Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God

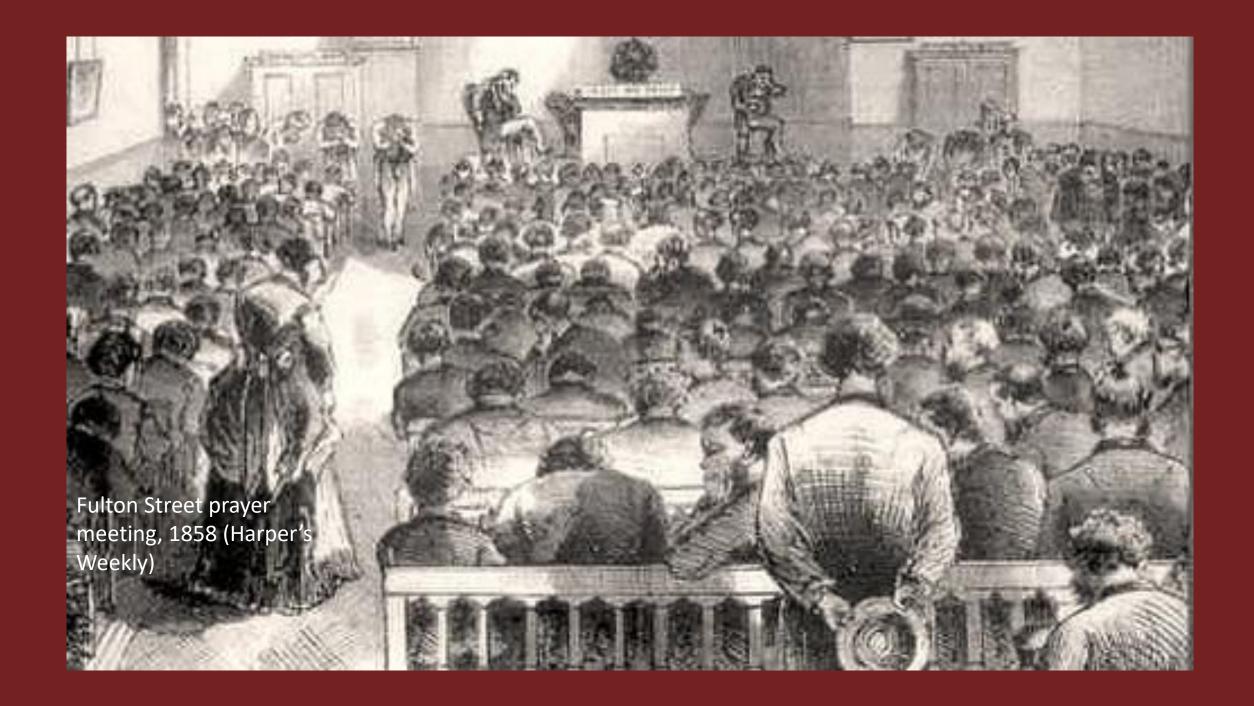
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Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of His mercies.



What various hindrances we meet

In coming to the mercy seat;

--William Cowper, *Olney Hymns*

What various hindrances we meet

In coming to the mercy seat;

Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,

But wishes to be often there.

--William Cowper, *Olney Hymns*

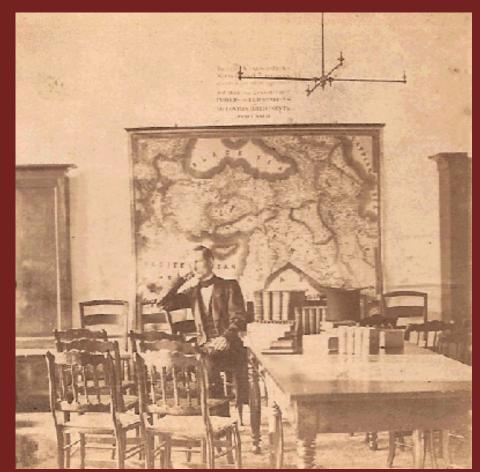
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- 3. Because we mistake the primary purpose for praying.

