

The Happiest People in the Word.

Youth's Bible Study Course

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalms 16:11.

Lesson 3. Joyful in the House of Prayer

Memory Verse: "Blessed is the man that . . . keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer." Isaiah 56:2, 7.

During World War 2 Corporal Keith Argraves, an ordinary Seventh-day Adventist medic, was with his unit crossing over to North Africa with the invading armies. When they were still one hundred miles from land one of the two motors of the plane spluttered and stopped. All efforts of the pilot to start the engine again were of no avail, and word was passed along to the men to get ready to jump, since they could not remain in the air with only one motor functioning. Life rafts were readied, but their case looked hopeless.

Then Keith asked his commanding officer for permission to pray out loud. Permission was given, and Keith prayed, asking God to make the engine start, so that they could complete their journey, for they were needed in Africa so much. While Keith was still praying the pilot stepped on the starter and the engine functioned perfectly the rest of the way.

You can read the story in his book, 'Keith Argraves, Paratrooper'. But you can hardly imagine how happy and joyful Keith was because of that prayer! Wouldn't you be happy and joyful in prayer if your prayers could start an airplane engine one hundred miles from land!

"I was glad," says David, "when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1.

In Job 22:21, 26, 27, we read: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." "For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God. Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee." And Jesus Himself said, "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John 16:24.

Now put with these scriptures this paragraph from Messages to Young People, page 150: "And all the way up the steep road leading to eternal life are well-springs of joy to refresh the weary. Those who walk in wisdom's way are, even in

tribulation, exceeding joyful; for He whom their soul loveth walks, invisible, beside them."

We cannot but conclude that in order for the children of God to be the happiest people in the world God gave to them the privilege of prayer, the joy of communing with Him along the way. As there can be no happy physical life without abundance of breathing, so there can be no happy spiritual life without abundance of prayer.

If prayer is such a joy and delight, why then do we pray so little? Can it be that we do not receive answers to our requests? Can it be that we feel our prayers do not reach all the way to heaven?

Once there was a man whose name was Saul, an enthusiastic, conscientious persecutor of the early Christian church. He was smitten with blindness on the road to Damascus one day, and Jesus came and spoke to him. He was led into the city, where he prayed and fasted for three days (Acts 9:9-11), and he was healed of his blindness in answer to prayer (verse 18). Ah, now, that is the kind of experience that would make us joyful in prayer.

That same man, who became Paul the apostle, prayed, and the dead were raised to life. "And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead." Acts 20:9, 10;

He prayed, and an earthquake opened the prison. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." Acts 16:25, 26.

He prayed, and 276 men were saved in a terrible shipwreck. "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." "And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls." Acts 27:23-25, 37. What wonderful, joyful experiences in prayer these were, but this same man Paul prayed earnestly three times for the removal of a "thorn in the flesh" "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." Corinthians 12:7, 8, quite possibly a weakness of eyesight, and

there was no physical healing. The only answer to that prayer was, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Verse 9.

Still in spite of what must have been a disappointment to him, this same Paul exhorts the Hebrews, and through them, every child of God, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16.

I like that thought of coming "boldly." To me it is related to the joyful, happy experience God wants us to have in prayer, and for years I have sought to understand it better. Step by step, by way of the common experiences of life, I have learned what it means to come "boldly," and have found such a new joy in prayer that I want to share it with you.

One day some years ago away over in Burma I was working at my office desk when I suddenly became aware of someone's presence in my room. I looked up quickly, but could see no one, and could hear no one! I called, "Who is it? What do you want?" But there was no reply, so I bent to my work again. But there was someone in the room. I could feel it. I looked up again quickly and caught sight of the tiniest fraction of a little black head as it bobbed behind the end of my desk. "Come on!" I coaxed. "I saw you; come on, Sonny, and tell me what you want."

Little by little, out came one of my small schoolboys, with one finger in his mouth, and another finger twisting a corner of his shirt. "Come on, Sonny! Don't be scared! I won't eat you!" I encouraged. He came a little nearer, but not a word came out of his little mouth. He stood on one leg and then on the other, a picture of personified timidity. "Come on, Sonny, tell me what you want," I coaxed.

He opened his mouth with a tremendous effort, "Please, Thara-I-please, Thara-I-" but he couldn't get out another word. I patted him on the head, smiled, and said, "Come on, finish it. Please, Thara-I-what?"

