

PRAYER AND PRAYING MEN

INTRODUCTION

Rev. Edward McKendrie Bounds was passionately devoted to his beloved Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His devotion was extraordinary in that he was praying and writing about Him all the time, except during the hours of sleeping.

God gave Bounds an enlargedness of heart and an insatiable desire to do service for Him. To this end he enjoyed what I am pleased to term a transcendent inspiration, else he could never have brought out of his treasury things new and old far exceeding anything we have known or read in the last half century.

Bounds is easily the Betelgeuse of the devotional sky. There is no man that has lived since the days of the apostles that has surpassed him in the depths of his marvelous research into the Life of Prayer.

He was busily engaged in writing on his manuscripts when the Lord said unto him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." His letters would often come to me in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1911, 1912 and 1913, saying, "Pray for me that God will give me new nerves and new visions to finish the manuscripts."

Wesley was of the sweetest and most forgiving disposition, but when aroused he was a man of the "keenest penetration with a gift of speech that bit like the stroke of a whip." Bounds was meek and humble, and never did we know him to retaliate upon any of his enemies. He cried over them and wept praying for them early and late.

Wesley was easily gulled. "My brother," said Charles, on one occasion in disgusting accents, "was, I believe, born for the benefit of knaves." No man could impose on Bounds' credulity. He was a diagnostician of rare ability. Bounds shied away from all frauds in profession, and would waste no time upon them.

Wesley was preaching and riding all day. Bounds was praying and writing day and night.

Wesley would not allow any misrepresentation of his doctrinal positions in his late years. Bounds in this respect was very much like him.

Wesley came to his fame while yet alive. He was always in the public eye. Bounds, while editing a Christian Advocate for twelve years, was little known out of his church.

Wesley at eighty-six could still preach on the streets for thirty minutes. Bounds was able at seventy-five in the first hour of the fourth watch to pray for three hours upon his knees.

Wesley, at the time of his death had enjoyed fifty-six years of preferment. His name was on every tongue. Christianity was born again in England under his mighty preaching and organization. Bounds was comparatively unknown for fifty years but will recover the "lost and forgotten secret of the church" in the next fifty years.

Wesley's piety and genius and popularity flowed from his early life like a majestic river. Bounds' has been dammed up, but now it is

beginning to sweep with resistless force and ere long he will be the mighty Amazon of the devotional world.

Henry Crabbe Robinson said in his diary when he heard Wesley preach at Colchester, "He stood in a wide pulpit and on each side of him stood a minister, and the two held him up. His voice was feeble and he could hardly be heard, but his reverend countenance, especially his long white locks, formed a picture never to be forgotten." The writer of these lines gave up his pulpit in Brooklyn in 1912 to Rev. E. M. Bounds just ten months before his death. His voice was feeble and his periods were not rounded out. His sermon was only twenty minutes long, when he quietly came to the end and seemed exhausted.

Wesley had sufficient money and to spare during all his career. Bounds did not care for money. He did not deprecate it; he considered it the lowest order of power.

Wesley died with "an eye beaming and lips breaking into praise." "The best of all is God with us," Bounds wrote the writer of these lines. "When He is ready I am ready; I long to taste the joys of the heavenlies."

Wesley said, "The World is my parish." Bounds prayed as if the universe was his zone.

Wesley was the incarnation of unworldliness, the embodiment of magnanimity. Bounds was the incarnation of unearthliness, humility and self-denial. Wesley will live in the hearts of saints for everlasting ages. Bounds eternally.

Wesley sleeps in City Road Chapel grounds, among his "bonny dead," under marble, with fitting tribute chiseled in prose, awaiting the Resurrection. Bounds sleeps in Washington, Georgia, cemetery, without marble covering, awaiting the Bridegroom's coming.

These two men held ideals high and dear beyond the reach of other men. Has this race of men entirely gone out of the world now that they are dead? Let us pray.

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