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The Pure in Heart.

By Lyman Abbott.

TO THE PURE IN HEART, proof of a God seems as idle as proof of a mother to a child clasped in its mother's arms, or proof of love to the two lovers who have just plighted their troth to each other. To such all argument of the question, Does God answer prayer? seems as idle as to a child would seem the question whether he can talk with his father or not. Prayer is not a message by wireless telegraphy to some unknown station, remote, invisible, from which some wireless answer may return. Prayer is not a check presented at a bank calling for money to be paid out over the counter at sight or after three days or thirty days of waiting. Prayer is the communion of spirit with spirit. The answer is a new inspiration of courage to meet danger; of patience to take up anew the burden of life; of hope to exorcise the spirit of despair. To one who thus sees God and communes with God the companionship of the Great Companion is the most real, the most intimate, the most certain experience of his life. Into this companionship with God the soul comes not by much study, but by high and holy living. We understand our neighbor only as we feel what he feels and purpose what he purposes. We understand God only as in these sources of our being we are at one with Him. Not to intellectual acumen, not to great scholarship, but to purity of intention and purity of imagination, to singleness of purpose; cleanness of thought and tenderness of feeling, is God revealed. We come to the vision of Him as we grow into oneness with Him, and we grow into oneness with Him by purposing what He purposes. If it is true that we shall be like Him when we see Him as He is, it is also true that we see Him as He is only as we are like him. "Ye are," says Paul, "the temple of God; and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. If any one shall corrupt the temple of God, him shall God bring to corruption." Whatever drives God out of His temple destroys the temple and makes it a common edifice. It is God's temple only when God dwells in it, and God dwells in it only when in aspiration if not actual realization, in strong desire if not always in successful accomplishment, the temple is pure.