Gathering courage from my friendliness, he suddenly blurted out, "Please, Thara, I want a new shirt!"

"Splendid, splendid," I replied. "We have lots of cloth in the store and lots of big girls in school who like to sew little shirts for little boys. That's nothing to be scared about. Why, I wouldn't be scared if I wanted a new shirt!"

"But, Thara, I haven't got any money!"

"Oh, Oh!" What a difference that made. Come to think about it, I'd be scared to ask for a new shirt too if I didn't have any money! Well, I told him we could put it

on his account, and his father could pay in rice, or he himself could work it out in summer, and soon away he went as happy as could be, with the cloth for his new shirt under his arm.

I was still musing on his timidity, and had hardly seated myself at my desk again when I heard another boy running down the path like a fire engine. He burst into the back room, came through to my office puffing and blowing and all out of breath. He put two pice on my desk and blurted out, "Please, Thara, two pice' worth of soap!"

Now I didn't usually sell soap in the school store. I had big girls spend regular hours in the store selling soap and pencils--I was the director of the mission! But he was so much in earnest, and he was so bold, and courageous, and he had his money! I just didn't have the heart to tell him to come back some other time. I got up, sold him his two pice' worth of soap, and away he went with a cheerful "Thank you, Thara," and making more noise like a fire engine.

I sat down to my desk but not to work. I had just had a lesson in coming "boldly." How plain it was! If we wish to come "boldly" to the throne of grace, we must have faith, and lots of it. "Without faith it is impossible to please him," says Paul. Hebrews 11:6. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God," says James, "but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." James 1:5, 6. "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them," says Jesus. Mark 11:24.

And do you know, in order for them to have this faith, Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven"? Matthew 6:9. Jesus might have taught them to address their prayers to the King of kings and the Ruler of the universe, but He didn't. He taught them to say, "Our Father," because He knew that they had learned to come boldly to their earthly fathers with faith and confidence, and He wanted them to have that same joy as they came to God in prayer.

"I'm a father. I know how fearless and confident and persistent children are with their requests. Many years ago when our son Lenny was just a little four-year-old, he awoke one morning at four o'clock, looked around his little world, then crawled out of his crib, over the top of his mother, and sat straddle-legged on top of me. Then he began, "Daddy, Daddy, Dad-dy!" There was no response.

Next he began pulling my nose and opening my eyes while again calling "Daddy, Dad-dy, Dad-dy!"

"Son, son," I groaned. "It's too early to talk; let me sleep a little longer." I turned on my side, but so did he, and again he began the same nose pulling and the eye opening. "Daddy, Dad-dy, Dad-dy!"

I drowsily awoke and asked, "What's the matter?"

"You are my daddy, aren't you, Daddy?"

"Of course I'm your daddy, but it's too early to . . ."

"But, Daddy," he began earnestly, now sure that I was awake, "I want you to make me a motorcar, Daddy. Will you, Daddy? And paint it green all over, and put a toot toot on it like an engine train, and a seat in it for the pussy cat to ride on. Oh, please, Daddy, won't you make me a motorcar, huh? Daddy?"

"Son, son," I groaned hardly realizing what I was saying. "I'll make you anything, if you'll only stop talking and let me sleep some more!"

"He said he would; he said he would!" the little rascal chuckled to himself as he slid out of bed and ran out of the house to go and tell See See and Barnabas the good news. At six o'clock the bell rang for worship, and as I went over to the chapel I saw the three little fellows playing imaginary motorcars, toot tooting for all they were worth as they ran up and down giving each other imaginary rides. They saw me, and descended upon me en masse. "Daddy, you are going to make me a motorcar," said Lenny. "Aren't you, Daddy? Are you going to make it today, Daddy, huh, Daddy?"

"Today!" I gasped. "But where am I going to get the wheels, son?" But that was my problem, not his. He just beamed upon his little mates, See See and Barnabas, and said. "He is! He is! He said he would; he said he would."

As I came home to breakfast I found little Lenny eating his porridge with great gusto. "Daddy," he shouted, "I'm a good boy. I'm eating all my porridge up. You're going to make a good boy a motorcar, Daddy, huh, Daddy?" And it was motorcar motorcar, motorcar, all day long!

