

Prayer And The Family Altar

1 Job 1:5 “And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that
2 Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and **offered**
3 **burnt offerings according to the number of them all**: for Job said, It may
4 be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. **Thus did Job**
5 **continually.**”

6

7 **If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it**
8 **is now.** Infidelity and skepticism are prevailing. Iniquity abounds, and in
9 consequence, the love of many waxes cold. Corruption flows in the vital
10 currents of the soul, and rebellion against our heavenly Father breaks out in
11 the life. Depravity spreads its loathsome canker over the entire heart. The
12 moral powers, enslaved by sin, are under the tyranny of unholy appetites and
13 passions. **The soul is made the sport of Satan’s temptations; and unless**
14 **some mighty arm is stretched out to rescue him, man goes where the**
15 **arch-rebel leads the way.** {ST August 7, 1884, par. 1} ...

16 **And yet in this time of fearful peril some who profess to be Christians**
17 **have no family altar.** They do not honor God in the home, nor teach their
18 children to love and fear him....

19 **The idea that prayer is not essential is one of Satan’s most successful**
20 **devices to ruin souls. ... We are under obligation to pray because he**
21 **requires it; and in obeying his requirements we shall receive a gracious**
22 **and precious reward.** {ST August 7, 1884, par. 4}

23 **I know of nothing that causes me so great sadness as a prayerless home.**
24 **I do not feel safe in such a house for a single night; and were it not for**
25 **the hope of helping the parents to realize their necessity and their sad**
26 **neglect, I would not remain.** The children show the result of this neglect;
27 for the fear of God is not before them. **Parents should make a hedge about**
28 **their children by prayer; they should pray with full faith that God will**
29 **abide with them, and that holy angels will guard themselves and their**
30 **children from Satan’s cruel power.** {ST August 7, 1884, par. 5}

31 **In every family there should be order, and regular habits. There should**
32 **be a fixed time to rise in the morning, a time for breakfast, and a time**
33 **for prayer, either directly before or directly after the morning meal.**
34 How appropriate it is for **parents to gather their children about them**
35 **before their fast is broken, and direct their young minds to our heavenly**
36 **Father, who bestows upon us the bounties of his providence.** Let them
37 thank God for protecting them during the night, and ask for help and grace
38 and the watchcare of angels through the day. ... {ST August 7, 1884, par. 6}

39 **Fathers and mothers, at least morning and evening lift up your hearts to**
40 **God in humble supplication for yourselves and your children.** Your dear
41 ones are exposed to temptations and trials. There are frets and irritations that
42 daily beset the path of old and young; and those who would live patient,
43 loving, cheerful lives amid daily annoyances, must pray. **This victory can be**
44 **gained only by a resolute and unwavering**
45 **purpose, constant watchfulness, and continual help from God.** {ST
46 August 7, 1884, par. 7}

47 **The father, who is the priest of his household, should conduct the**
48 **morning and evening worship. There is no reason why this should not be**
49 **the most interesting and enjoyable exercise of the home-life, and God is**
50 **dishonored when it is made dry and irksome.** Let the seasons of family
51 worship be **short and spirited. Do not let your children or any member of**
52 **your family dread them because of their tediousness or lack of interest.**
53 When a long chapter is read and explained and a long prayer offered, this
54 precious service becomes wearisome, and it is a relief when it is over. {ST
55 August 7, 1884, par. 8}

56 It should be the special object of the heads of the family to **make the hour of**
57 **worship intensely interesting.** By a little thought, and careful preparation
58 for this season, when we come into the presence of God, family worship can
59 be made pleasant, and will be fraught with results that eternity alone will
60 reveal. **Let the father select a portion of Scripture that is interesting and**
61 **easily understood; a few verses will be sufficient to furnish a lesson**
62 **which may be studied and practiced through the day. Questions may be**
63 **asked, a few earnest, interesting remarks made, or incident, short and to**
64 **the point, may be brought in by way of illustration. At least a few verses**
65 **of spirited song may be sung, and the prayer offered should be short and**
66 **pointed.** The one who leads in prayer should not pray about everything, but
67 should express his needs in simple words, and praise God with
68 thanksgiving. {ST August 7, 1884, par. 9}

69 ...

70 **God has made earnest prayer the condition of the bestowal of his richest**
71 **blessings.** Prayer brings us nearer and nearer to Jesus. **However fully we**
72 **may have given ourselves to God at conversion, it is of no avail unless we**
73 **renew our consecration in each separate duty as it presents itself.** Dear
74 reader, **consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very**
75 **first business, even if you have to rise half an hour earlier in order to**
76 **find time.** Let your prayer be, **“Take me, O Lord, as wholly thine. I lay all**
77 **my plans at thy feet. Use me today in thy service. Whatever errand I**
78 **may do, send me. Whatever I may say to honor thee, or lead souls to**
79 **Christ, help me to say it.”** {ST August 7, 1884, par. 13}

