

ZION COLLEGE LECTURES ON PRAYER

A Series Delivered Before the Students of Zion College by the President, Rev. John Alexander Dowie,
General Overseer of the Christian Catholic Church in Zion.

THE world today has learned that there is something far beyond the ordinary in the words of God's Messenger to Zion, John Alexander Dowie.

As this realization comes to the public, the first question always is, "How does he do it? What is the secret of his power?"

Those who know the General Overseer and have heard and heeded his teaching know that the power belongs to God. But the General Overseer is wonderfully used by God, as an instrument, on account of his mighty power in Prayer, taught him by the Holy Spirit.

Hence it was with the greatest joy that the students of Zion College received the announcement that the General Overseer would deliver a Series of Lectures on the subject of Prayer. It was an inestimable privilege to learn how to pray from a man whose whole life had become a mighty power of God through Prayer. But joyful as the anticipation was, it was more than justified by the realization.

Many members of the Christian Catholic Church also attended these Lectures and were amazed, from week to week, by the real depth and scope of the subject as it was opened up by the man of God.

Since the delivery of these Lectures there has been a loud appeal, from many sides to have them published.

The General Overseer was reluctant, as he felt that in the great pressure of his other duties he had not been able to give the Lectures as he might have done with more time at his disposal. He also felt that he should revise them before their publication, and this he could not find time to do.

At length, however, the appeal for them being urged, he consented that they should be sent forth,

without his revision, during his absence in Europe and the Holy Land.

Accordingly this wonderful teaching will be printed, almost as it came from his lips, from time to time, in LEAVES OF HEALING. In preparing these Lectures for the press, we have eliminated some allusions to topics of the time and place and have written in some headlines. We have also cut out opening and closing exercises and arranged the matter consecutively without regard to number and date of Lectures.

We pray that God will bless these wonderful truths to all who read in even greater measure than He did to those who heard.

A.W. N.

OUR FATHER

This afternoon there are two words in my mind which have so deeply impressed me that I feel I would like to make them the subject of my address.

When you pray, say:

"Our Father."

I apprehend that we shall greatly endanger Divine instruction if we begin to define that which is essentially incapable of definition.

When we define a truth, it must be a very small one. It cannot be of much importance. In fact, my judgment is that you cannot define Truth.

To define a thing is to put limits around it.

There are no limits to the Infinite.

There are no limits to the thought which is expressed in the first words of the Disciples' Prayer, as taught by our Lord:

"Our Father."

The word Father is a very different word from the word Maker, Creator.

God made the world. He made all creatures below man. He is the Maker of the birds, of the beasts, and of the fish, but He is not their Father.

God the Father of Our Spirits.

He is our Father; because He is the Father of our Spirits, not the Father of our souls, not the Father of our bodies.

He is the Maker of our bodies, and the Maker of our souls in the same way that He is the maker of the souls and bodies of the fish, the beasts and every creeping thing, and everything that flies.

They have souls, they have bodies, but they have no spirits.

Do not let us forget that in the creation of man there was that which was not in the creation of these lesser creatures.

There was the breath of God Himself; the inspiration by God Himself. The spirit, *rauch*, that spirit of life; the breath of life. Breath, of course, is spirit; breath of the Almighty; the spirit of the Almighty; the spirit in man.

That spirit has its paternity in God. It is not communicated by transmission, by physical generation. It is not communicated by our parents, nor can we communicate spiritual being.

Spiritual being is always, everywhere, Divine in parentage.

Get this thought so clearly in your mind that you will never confound soul and spirit.

Let the Word of God, which is quick and powerful, that is, living and active, enable you always to differentiate between spirit and soul.

Never let there be any confusion in your mind, for you will never know God as your Father if you think of Him as the Father of your soul. If He is only the Father of your soul, He is no more your Father than He is the Father of an eagle, or a barnyard fowl, or a mackerel, or a whale, or an elephant, or a hog; for every one of these creatures has a soul, animal life.

I wish to take you back to the definition which we

make very emphatically in our teaching as to the separation and the absolutely different origin of the soul and the spirit.

For the Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and Spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Christ the Living and Active Word.

I believe that that passage has reference not merely to the Scripture, but to Jesus Christ, the *Logos*.

It is He who is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword. It is He who is a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

It is His words which are spirit and life.

