

## **A letter to a friend on the subject of United Prayer**

I append this remarkable letter by CHM, written, probably between 1888-1892, to an unknown friend. It still communicates with freshness what had weight in his soul and brings again the appeal for the need of united prayer by all who love our Lord Jesus Christ and what belongs to Him. May the prayerful desires of this faithful servant of the Lord still speak to our consciences and stimulate the reader to similar expressions in their prayers.

Beloved in the Lord,

I have, for some time, been deeply exercised as to the condition of the whole church of God - the body of Christ; the beloved lambs and sheep of His flock, scattered through the various denominations and associations of Christendom, and the assemblies of those ostensibly gathered out to His blessed name. In a word, the low condition of things, on all hands; the little fruit in the gospel, and the excessive feebleness in collective and individual testimony for Christ. All this has weighed very heavily on my heart, before the Lord, in connexion with the fearful progress of infidelity, in all its phases, and the darkening influence of superstition; and I feel called to send forth an appeal to every child of God and servant of Christ, throughout the whole world, to unite in humbling ourselves before the Lord, in self-judgment, confession, supplication and intercession. I do not attempt to offer a suggestion as to time, place or mode. My simple object is to rouse the church of God to a profound and solemn sense of our true condition. If this object be gained, the Spirit will guide as to the most suited and effectual mode of carrying it out. I may just say to you, beloved friend, that it would rejoice my heart exceedingly, if all our assemblies would agree to have a week of special waiting on the Lord, for humiliation and prayer. I believe it would yield a harvest of blessing. But, lest this should not be

practicable, I venture, in dependence on our ever gracious Lord, to send this little appeal; and I would, in true brotherly love, entreat each beloved reader to unite in earnest, believing, persevering prayer for the following objects:

1. For the members of the church of God who are scattered through the various denominations of Christendom; that the Spirit may lead them into deep and true exercise of heart and conscience, as to their position and association, that they may with a single eye and teachable spirit, test the religious systems of the day by the word of God, and turn away from everything which cannot stand the test, that they may see their true place, 'inside the veil' and 'outside the camp;' and their proper hope, the coming of the Lord.

2. For all our assemblies, throughout the world, that they may be delivered from every hindrance, every stumbling-block, every root of bitterness; that they may be knit together in holy confidence, true brotherly love, and spiritual fellowship; that their meetings may be characterized by simplicity, reality, freshness and spiritual power; that the ministry may be with unction and true savour; that they may be entirely delivered from restless activity and unprofitable speaking; that there may be, in all, a clear understanding and a solemn sense of what it is that brings us together; that on the Lord's Day morning, the Lord's Supper may ever get its own proper, prominent place; that all may remember that 'we come together to break bread,' and that nothing may be allowed to interfere with that most precious object.

3. For the work and the workmen, at home and abroad; that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified; that many precious souls may be gathered in ere the door is shut; that the gospel may be preached, in all its fullness and moral grandeur; that the Lord's beloved messengers may be cheered by the assurance that, however the church has failed as God's witness on earth, yet

the gospel tells out what He is to every poor bankrupt sinner that will only trust Him; that the oral and written ministry may be clear, sound, and unequivocal; that all who speak and write may be ruled by one object, namely, the glory of Christ, in the comfort and edification of His beloved people: that they may carefully avoid all curious questions, startling theories, hair splittings and strifes of words.

4. For all Christian households; that they may be ruled in such a way as to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, in all things; that all Christian parents may realize their solemn responsibility to train their children, from their earliest days, in the habit of implicit and unhesitating obedience; that the atmosphere of our family circles may be love, peace, tender consideration one of another, each seeking the good of all, that the unconverted may be gathered in, the wanderers brought back, and backsliders restored.

5. For our own souls; that there may be a deeper work of grace in our hearts, a closer walk with God, a richer enjoyment of Christ, a more pronounced and devoted discipleship, a more earnest longing for His coming.

Will you, beloved friend, join in crying to God, night and day for these things; and seek to get others to do the same?

Affectionately yours in Christ

C. H. Mackintosh