At last it was night, and he lay asleep in his little crib. His mother locked arms in mine and drew me over close by and whispered, "Isn't he sweet!" And I said, "Yes, when he's asleep! He's motor-car-ed me all day long! But how can I make him a motorcar? Where could I get the wheels? And the paint?"

"You could have the old baby-wagon wheels," suggested mother, "and there's a little green paint left over from the cupboard we painted last week."

So while little Lenny slept I went down to the workshop and made him a motorcar. I put a toot toot on it like a train engine, and a seat in it big enough for a boy and a pussy cat too. Then I mixed the paint with a generous supply of gasoline so it would be dry by morning, and painted it green all over. There never has been anything like it on earth, before or since. But I carried it up quietly and put it right beside my bed.

At four o'clock the next morning little Lenny awoke. He looked all around, then crawled out of his crib, right over his mother and sat straddle-legged on top of me once more. "Daddy, Daddy, Daddy!" he called, but there was no response. "Daddy, Dad-dy, Dad-dy!" And this time he pulled my nose and lifted my eyelids. "Dad-dy!"

"O, son!" I groaned. "Daddy's too sleepy to talk. Let us rest a little longer."

"But, Daddy, you said you were going to make me a motorcar. Are you going to make it today, Daddy, huh, Daddy?"

"Son," I said, "If I do something for you, will you do something for me?"

"Oh, yes, Daddy; tell me what to do."

"All right, jump out of bed, and get daddy his shoes."

"Oh, don't make the little fellow get out of bed," pleaded his mother.

But as he got off the bed to get my shoes, he slid right into the motorcar. There was just one minute of silent amazement, then, "Mother! Mother! He did make it, and it's got a toot toot on it like a train engine, and it has a seat in it for the pussycat to ride in, and it's painted green all over! O Mother, he did make it. I knew he would."

Oh what joy! Mother had to dress him in his precious motorcar that morning, and I helped him down the stairs with it. Soon I could hear See See and Barnabas as they joined him, and they all squealed with delight.

And that morning I read over again Luke 11:9-13: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.... If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" And I understand it so much better now.

I'm so happy I have a Father in heaven who has promised to supply all my needs; "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19, to protect and deliver me; "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Psalm 91:10, 11, and to lead and guide me; "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Psalm 23:4.

Why should I fear Him? He is my Father. He delights to have me come boldly and persistently to Him, in my time of need, just like my little son came boldly and persistently to me. Then I can rejoice even as he rejoiced.

There is something else I have discovered from the common things of life that prevents us coming "boldly" and robs us of a lot of joyfulness in prayer.

About three miles from my mission station there lived a dear old friend named Pa Keh. I had often visited and eaten in his house and he had often eaten and visited in my house. One day, hearing that I was going to Rangoon for supplies, he came and requested me to bring him back a certain book worth about fifty cents. He said, "I don't have the money just now, Thara, but I'll have it by the time you get back all right."

I said, "Never mind the money, Pa Keh; I'll gladly bring the book back for you." And I did. And I gave him the book one day as he was passing by.

"I'm sorry I don't happen to have the money with me, he said, "But at the end of the month I'll have it all right."

"Don't worry a minute!" I assured him. "Any time will do. It is only fifty cents anyway."

The end of the month came, and Pa Keh stopped in to explain in some way his bills had amounted to more than he had expected that month, and he had no money left.

"Would you mind waiting till the end of the next month, Thara?" he begged, "I'm sure I'll have the money then."

"Of course, of course." I assured him. "Any time will do. Why, you are welcome to it as a present for that matter!"

"Oh, no," he replied. "I ordered it and I'll pay for it, but if next month will do, it will be a little easier for me."

I noticed that he never called in to see me all during that month, but at the end of the month he came. "O Thara, I'm so ashamed," he cried. "I still have no money. My bills were too high again. I do not dare to ask you to wait for another month, but what can I do!"

"That's perfectly all right, Pa Keh," I said. "Don't feel bad! Please accept it as . . ."

"Oh, no, no! I couldn't think of it. But just let me have one more month."

I laughed and patted him on the shoulder. "I'm going to forget all about it," I said. "Please don't worry about it anymore." But all the next month he never called in, and I missed his little visits, for he was a pleasant old gentleman, and I loved to have him come.

