

**BREATHINGS AFTER  
GOD, PRAYERS FOR  
THE CLOSET. PART I**

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Breathings after God, prayers for the closet. Part I by Anonymous

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**ANONYMOUS**

**BREATHINGS AFTER  
GOD, PRAYERS FOR  
THE CLOSET. PART I**



# Breathings after God.

PRAYERS FOR THE CLOSET.

BY A LAYMAN.

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*"Hide not thine ear at my breathing."*

LAM. iii. 56.

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PART I.

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*The following OPINIONS are so striking and valuable, as showing the great importance of Prayer and attention to religious duties, that they have been selected as a suitable introduction to the Prayers.*

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“Prayer is as essential to the soul as breath is to the body. It is one of the first acts of spiritual life, and there is nothing by which we may at any time form so correct an estimate of our spiritual condition, as by an engagement of soul in this all-important exercise. I speak not here of *sensible* enjoyments in prayer,—lively frames of devotion, when our hearts burn within us, and our tongues catch the flame, and the whole soul pours forth in ardent aspirations of prayer and praise. Nor do I refer to peculiarly kind and pleasant emotions of godly sorrow, when the soul is graciously melted under the sweet influence of the

Spirit into repentance. These seasons are indeed precious moments, rich in blessing to the child of God; but they are usually brief and occasional refreshments by the way to support us. But I mean rather that stedfast continuance, that patient waiting on God in the unshaken conviction of his faithfulness and love, which brings honour to God, and which is no small evidence of spiritual health and strength, and of Divine grace with those in whom it is found. We are so prone to live continually by feelings, instead of living on the simple word of God, that when God shuts us up to them, and we have nothing else left us to animate our hopes, presently our hearts fail us; we give up prayer, or it is little more than unbelieving lamentations or complaints; we expect nothing from it." — GOODE ON LUKE xviii. ver. 1.

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"Unless there be a resolute appointment of a certain time every day for entire seclusion and secret communion with God, and private devotional dwelling upon his Holy Word, there never can be much of real and spiritual nourishment in our ministry, or much of unction



in our ministrations, or much of Christ in our souls."—BLUNT'S LECTURES ON ELISHA.

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"There is an alienation of mind from God which grows in us, if there be no effort of attention, no care, no vigilance, in the consideration of truth. And on the other hand, there is a spirituality of mind which is corroborated and advanced as we bestow pains on religion, and fix our thoughts and contemplations on its doctrines, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit."—ROBT. HALL ON ACTS xiv. 22.

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"Man has a voluntary control over his thoughts. He *may* think of God when he chooses. He *may* bid his mind cease from its rambles, and lift itself up to the abode of the Eternal. He may lay an arrest on the processes of the inner man, and say to it, with authority, that now is the moment for an aspiration, or solemn feeling towards God. He may repeat and multiply this effort into a habit of seriousness. It may mix itself into his ordinary business. It may accompany him in his walk. It may season the hours of his social

fellowship, and what at first is difficult and rare, may, by dint of perseverance, settle itself into an habitual tendency.

“This is not the attitude of nature, but it may be tried and practised, and at length effectually learned. But you will never reach it unless you begin; you will never succeed in it unless you persevere; and, therefore, my plain advice to you is, that you now set about it in good earnest. Lay a mandate upon your thinking faculty, and send it heavenward to God. There is many an useless moment that may thus be turned to account; many an idle waste that may thus be reclaimed to sacredness. This is true spiritual education, the practice of godliness instead of the theory—the way by which the soul may at length be disciplined to the habit of setting God always before it.”—CHALMERS ON ISAIAH i. 3.

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“Learn then, however men may speak of it, that the eternal salvation of a soul, although entirely the work of free and sovereign grace, is, to every individual, a matter of the extremest difficulty, and requiring the most earnest, persevering, intense application of all the

powers of the mind, and all the efforts of the will. Every declaration, even every single expression in the Word of God is calculated to convey this solemn truth. One Apostle declares that even the righteous shall *scarcely* be saved. Our Lord himself does not merely say 'strive to enter in at the strait gate,' as our translation renders it, but *agonize* to enter in.

"And can you hope that heartless efforts, cold prayers, listless endeavours, divided affections, will come up to the requirements which such words and such declarations convey? You feel that you cannot. 'Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto eternal life, and few there be that find it.'—  
BLUNT'S LECTURES ON THE HISTORY OF OUR LORD.

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"What is Prayer? It is the communion of the spiritual life in the soul of man with its Divine Author; it is the breathing back the Divine life into the bosom of God, from whence it came; it is holy, spiritual, humble converse with God. It is a talking with God as a child talketh with his father, as a friend converseth