80 This is a daily matter. **Each morning consecrate yourself and your family**
81 **to God for that day.** Make no calculation for months or years; for they are
82 not yours. One brief day is given you, and that one day work for yourself and
83 your family as though it were your last. **Surrender all your plans to God,**
84 **to be carried out or given up, as his providence shall indicate. In this**
85 **manner you may, day by day, be giving your life with its plans and**
86 **purposes into the hands of God, accepting his plans instead of your own,**
87 **no matter how much they may interfere with your arrangements nor**

88 **how many pleasant projects may have to be abandoned.** Thus the life will
89 be moulded more and more after the divine Model; and “the peace of God,
90 which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through
91 Christ Jesus.” {ST August 7, 1884, par. 14}

92

93 **The hour of prayer should not be neglected for any consideration. Do**
94 **not talk and amuse yourselves till all are too weary to enjoy the season of**
95 **devotion.** To do this is to present to God a lame offering. **At an early hour**
96 **of the evening, when we can pray unhurriedly and understandingly, we**
97 **should present our supplications and raise our voices in happy, grateful**
98 **praise.** {Pr 165.2}

99

100 I used to say to my children, as they were leaving home in the morning:
101 “Now, children, you are going out for the day’s work. Remember that
102 you are to guard your tongue. Speak not one word that will provoke a
103 wrong act. If you fail, then when we meet at family worship during the
104 evening hour, we shall talk the matter over and make it right with God.
105 You see, children, kind words never cause you any pain and sorrow. Speak
106 kindly, tenderly to one another, and see what a refreshing, what a blessing,
107 comes to your own heart. But if you begin to contend one with another, then
108 passions arise, and you have to strive with all your might to retain control
109 over yourself. Be brave, be true.” – {1SAT 374.2} And **at eventide, when**
110 **the children would gather together before going to bed, we would talk**
111 **over the happenings of the day.** Possibly during the day one of the children
112 had said, “Mother, someone has done thus and so to me.” I had replied that
113 when we all came together in the evening we could talk it over. **When**
114 **evening came, they had all had time for reflection, and they did not feel**
115 **inclined to bring charges against one another. They would say, “Mother,**
116 **I have done thus and so,” and the tears would start from their eyes, as**
117 **they would add, “I feel as if I would like to have you ask the Lord to**
118 **forgive me. I believe He will.”** And then we would bow in prayer and
119 confess the sins of the day, and pray for forgiveness. After confessing their
120 wrongdoings, these little fellows would soon fall asleep. – {1SAT 375.1}

121

122 **Prayer & Angel Guardianship**

123 “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and
124 delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7

125

126 “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy
127 ways.” Ps. 91:11

128

129 I wish to call your attention this afternoon to the importance of everyone
130 understanding that we cannot keep ourselves, that God has angels.

131 **These angels from heaven communicate with the children of men, and**
132 **not one of us, by anything we may do, can uphold or keep ourselves. We**
133 **are where we are, kept every moment by the power of God.** {2SAT 57.2
134 } **We do not take in this matter and present it in the church; we do not**

135 **present it in our families; we do not talk it as we ought, and thus keep in**
136 **remembrance that every soul with whom we are connected has the**
137 **guardianship of heavenly angels**, sent forth to minister unto those who
138 shall be heirs of salvation. { 2SAT 57.3 }

139

140 Before leaving the house for labor, all the family should be called together,
141 and the father, or the mother in the father's absence, should plead fervently
142 with God to keep them through the day. Come in humility with a heart full of
143 tenderness and with a sense of the temptations and dangers before yourselves
144 and your children; **by faith bind them upon the altar, entreating for them**
145 **the care of the Lord. Ministering angels will guard children who are**
146 **thus dedicated to God. It is the duty of Christian parents, morning and**
147 **evening, by earnest prayer and persevering faith, to make a hedge about**
148 **their children.** They should patiently instruct them, kindly and untiringly
149 teach them how to live in order to please God. {1T 397.2}

150

151 Prayer & Intercession For Children

152 Isa. 49:25 "But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall
153 be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will
154 **contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy**
155 **children.**"

156

157 No work can equal that of the Christian mother. She takes up her work with a
158 sense of what it is to bring up her children in the nurture and admonition of
159 the Lord. **How often will she feel her burden's weight heavier than she**
160 **can bear; and then how precious the privilege of taking it all to her**
161 **sympathizing Saviour in prayer. She may lay her burden at his feet, and**
162 **find in his presence a strength that will sustain her,** and give her
163 cheerfulness, hope, courage, and wisdom in the most trying hours. How
164 sweet to the care-worn mother is the consciousness of such a friend in all her
165 difficulties. **If mothers would go to Christ more frequently, and trust him**
166 **more fully, their burdens would be easier, and they would find rest to**
167 **their souls.** {HR July 1, 1877, par. 1}

168

169 **Christian mother, forget not where lies the Source of your strength.**
170 **Abound in prayer—fervent, earnest, wrestling prayer. ... Constant**
171 **prayer will fit you for your duties.** By prayer you may lay hold of the
172 strength of God, and be enabled to say with the apostle, "I can do all things
173 through Christ which strengthen me." – {ST August 20, 1902 Par. 6}

174

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