It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life.

You must always in this case remember that the thought is to lead you back to the Eternal *Logos*; the Power by whom everything came into being; the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us.

Christ is the Living Word. He dwells among us. He dwells within us still.

It is only the Word of God which enables us to see the distinction between soul and Spirit.

I desire, for a special reason, to call attention to the very beginning of the Word of God in this matter.

Take with me the first chapter of Genesis, and read with me the twentieth verse:

And God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and let fowl fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

All the creatures have souls.

Note the expression in the thirtieth verse, "Wherein there is *life*."

What is your margin?

Voices—"A living soul."

President Dowie—What creatures have living souls?

Voices—"Every creature."

President Dowie—All the fowls of the air have souls, and every beast of the earth has a living soul
Have they spirits?

Voices—"No."

President Dowie—That is the Word of God which makes this plain.

The Soul Distinguished From the Body.

For the most part, there is no teaching on the subject at all. What do the scholars mean by psychology? They are referring there practically to the intelligent mind.

That is not psychology. *Psyche* (ψυχή) means—what?

Voices—"Soul."

President Dowie—Young defines it properly as animal life. It is nothing else. The beast has it; the bird has it, the fish has it. It is animal life, not spiritual being.

Get this thing distinct and clear. Look carefully at your Greek Testament and note where the word soul is used, and see that the word means life, and do not confuse animal life with spiritual life.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Can a spirit die?

Voices—"No."

President Dowie—No man can say from his soul, "My Father," No man can say from his body, "My Father." No beast can stand up on this earth and say, "My Father." No bird can say, "My Father."

They cannot say my Father because they have no revelation of fatherhood within them. There has never been anything begotten in them of a spiritual nature.

It is this principle of a Divine life which completely separates humanity from all else and enables us to so realize the great purpose for which God has put all things under our feet. When we realize, this, we rise superiors to earth and every material thing, and to every animal with a merely psychical nature. We realize that the *pneuma* (πνεύμα), the *rauch*, the spirit that is in us, is the offspring of God.

That principle lies at the bottom of everything

when we pray.

It is also true that the construction of this early temple is essentially different in a great many ways from the lower creatures.

Man and the lower Do Not Differ Essentially as to Brains.

I do not think it is so in the brain, although we are trying to make it so. I think that the thinking machinery of some animals is a great deal more clever than the thinking machinery of some men in some things, and it is very much of the same order.

Those who have experimented (and it is a cruel and useless experiment) on the brains of creatures yet alive, tell us that they have been able to create emotions of fear and love, of pain and delight, or rather to give these emotions expression just by touching certain parts of the brain. Certain powers of men have been awakened, which have been dormant, by the taking pressure from or placing pressure upon that part of the brain. Certain sensibilities which are only infrequent are made continuous by pressure upon the brain.

We have had the case, in Zion Home, of Mr. Seeger, who was yawning every few moments. He at last held his mouth open constantly. God healed him. Thank God for that. We did not need to lift some pressure from the brain, either.

The surgeons said if they could only take off the scalp and search all around underneath, they might find the place where the pressure was, and relieve him of the difficulty.

I think they would, too, by that time. It would be like the cure for the toothache by cutting off the head.

Yet the thinking machinery in man can by Divine grace be developed and make a wonderful vehicle of Divine thought. I believe we have never reached, nor can we reach, the possibilities in the development of mind.

The Spirit of Man Greater Than His Mind.

Yet we can value mind too highly and say as Sir

William Hamilton said, "On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind."

He had that inscribed on the wall above his chair in the class room in my native city, the School of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. Afterwards I often used to sit and look at it and say to myself; "That is a lie."

One day we were asked to give a series of extemporaneous addresses upon thoughts connected with logic and metaphysics. I arose and said:

"I desire to criticize the motto above your head, Professor Frasier. It is a lie."

There was a sensation.

I said, "I do not care who it was said it."

"Sir William Hamilton," shouted the students.

"I do not care whether it was Sir William Hamilton or anybody else. It is a lie to say that in man there is nothing great but mind, because there is a spirit in man, and it is far greater than mere mind.

"The mind of a magnificent man might not only suffer a collapse, but be plunged into hopeless darkness, chaos and ruin. A splendid man may become a driveling idiot by a blow, and his mind, his mental powers, not only become empty, but degenerate and thrown into confusion, but the majestic spirit of that man would remain."