Then one day at the end of the next month I was sitting on the front veranda of my dispensary treating a patient who had a terrible tropical ulcer on his leg, when looking up, who should I see coming away down the road, but my friend, Pa Keh. I could recognize him by his broad bamboo hat, and the fancy dah (sword) he always carried, and my heart warmed as I thought of his coming and the friendly visit we should have. I bent to my work, hoping to finish dressing the wound on my patient's leg before Pa Keh came.

The bandage completed, I stood up to greet my dear friend. "He must be about here by this time," I thought. But as I glanced down the road, I was dismayed to find it empty.

"Pa Keh," I said to myself. "I'm sure it was you. Now where could you have disappeared?"

Thinking maybe he had passed by unnoticed, I glanced down the road in the other direction, but no Pa Keh was in sight anywhere.

"Pa Keh, Pa Keh!" I said to myself. Then suddenly I saw some bushes moving on the other side of our cleared land across the road. I looked, and noticed someone sneaking along through the bushes on the other side of the fence, trying to keep out of sight. Now and then I caught a glimpse of a broad bamboo hat and a fancy dah! It was Pa Keh!

"Whatever is the matter? Pa Keh! Why are you afraid to come to see me? What makes you want to sneak out of sight behind the bushes like that?" I kept saying to myself. Then I remembered that fifty-cent debt, and I gathered that he still didn't have the money, and he was afraid to come and see me because he owed me some money, ashamed because his accounts were not square.

And I have discovered that life is just like that. We are all prone to avoid our creditors if our accounts are overdue. And I had learned another lesson about coming "boldly" to God in prayer.

God has done wonderful things for us, bestowing upon us blessings that cannot be numbered. "Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Psalm 40:5.

He has given us light, so that we need not walk in darkness. All He asks in return is that we live up to all the light we have, and recognize Him as supreme by bringing to Him our tithes and offerings. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Luke 10:27. Then He says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 3:10.

Oh, I like those words, "Prove me." They are bold words, courageous words. God does not require us to serve Him for naught. If we do our part with all our strength, He challenges us to dare Him to do His part. There is no fear or timidity about words like that.

I remember one day old Naw Kya Tee, who lived across the river from our mission station, came to me and said, "Thara, bring your gun. The trader's elephants are treading down my bananas and my garden."

"O Naw Kya Tee," I said, "a gun wouldn't do much good with forty elephants. I know something better than that!"

"You do?" she said with a surprised twinkle in her eye. "Yes."

"What is it?"

"Tell me first," I said, "have you been true to God since you were baptized?"

"Oh, yes, I have."

"And have you paid your tithe faithfully?"

"Yes, and more, though it's been so little."

"Then tonight I will come, and we will see what God will do."

And that night Naw Kya Tee, her son Ton Pein, Thara Peter, and I came "boldly" to the throne of grace. With the dear Book of God open to Malachi 3:10, we got on our knees, and said, "Lord we are living up to the light as we know it. We are

serving Thee with all our heart and soul and strength. Now, Lord, you've promised to rebuke the devourer for our sakes."

It was only a simple prayer, but that night forty elephants descended on the gardens on the riverbank. No fences could ever keep out those jungle giants. The gardens all around Naw Kya Tee's garden were stamped upon and destroyed, but not an elephant set foot on her garden.

But if we were not living up to all the light, if we were doing things we knew were wrong, if we were going to places we promised God we would not go to, if our tithe accounts were in arrears, we just couldn't talk like that. We would just naturally be like Pa Keh and try to keep out of sight and thus lose all the joy in prayer.

One afternoon I was sitting on my front veranda waiting for supper. The heat of the day was passed. A cool breeze was blowing from the river, and it was pleasant to rest in clean clothes after a refreshing bath. Just then one of my big boys came upstairs and said, "Thara, Mg Tin is downstairs and wants to see you."

I recognized the name at once. Mg Tin was the leaf thatch contractor, from whom we bought our leaf thatch for our different mission homes every year. I had been expecting him any day. He used to come, and together we would look over the houses, estimate how many strips of thatch we would need to get the houses ready for the rainy season. Then I would give him half the amount, and he would bring the leaves a few weeks later and collect the rest of the money. I was glad he had come, so I said to the boy, "Good! tell him to come right up, I have a chair all ready for him."

