

**"OUR FATHER." A MANUAL OF SHORT
FAMILY PRAYER, FOR GENERAL AND
SPECIAL OCCASIONS, WITH SHORT
PRAYERS FOR SPARE MINUTES, AND
PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION**

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"Our Father." A Manual of Short Family Prayer, for General and Special Occasions, with Short Prayers for Spare Minutes, and Passages for Reflection by John Cumming

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JOHN CUMMING

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

PRAYER is the inestimable privilege of the people of God. It is liberty to approach and speak with boldness to the King of kings.

It is well defined in these words :
" Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the Name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies."

It must be *sincere*. If not from the

heart, it may be a beautiful form in the eyes of man, but it is altogether displeasing in the judgment of God: "Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." "My son, give me thy heart."

We must pray *in faith*. "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."

We must pray *with humility*. When Jacob prayed, he said, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto thy servant." God declares, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and

seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins."

With earnestness. Jesus in his agony "prayed the more earnestly."

With perseverance. It is after he has given an instance of the success of persevering importunity (Luke xi. 5), that our Lord adds, "Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;" each clause indicating an increase of earnestness and perseverance.

With filial fear. It is with the spirit of adoption in our hearts, that we cry "Abba, Father." "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your hea-

venly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!"

With spiritual and holy *boldness or liberty of speeck*. "Seeing we have a great High Priest, let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Pleading the promises. What God has promised, we may pray for. His promises are given in Christ, ratified and Yea and Amen in Christ; and having heard the varied promises, we may render them to God again in fervent petitions. Prayers are the echoes of promises.

We must pray *to God only*. "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." "Thou shalt worship the

Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the Name of Christ: that is, resting on His atonement, relying on His intercession, pleading what He is and has done. "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." Christ alone has the golden censer; He is the only "Altar that sanctifies" gifts and offerings.

By the Holy Spirit. "Ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry Abba, Father." "Access by One Spirit to the Father." "Praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."