It is the development of this thought of spirit which I wish to impress upon you. This spiritual being has not only its presence in the brain, but it has its expression and its presence in all parts of the being. The spiritual being of a man is really coextensive with the man himself, if he is pure and clean. The spiritual being may find expression through his fingers as well as through his tongue, through his feet as well as through as through his hands, through his eyes as well as through his lips and tongue, if he really is being all-pervaded by spirit.

There are some men whose Spirits are shut up in prison, and are to be found only in some dark corner. Their spirits have been driven back and driven inward. The spiritual being is put last. All the conception of it in the man has is that he has a soul, to which he says, "Soul; thou has much goods laid up for

many years; take thine ease; eat drink be merry."

He does not realize that he has any spirit. The Church is damned because of its ignorance in this matter. I am convinced of it.

They are getting up revival for the purpose of saving souls, and they cannot save the soul, because they do not get up a revival for saving of the spirit.

They do not understand the salvation of the spirit.

They do not take any notice of the words of the apostle which I always use in benediction: "The very God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame." etc. They say the spirit and the soul are the same thing, which shows their crass ignorance.

The soul can never say Father. If the soul said Father, it would lie, because God is not the Father of souls, He is the Father of spirits.

Spirits are His offspring, but He does not give paternity, His own nature, to beasts, birds and fish. He gives it to man, not in his soul, nor in his bodily nature, but in his spirit.

The Purpose of Redemption to Free Men's Spirits from Forces Hostile to God.

This is the great purpose of redemption, that we should first of all remember that these spirits must be entirely delivered from the thralldom of other spiritual forces and beings which are antagonistic to God.

We cannot claim our paternity and say, "Our Father"; we cannot call Jesus Lord, but by the Spirit of God awakening in our spiritual being the conviction that we are the offspring of God. We must have the knowledge, by the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, that we have been quickened, made to live, by being liberated in spirit until that spirit fills the whole being and lifts up the soul and the body, and presents them, "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

Then we understand something of what it means to say "My Father."

The development of this knowledge is slow. The majority of people do not pray to the Father. They

pray to the Son; they pray to the Holy Spirit, they say, "Lord Jesus, help me. They say, Holy Spirit help me."

My declaration that we have no more right to pray to Jesus Christ or to the Holy Spirit than we have to the Virgin Mary or St. Joseph has given great offense, but has been unanswerable. It is a Divine truth, for Jesus bids us, when we pray to say, "our Father," and the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts crying "Abba Father."

We are never taught, either by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, or by the Holy Spirit who comes from the Father and the Son, to pray to them or either of them.

Do what Jesus tells you. Do what the Holy Spirit tells you.

If you forget all else I have ever said about Prayer, never forget this; that in praying you must pray to God the Father alone in the Name of God the Son, in the power of God the Holy Spirit, and that you must never direct your supplication to any other than to Him.

But no matter how emphatically my speech expressed it, if you do not take it in and live it and use it, it will not only be of no value, but, not being used, it will become a curse.

An Unused Talent Brings a Curse.

It brings the curse of God Himself. Every bit of cowardice upon our part which makes us bury a talent or conceal a truth, makes that talent or that truth our accusation and our curse. The day will come when the Master will say, "I gave you that talent; I gave you that truth and you never used it, you wicked and slothful servant." Then He will take it away.

How can Jesus be my Advocate with the Father, if I make Him the Father, and talk to Him as if I were talking to my Father?

He is not my Father. He is my Brother. He is not ashamed to call us brethren, and I stand upon His Word in which He said:

I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.

You must obey what He said. If God is the Father

of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, then my Saviour is my Brother; my great Elder Brother; God's eternal Son.

He is the eternal *Logos*; incomprehensibly greater than I, but still my Brother who said when He was here on earth, "My Father is greater than all." Our great Elder Brother will one day, when He has finished His work, delivered up the key to God, even the Father.

The Uselessness of Mere Words.

This to me is greater than words, because when a thing is only a word it is not much account unless it gets impressed.

I am tired of words which do not find expression in something more than words.

The whole earth is tired of words.

The Church today is utterly disgusting to men who have an intelligent understanding, because the whole business is a mass of words and talk and discussion about words."