The boy was back in a minute, and said, "Thara, Mg Tin is scared to come up; he wants you to come down."

"Fiddlesticks," I said. And going to the back veranda, I called myself, "Come on up, Mg Tin, it's nice and cool on the front veranda. I have a chair all ready for you." I wish you could have seen the poor man. He looked so miserable and uncomfortable. He looked here, and he looked there.

"Come on, Mg Tin, my friend," I called. "Don't be scared. Come on up."

Still he hesitated, and looked around again. Suddenly he walked quickly over to a large nearby croton bush, and stooping over spat out his betel nut. Then he came to the waterpot at the foot of the stairs and washed his mouth out.

"Oh," I said to myself as I found the reason for his embarrassment, "his mouth was dirty."

Then he washed his face; hands, and feet.

"Oh," I said to myself, "his face and hands and feet were dirty." Then he brushed the dust from his travelstained garments.

Then smiling, happy, and confident, he came up into my nice clean home and sat with me on my front veranda. Soon Mg Tin went away with a pocketful of money, but I cannot soon forget the lesson he taught me about the conditions necessary for coming "boldly" to the throne of grace.

And I know that's why so many miss the joyfulness of prayer. Their mouths are dirty, their hands are dirty, their eyes are dirty, their ears are dirty, and their feet are dirty. No, not with dirt that can be washed away with soap and water, but with the dirt that Jesus shed His blood to wash away.

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," says David. Psalm 66:18. And John says of those who are the sons of God and hope to be with Him someday, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:3. What a joy awaits us as we clean up our hearts and lives, and enter in to the experience of coming "boldly" to the throne of grace, and there communing with our Father in heaven.

A number of years ago Mrs. Hare and I were invited to attend a camp meeting at Taikgyi. After traveling a day by boat and a night by train, we arrived at Rangoon. We planned to stay there a day to do some shopping, and then go on to Taikgyi the next day. At the Rangoon station I called three or four coolies and had them carry our suitcases, bed bundles, baskets, and camp cots to the checking room.

About three o'clock I returned to the station to take our luggage out to the mission house, where we planned to spend the night.

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight." I counted slowly as the baggage porter put my luggage on the floor.

"Hold on, porter, there's one more piece--a basket," I added.

"No, sir! Your ticket says eight pieces," he replied. "That's all you put in."

"But the basket! It's got my cornet in it."

"Well, I'm very sorry for you, mister, but it isn't usual to expect more out of a cloakroom than you put in. You'd better inform the police."

"Inform the police? You mean it's lost?"

The realization of the awful truth, the mental checking up only to find the porter's statement correct, made me dizzy. Stopping to think, I couldn't remember seeing the basket when we got off the train in the morning. And now the cornet that I had been playing for fifteen years was gone! The cornet that had inspired the jungle band and had played in a hundred villages--GONE!

I informed the police. I informed the station master and searched the station and the "lost luggage" room. I asked every coolie within hearing distance if he had seen my basket. But not a soul had seen such as basket all day long. The basket was lost, and my cornet was GONE!

Lifelessly I put my eight pieces of luggage into a gharry and directed the driver to the mission house. Even had the hour of death been nigh I could not have felt more hopelessly dejected than I did then, till my soul reacted with the thought of prayer. Why, of course! Why not pray? So right there in that old gharry, rumbling off down the road, mingling with the thousand sounds and voices common to an Eastern street, I prayed.

I told the Lord that that cornet was just as much His as it was mine. It had been consecrated to His work. Then I dared to ask Him that if it could glorify His name, if it could benefit His cause, to please have it sent back that evening, since I wanted to take it to the Taikgyi meeting the next day.

Talking it over with the Lord lifted my burden and gave me the assurance that God was now going to take matters into His hands. Maybe He would teach me a severe lesson. But I felt safe in the hands of the Lord, because He always works things out for our good in the long run, and in this frame of mind I completed the journey to the mission house, where my wife, sharing my disappointments and hopes, helped me get things ready for the night.

We were still fixing our camp cots and putting up the mosquito nets when about five o'clock there was a knock on the door, and a Mr. Minus, a total stranger to us, stood there, asking for "Mr. Hare."

"Mr. Hare," he asked politely, "excuse me, but was your wife traveling on the Maulmein train last night?"

"Yes!" I blurted out, holding my breath.

