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## CHAPTER 1 — PRAYER

"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and,  
when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father

PAGE 15

1     which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in  
secret, shall reward thee openly."

### **Spiritual sanctuary**

3     So spake Jesus. The closet typifies the sanctuary of  
Spirit, the door of which shuts out sinful sense but  
lets in Truth, Life, and Love. Closed to  
6     error, it is open to Truth, and *vice versa*.  
The Father in secret is unseen to the physical senses,  
but He knows all things and rewards according to  
9     motives, not according to speech. To enter into the  
heart of prayer, the door of the erring senses must be  
closed. Lips must be mute and materialism silent,  
12    that man may have audience with Spirit, the divine  
Principle, Love, which destroys all error.

### **Effectual invocation**

15    In order to pray aright, we must enter into the  
closet and shut the door. We must close the lips and  
silence the material senses. In the quiet  
sanctuary of earnest longings, we must  
18    deny sin and plead God's allness. We must resolve to  
take up the cross, and go forth with honest hearts to  
work and watch for wisdom, Truth, and Love. We  
21    must "pray without ceasing." Such prayer is an-  
swered, in so far as we put our desires into practice.  
The Master's injunction is, that we pray in secret and  
24    let our lives attest our sincerity.

### **Trustworthy beneficence**

Christians rejoice in secret beauty and bounty, hidden from the world, but known to God. Self-forgetfulness, purity, and affection are constant prayers. Practice not profession, understanding not belief, gain the ear and right hand of omnipotence and they assuredly call down infinite blessings. Trustworthiness is the foundation of enlightened faith. Without a fitness for holiness, we cannot receive holiness.

### **PAGE 16**

### **Loftiest adoration**

A great sacrifice of material things must precede this advanced spiritual understanding. The highest prayer is not one of faith merely; it is demonstration. Such prayer heals sickness, and must destroy sin and death. It distinguishes between Truth that is sinless and the falsity of sinful sense.

### **The prayer of Jesus Christ**

Our Master taught his disciples one brief prayer, which we name after him the Lord's Prayer. Our Master said, "After this manner therefore pray ye," and then he gave that prayer which covers all human needs. There is indeed some doubt among Bible scholars, whether the last line is not an addition to the prayer by a later copyist; but this does not affect the meaning of the prayer itself.

In the phrase, "Deliver us from evil," the original properly reads, "Deliver us from the evil one." This reading strengthens our scientific apprehension of the petition, for Christian Science teaches us that "the evil one," or one evil, is but another name for the first lie and all liars.

Only as we rise above all material sensuousness and

21 sin, can we reach the heaven-born aspiration and spir-  
itual consciousness, which is indicated in the Lord's  
Prayer and which instantaneously heals the sick.

24 Here let me give what I understand to be the spir-  
itual sense of the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father which art in heaven,  
27 *Our Father-Mother God, all-harmonious,*

Hallowed be Thy name.  
*Adorable One.*

30 Thy kingdom come.  
*Thy kingdom is come; Thou art ever-present.*

#### PAGE 17

1 Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.  
*Enable us to know,— as in heaven, so on earth,— God is*  
3 *omnipotent, supreme.*

Give us this day our daily bread;  
*Give us grace for to-day; feed the famished affections;*

6  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
*And Love is reflected in love;*

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from  
9 evil;  
*And God leadeth us not into temptation, but delivereth*  
*us from sin, disease, and death.*

12  
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the  
glory, forever.  
*For God is infinite, all-power, all Life, Truth, Love, over*  
*all, and All.*