon.

7. Look, we beseech Thee, upon our afflictions, and plead our cause and redeem us speedily for the sake of Thy name, for a mighty Redeemer Thou art. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the Redeemer of Israel.

8. Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed; save us, and we shall be saved; for our praise art Thou; and bring forth a perfect remedy unto all our infirmities; for a God and King, a faithful healer, and most merciful art Thou. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who healest the diseases of Thy people Israel.

9. Bless unto us, O Lord our God, this year and grant us an abundant harvest, and bring a blessing on our land, and satisfy us with Thy goodness; and bless our year as the good years. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who blessest the years.

10. Sound with the great trumpet to announce our freedom; and set up a standard to collect our captives, and gather us together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who fatherest the outcasts of Thy people Israel.

11. O restore our judges as formerly, and our counsellors as at the beginning; and remove from us sorrow and sighing; and reign over us, Thou O Lord alone, in grace and mercy; and justify us. Blessed art Thou, O Lord the King, for Thou lovest Righteousness and justice.

12. To slanderers let there be no hope, and let all workers of wickedness perish as in a moment; and let all of them speedily

be cut off; and humble them speedily in our days. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who destroyest enemies and humblest tyrants.

13. Upon the just and upon the pious and upon the elders of Thy people the house of Israel, and upon the remnant of their scribes, and upon righteous strangers, and upon us, bestow, we beseech Thee, Thy mercy O Lord our God, and grant a good reward unto all who confide in Thy name faithfully; and appoint our portion with them for ever, and may we never be put to shame, for our trust is in thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the support and confidence of the righteous.

14. And to Jerusalem Thy city return with compassion, and dwell therein as Thou hast promised; and rebuild her speedily in our days, a structure everlasting; and the throne of David speedily establish therein. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the builder of Jerusalem.

15. The offspring of David Thy servant speedily cause to flourish, and let his horn be exalted in Thy salvation; for Thy salvation do we hope daily. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who causeth the horn of salvation to flourish.

16. Hear our voice, O Lord our God, pity and have mercy upon us, and accept with compassion and favour these our prayers, for Thou art a God who hearest prayers and supplications; and from Thy presence, O our King, send us not empty away, for Thou hearest the prayers of Thy people Israel in mercy. Blessed art Thou O Lord, who hearest prayer.

17. Be pleased, O Lord our God, with Thy people Israel, and with their prayers; and restore the sacrificial service to the Holy of Holies of Thy house; and the offerings of Israel, and their prayers in love do Thou accept with favour; and may the worship of Israel Thy people be ever pleasing. O that our eyes may behold Thy return to Zion with mercy. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who restorest Thy glory (הִתְפָּאָר) unto Zion.

18. We praise Thee, for Thou art the Lord our God and the God of our fathers for ever and ever; the Rock of our life, the Shield of our salvation, Thou art for ever and ever. We will render thanks unto Thee, and declare Thy praise, for our lives which are delivered into Thy hand, and for our souls which are deposited with Thee, and for Thy miracles which daily are with us; and for Thy wonders and Thy goodness, which are at all times, evening and morning and at noon. Thou art good for Thy mercies fail not, and compassionate for Thy loving-kindness never ceaseth; our hopes are for ever in Thee. And for all this praised and extolled be

Thy name, our King, for ever and ever. And all that live shall give thanks unto Thee for ever, Selah, and shall praise Thy name in truth; the God of our salvation and our aid for ever. Selah. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, for all-bountiful is Thy name, and unto Thee it becometh us to give thanks.

19. Great salvation bring over Israel Thy people for ever, for Thou art King, Lord of all salvation. Praised be Thou, Lord, for Thou blessest Thy people Israel with salvation.³

³ E. Schürer, A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, trans. S. Taylor and P. Christie (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885), Div. II, Vol. 2, 85-87.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, W. C. The Gospel According to St. Matthew. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907.
- Bernard, T. D. The Central Teaching of Jesus Christ. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1900.
- Branscomb, H. The Teachings of Jesus. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1931.
- Bruce, A. B. The Parabolic Teaching of Christ. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1882.
- _____. The Training of the Twelve. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1877.
- Buttrick, G. A. Prayer. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942.
- _____. The Parables of Jesus. New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1931.
- Creed, J. M. The Gospel According to St. Luke. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1930.
- Dictionary of the Bible. Edited by J. Hastings. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.
- Dictionary of the Bible, A. Edited by J. Hastings. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902. IV.
- Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, A. Edited by J. Hastings. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912. II.
- Edersheim, A. The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1898. I.
- Findlay J. A. Jesus and His Parables. London: The Epworth Press, 1951.
- Fosdick, H. E. The Meaning of Prayer. New York: Association Press, 1951.
- Glover, T. R. The Jesus of History. New York: George H. Doran Co., 1917.
- Interpreter's Bible, The. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951. VII, VIII.
- Mackintosh, H. R. The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912.

- Martin, H. The Parables of the Gospels. London: S. C. M. Press, 1953.
- M'Neile, A. H. The Gospel According to St. Matthew. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1915.
- Moore, G. F. Judaism. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950. II.
- Murray, A. With Christ in the School of Prayer. New York: The Mershon Co., n. d.
- New Bible Commentary, The. Edited by F. Davidson. Chicago: The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, 1953.
- Rawlinson, A. E. J. St. Mark. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1925.
- Schürer, E. A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ. Translated by S. Taylor and P. Christie. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885. Div. II. Vols. I, II.
- _____. Index to Schürer's History. Translated by J. MacPherson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1890.
- Scott, E. F. The Lord's Prayer. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951.
- Scott, J. F. The Religion of the Lord's Prayer. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946.