

**A MANUAL OF
PRAYERS FOR
FAMILY WORSHIP**

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A Manual of Prayers for Family Worship by C. C. P.

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FOR FAMILY WORSHIP.

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Except the Lord build the house, they labour in
vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the
watchman waketh but in vain.—PSALM cxxvii. 1.



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PREFACE.

IN sending forth this little manual of family prayers, it may be well to adduce the reasons which prompted its publication. I had been repeatedly solicited to recommend some book of the kind for the use of believing heads of households, who, whilst sincerely desiring to honour the Lord, by seeking daily His help and blessing, yet had not the courage to constitute themselves the voice in the midst by extemporaneous prayer.

I am aware there are already in print many excellent volumes of prayers, which, nevertheless, fail to suit all inquirers after such, because of the sectarian peculiarities naturally pervading them. It was, there-

fore, suggested to me to prepare a small collection myself; and although at first I rejected the thought as in my mind altogether foreign to the principle of so divine and sacred an institution between the Creator and the creature, yet, eventually, I was irresistibly led to view it as a work of love in the Lord appointed unto me, and one on which I might expect His blessing. I now, therefore, present it to all to whom it may prove acceptable, as a crutch merely for the time being, until able to cast it aside; having in like manner, after my own conversion some forty odd years since, had recourse for a short time to a printed form, occasionally wandering therefrom, or enlarging thereon, as the Spirit led and circumstances dictated.

We know it is recorded of Paul, after his vision, on the road to Damascus, "Be-

hold, he prayeth;" and so it is with every awakened sinner. "The husbandman who laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits." "The Bereans were more noble than they of Thessalonica, in that they searched the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so." For it is by daily study of, and conversance with, the Word, in communion with its Divine Author, that our intense need is truly felt, and we are enabled to pour out our hearts before Him in the very words so abundantly supplied therein for our utterance, comprehending, as the Scriptures assuredly do, every need of man in this probationary state of his existence, not in the words that man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; for "all Scripture is written by inspiration of God," and is not only "the power of God unto salvation," but profitable

for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works," amongst these, Prayer.

Again, family prayer must be preceded and strengthened by closet prayer, (see Matt. vi. 6). And, farther, there must be a close walk with God, such as Enoch's, for are we not expecting to be translated as Enoch was, or more gloriously still (1 Thess. iv. 13-18)? and may not this walk be defined by "praying without ceasing," and "in everything giving thanks?"

"There was a period when I chose
A time and place for prayer,
At morning's dawn and evening's close
My feet would wander there.
But now I seek that constant prayer
In inward stillness known,
And thus my spirit everywhere
Can dwell with God alone."

Thus closet prayer will help family prayer, and both combined will endue us with courage and ability for public usefulness, if called thereto.

Finding, as a rule, that in most families the household assembles but once in the day, I have only supplied services for four weeks, suitable for either morning or evening. The adoption of a query at the commencement of each day's reading may seem a useless novelty, but if read emphatically, like the text of a sermon, it serves at once to command the attention of the hearers to the portions of Scripture that follow, and may also prove suggestive of thought to the presiding head, and, if need be, of further comment over and above the passages furnished.

When the Scripture portions preceding each prayer have been well used, and we