

Almost Incredible Promises

By An Unknown Christian

If we sing the hymn lyrics, "When we stand with Christ in glory, looking o'er life's finished story,"¹ the most amazing feature of that life, as it is looked back upon, will be its *prayerlessness*. We shall be almost beside ourselves with astonishment that we spent so little time in real intercession.

In our Lord's last discourse to His loved ones, the Master held out His kingly golden scepter and said, as it were, "What is your request? It shall be granted *unto you, even unto the whole of My Kingdom!*"

Do we believe this? We must do so if we believe our Bibles. We should open our eyes in bewilderment, for these promises are almost incredible. But it is the Lord of heaven and earth who speaks:

"Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (John 14:12–14, KJV).

A Staggering Promise

Could any words be plainer or clearer than these? Could any promise be greater or grander? How staggered those disciples must have been! Surely they could scarcely believe their own ears. But that promise is made also to you and to me.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:23–24, KJV). This is the greatest—the most wonderful—promise ever made to man. Yet most people practically ignore it! Today He sits on the throne of His Majesty on high, and He bids us to take of His treasures. He tells us that our strength and our fruitfulness depend upon our prayers. He reminds us that our very joy depends upon answered prayer (John 16:24).

Dare Not Hold Back

Let us not put it off till a more convenient season. The dear Savior wants me to pray. How dare we hold back? Let every one of us ask on our knees this question: *If no one on earth prayed for the salvation of sinners more fervently or more frequently than I do, how many of them would be converted to God through prayer?* Why, the wonder is not that we pray so little, but that we can ever get up from our knees if we realize our own need; the needs of our home and our loved ones; the needs of our pastor and the church; the needs of our city—of our country.

So great is the importance of prayer that God has taken care to anticipate all the excuses or objections we may be likely to make. Men plead their weakness or infirmity—or they declare they do not know how to pray. God foresaw this inability ages ago. Did He not inspire Paul to say this?

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Rom. 8:26–27, KJV).

Yes. Every provision is made for us. But only the Holy Spirit can "stir us up" to "take hold of God." And if we will yield ourselves to the Spirit's promptings, we shall most assuredly follow the example of the apostles who gave themselves to prayer, and continued steadfastly in prayer (Acts 6:4, KJV).

Why Revival Is Delayed

Men are wondering why the revival delays its coming. There is only one thing that can delay it, and that is *lack*

of prayer. It seems almost impertinence for any man to take up the cry when our Savior has put forth His “limitless” promises. But these utterances go forth steeped in prayer that God the Holy Spirit will Himself convict Christian men and women of the sin of prayerlessness, and drive them to their knees, to call upon God day and night in burning, believing, prevailing intercession.

¹From “**When This Passing World Is Done**” a hymn by Robert Murray McCheyne (1813- 1843).

An Unknown Christian, who chose to remain anonymous, wrote a classic book on prayer in the 1930s. This article is excerpted and edited from *A Kneeling Christian*.