"What does it matter?" They say. "We want something more than words."

While it is a good thing to talk with words when you go to your fellowman, and even in a measure when you go to God, it is infinitely better when you get to the place where you are beyond words.

When love can find expression only in words, it is a poor, pitiful thing.

Did you ever see that light which never shone on sea or land, the love-light in the eye of a little child who suddenly discovered its mother?

The love-light is there when the baby cannot talk at all. A baby needs not to talk to tell that it recognizes mother.

You can get to the place where love has its highest expression, when you desire to say something for which you cannot find words; when you can just take the hand and look straight into the eye and look your thought.

When you get away to the highest point of Divine love, you will not need to talk. Christ Himself will not need to talk to the Father for you. He will tell you

what is true, as He said:

I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you.

Did you ever sit down, and just let that thought take possession of you by the Spirit: "If a man love Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him"?

Then the love-light will come, and there will be that about you which will make you to be so much more powerful in your silence than you are in your speech.

There is a Place and A Need for Speech.

I know there is a place of speech, because humanity is so weak it needs expression. Poor humanity is in its boyhood, and it wants taffy. There are some silly men and some silly women who can never believe that they are loved unless the other says, "I love you." It is a poor business that. If I only got people to see that I loved them because I said it all the time, I would think, my love a poor thing.

I do not know that my mother said very often that she loved me, but she kept all the buttons sewed on my shirts, and she saw that I had excellent porridge in the morning. Her love made her rise early in the morning and boil it until it was right for John. She would not trust a maid with it. When we got two servants for her, she worked just as hard looking after these servants.

I do not know that she was given much to saying that she loved me. I cannot remember the time that she said it, but she looked it, and she lived it, and I know that she loved me. I did not need the words, I had something better. I had the actions. I had the light in her eye. When I came in, and she saw me, suddenly her eye would brighten and there would be the love.

Prayer is oftentimes most effectual when it is—

The burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye.

When none but God is near.
Prayer is the simplest form of speech.
That infant lips can try:
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

But prayer is most sublime when it says least.

When Christ, one day, contrasted two men's Prayers, they were the Prayer of a hypocritical Pharisee who explained to God, what a good man he was, and all the good things he had one, and the Prayer of a publican who would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, and spoke in a low and faint voice. But the ear of the Almighty could hear it, and it rang through highest heaven, the broken cry of a broken heart; "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

"The sacrifices of God are" always "a broken spirit" and a "contrite heart." That publican's Prayer reached God, and he went down to his house a justified man. The Pharisee went down damned. Yet he made magnificent Prayer, complying with all the ritual.

Students in Zion College, get to a place where you can get to God without words.

Prayer for the Healing of the Sick is Nearly Always Silent.

A friend asked me sometime ago: "What do you say to God when you pray for the healing of the sick?"

I said, "I never tell, except in very rare cases, what I pray. My spoken words are simply an invocation in obedience to the command I had 'in the Name of the Lord Jesus, in the Power of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Will of God our Heavenly Father.'

"There is no Prayer in that. That is not a Prayer, but an invocation. The Prayer is silent. If the people always heard the Prayer, it would be very startling."

Some time ago I had a letter from a certain part of this country from a lady who is not in the Home. I will not tell you her name Perhaps the story will enlighten the desire, and help you to understand the matter.

This lady's pastor was applied to for a letter to Dr.

Dowie. She demanded of him that he tell what a kind, good woman she was, and how desirable it was in the interests of Jonesville that its paragon of all perfection in that church should be handed up and healed.

She was very sick. All the doctors had gotten through with her.

She was one of these women—you can see it in their faces—who make the poor man whom they have condescended to marry feel what a lifelong, supreme favor they have bestowed upon him, and how he ought to be grateful forever that so high and mighty a person ever condescend to take him. The minister was afraid of her, because if he did not suffer the word of exhortation as she gave it to him, he might just as well send in his resignation; for if he did not, he would starve in that place. She would see that he got no money from her husband, and no money from anybody else.

A Severe but Wholesome lesson to a Self-Important Woman.

Nobody told me that when I read the letter which was to this effect:

MY DEAR DR. DOWIE:—The lady who brings this letter in person has come to be a guest in Zion Home.

She is a most worthy member of this Church—and so on.

