

“Prayer Meeting Abandoned”

In former times, there was a neighborhood some few miles from Philadelphia, where the inhabitants did not, it would seem, enjoy but seldom the blessings of a gospel ministry. Still, some of them were professors of religion, and for a long time they met together in a school-house in the capacity of a conference and prayer meeting. The spirit of religion, however, was low among them, that their meetings were conducted with little interest and attended by a scanty number. At length, at the close of a lifeless service, some one proposed that the meetings thereafter should be abandoned. All assented but an aged mother in Israel, who, after a vain remonstrance, assured them that the worship of God should be kept up there, though she might have to keep it up alone. On the ensuing Sabbath she accordingly bent her solitary steps to the deserted sanctuary. She read a portion of Scripture, sang a hymn, and knelt down to weep and pray over the desolation of Zion. While engaged in this exercise, two men happened to be strolling by, and overhearing prayer, went in. What was their surprise on entering, to find but a single Christian present, where they expected to find an assembly. They took their seats and waited till she had got done. As she rose from her knees, seeing strangers present, she asked them to engage in prayer. They had probably never prayed in their lives, and accordingly, they peremptorily refused. Having, therefore, we presume, addressed them faithfully on the subject of religion, she sung another hymn, and once more addressed the throne of grace. At the close of the services, she gave out an appointment for a prayer meeting in the same place on the ensuing Sabbath. These men were not slack in publishing their singular visit to the school-house, or in circulating the notice of another meeting which was to be held there the next Lord's day. When the time arrived, some came from shame, perhaps, and more from curiosity, and so the school-house was filled ! The Spirit of the Lord now began to work ; Christians confessed their lukewarmness and devoted themselves afresh to the service of God ; and sinners began to inquire, " What shall we do to be saved ? " Indeed, there was a precious revival; and as the result, a church was constituted, and remains as a monument of that Christian woman's faithfulness to this day. One of the converts became a minister of the gospel, and labored in the western part of Pennsylvania, and was, perhaps, instrumental in the conversion of many souls. Despise not the day of small things. Keep up the prayer meetings.