In praying, the principal object to be sought, is to be alone with God.

--J. C. Ryle



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- 4. Because of our sin.

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- 4. Because of our sin.
- 5. Because of spiritual opposition.



For, as for my heart, when I go to pray, I find it loth to go to God, and when it is with him, so loth to stay with him, that many times I am forced in my prayers, first to beg of God that he would take mine heart, and set it on himself in Christ, and when it is there, that he would keep it there.

--John Bunyan, A Discourse on Prayer

- 1. Because prayer is a giving out rather than a taking in.
- 2. Because generally there is no *immediate* return.
- 3. Because we mistake the primary *purpose* for praying.
- 4. Because of our sin.
- 5. Because of spiritual opposition.
- 6. Because of the discouragement of fitfulness.

If my prayers were written down on paper, and then my vain, distracting thoughts in time of duty interlined, O, what incoherent nonsense would there be! I am ashamed, Lord, I am ashamed! O, pity and pardon!

--Philip Henry (Feb. 19, 1657)

But you, when you pray, go into your secret room, close your door and pray to your Father. . .

Matthew 6:6a (NASB)

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Luke 18:1a (NASB)

Devote yourselves to prayer...

Colossians 4:2 (NASB)

1. By Obedience.

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By submitting to this **law**, we immediately discover **liberty**.

1. By Obedience.

2. By Realization.

Remember the rebuke I once got from old Mr. Dempster of Denny after preaching to his people.

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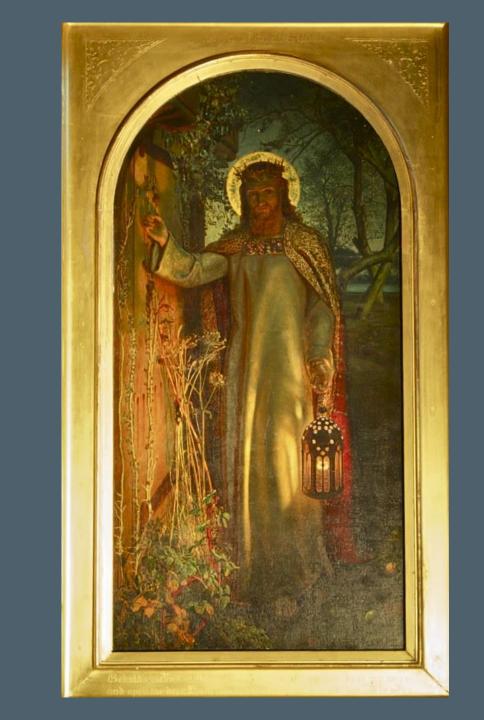
"I was highly pleased with your sermon, but in prayer it struck me that you thought God Remember the rebuke I once got from old Mr. Dempster of Denny after preaching to his people.

"I was highly pleased with your sermon, but in prayer it struck me that you thought God <u>unwilling to give</u>."

1. By Obedience.

2. By Realization.





1. By Obedience.

2. By Realization.

Revelation 3:20

It is, it seems to me, the key which opens the door in the holy and blessed realm of prayer. To pray is to let Jesus come into our hearts. This teaches us, in the first place, that it is not our prayer which moves the Lord Jesus. It is Jesus who moves us to pray. He knocks.

To pray is to open the door unto Jesus.

--O Hallesby, Prayer

1. By Obedience.

2. By Realization.

3. By Preparation

1. By Obedience.

2. By Realization.

3. By Preparation

4. By Praying First about the Obvious

I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless

I am God Almighty; Walk **before Me**

I am God Almighty;
Walk before Me
"to my face"
"toward my face"

I am God Almighty;
Walk before Me
"to my face"
"toward my face"

Most of us cannot quite understand how prayer can involve such difficulty and anguish.

Why should praying entail so much suffering?

Why should our prayer life be a constantly flowing source of anguish?

If we will reflect but for a moment, we will, however, see that it cannot be otherwise. If prayer is. . . the central function of the new life of faith, the very heart-beat of our life in God, it is obvious that our prayer life must become the target against which Satan directs his best and most

numerous darts....