It is highly in the interest of Zion that she should be healed, because she is a woman of vast influence in Jonesville.

I never had seen the lady, but I smiled as I read this letter.

I understood that she had issued a request that I immediately repair to her room and interview her. I did not do any such thing, (Laughter.)

She was most angry that she had not been attended to. Who were the Elders? She did not come down to see the Elders. She came down to see Dr. Dowie. (Laughter) She brought a letter from her minister. She was very sick.

Somebody said to me, “She is highly offended.”

I said, “Tell her she can go home. Tell her that she can go home by the next train. She will see me when I am ready. She will see me when she has had some

instruction.”

I happened to be in the elevator when somebody came up; “Oh, Dr. Dowie, I have been waiting for you for three days.”

I said, “Have you? I guess you will wait three days more.”

She had some good, sound sense somewhere. I had that conviction. There is no woman who is ever entirely without it, (Laughter.)

About four days afterwards I was announced to take the meeting in the Prayer Room. There was Mrs. Smith, as I will call her, dressed in her best. Something was beginning to dawn upon her. She suspected that she was not nearly so important with me as she had thought herself in Jonesville.

I sat down, and for twenty minutes, without looking at her, saving now and then to see how she was getting on, I gave it to Mrs. Smith. (Laughter.)

I had learned that her husband was in the house by this time. He was the meekest man I ever saw. (Laughter.) He reminded me of Moses. The tribulations through which he had passed had taught him patience. I had not known of his existence. It was by accident. I discovered it, and that was because she, being in the habit of having him do things for her (laughter) made signs to him.

For twenty minutes my subject was really Mrs. Smith of Jonesville, and you should have seen the various changes of expression which passed over her face. I think if she could have gotten out without too much trouble, she would have gone.

When it was over, indignation took the place of humility, and I saw the impudence in her face. She had made up her mind about Dr. Dowie, and I thought afterward of inviting her to go out. No one saw him except myself and Mrs. Smith. Nobody knew I had been thinking all the time of her.

When I got through, I uttered the usual invocation. That was all Mrs. Smith heard me say, but if she had heard my Prayer as I paused a minute, she would have heard this, “Oh God Almighty, in Thine Infinite Love and Mercy knock all the devils and all the conceit out of this woman. (Laughter) Break her heart. Make her to realize what a bad-tempered filthy, miserable

wretch she is. Make her to realize that she is unconverted, and that she knows nothing about Thee, and that she is a curse to her husband, and to the Church, and to Jonesville, and the greatest blessing that could happen to Jonesville would be her departure from it.

“Make her to see that she is a cumberer of the earth, and O God Almighty, when Thou has broken her all up, then if she repents, Thou wilt hear her.”

I did not say all that, but just you think what would have happened if I had. But I finished my little Prayer in my heart and passed on.

I pray that prayer in faith, and when I had stopped for a few minutes, I said a few words concerning a very touching case of healing of one who was then present who was not here for healing. She told how she had come to be full of pride and self-sufficiency and ignorance, and my words had just knocked it all out of her, and how God has used me to help her. It had seemed to her that everybody must know what she was, and then she told the touching story of how she had been crushed to the very earth, and had come to see that she was nothing at all; that God suddenly took away the veil from her eyes, and made her see how mean she was. Then she got down one day in the Prayer Room, willing to obey, no matter what I said, convinced that I was God’s servant, and that I had seen the light in her eyes.

She told how I had said to her. Are you ready to obey now?” and she said “Yes.” Then I said, “Arise,” and she had risen and walked and was healed.

The telling of all that had broken Mrs. Smith’s pride. I turned to see Mrs. Smith, and she was sobbing as if her heart would break. She had seen her own meanness had been converted. She received her healing.

The Effectiveness of the Silent Prayer.

You cannot put your prayer into words, it is not best. The Prayer which God will hear most effectually will be the silent Prayer. Get the place where you can say “Father.”

Mrs. Smith went home. She said to the Masonic

minister, “This Church has gone to the Devil. I believe you have gone to the Devil, too.”

She stepped upon the platform and made one of the most startling speeches that Church had ever heard.

She told of her healing, and they said she had gone mad. She is “mad” now, but she is in the Christian Catholic Church in Zion.

Get to know God. That is Prayer.

Get to know your Father.

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