"Well, a friend of mine was in the same. ."

"Have you got my cornet?" I interrupted.

"I don't know what I've got, but if you'll come and . . ."

"It was in a basket with some rugs and pillows," I called out, as I dashed out to his gharry.

"Well, that's it," he said.

And the next minute I was happy--just filled with joy.

"My friend has been after me all day to try to hunt you up," he explained at last. "But I didn't have much hope of finding you in this big city. But at last, at half-past three, I could stand it no longer. She knew the name was Hare from the reservation ticket on the carriage. She knew you were Seventh-day Adventists from the conversation she had had with your wife. So I traced you from the church to the pastor's house, then to the office, then here. The basket got mixed up with her luggage somehow. I do hope it has not caused you any inconvenience."

If you could have heard that old trumpet playing at the Taikgyi meeting, you would have known that God does make His children "joyful in the house of prayer."

In Messages to Young People, on page 63, we read: "Satan will seek to discourage the followers of Christ, so that they may not pray or study the Scriptures.... It is his delight to cause the children of God to go shrinkingly, tremblingly, and painfully along, under continual doubt. He seeks to make the pathway as sorrowful as possible."

But God opens the door for His children to a fullness of joy in companionship with Him through prayer. "We are not to let the future, with its hard problems, its unsatisfying prospects, make our hearts faint, our knees tremble, our hands hang down. 'Let him take hold of my strength,' says the Mighty One, 'that he may make peace with me' Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend." Ministry of Healing, pp. 248, 249.

Now let us add to this the remainder of the paragraph used at the beginning of this chapter from Messages to Young People, page 150: "And all the way up the steep road leading to eternal life are well-springs of joy to refresh the weary. Those who walk in wisdom's ways are, even in tribulation, exceeding joyful; for He

whom their soul loveth walks, invisible, beside them. At each upward step they discern more distinctly the touch of His hand; at every step brighter gleanings of glory from the Unseen fall upon their path; and their songs of praise, reaching ever a higher note, ascend to join the songs of angels before the throne."

May we all develop such faith that we can talk to the living God as "our Father." Then let us live up to all the light we have, serving God with all our heart and soul and strength, paying Him our vows and tithes and offerings. Also let us be sure all our mistakes are confessed and made right. Then we may feel the thrill of coming "boldly" to the throne of grace in the time of need, and proving the promises of a loving God. I assure you our songs of praise will then indeed reach "ever a higher note." And this is but one of the joys that make Christians the happiest people in the world.

THREE WAYS

Three ways God has to answer prayer:

Sometimes He sayeth "yes."

Always 'tis joy for God to bless

His children in the way

That brings them happiness.

And when He sendeth in accord

We well may know it pleased the Lord

To answer this request.

But often God says "no."

He sees ahead; and so,

He knows 'tis best that He deny

The thing for which we plead.

Not all we want

But what we need He promised to supply.

And then, God sometimes speaketh low,

Saying, Wait awhile.

I must be slow, my child, In answering thee this time.

Have patience, and wait in faith sublime.

'Tis better that you learn to trust when I delay.

See'st thou the stars that nightly burn?

Know'st thou the seasons that return?

These come when they are due;

And so, my child, I'll answer you
Not now, but in a little while. And thou shalt see
Thy father sent when it was best for thee.
God answers prayer, I know!
His way I cannot tell, nor always understand.
But if I wait, or if I am denied,
God sends the best,
And all my needs are well supplied.
Charles E. Dickerson.
By permission of the author.

PRAYER

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower;
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near
Stands forth a sunny outline brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak! we arise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care;
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage, are with Thee?
Richard C. Trench.

Lesson 3 Quiz:

Write True or False [T or F]:

1. _____ We should only pray if we are in trouble.
2. _____ We can't live a happy Christian life without prayer.
3. _____ We should think of God as our loving Father.
4. _____ When we pray, we must have special words to say.
5. _____ The busier we are, the more we need to take time to pray.

6. _____ Bible study and prayer isn't important as long as we go to church.
7. _____ The more we learn about God the more we will enjoy talking to Him.
8. _____ If we are doing things that we know are wrong, we can't come boldly to God.
9. _____ Faith is to make ourselves believe something we know is not true.
10. _____ Faith is to have confidence that God means what He says in His Word.