

Upcoming Events

Mid-course Review: Saturday Meeting 2021

Memorial Day: May 25

Panera Bread Open Bible Study: TBD

Prayer

“Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.” James 5:13

“...rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer...” Romans 12:12

“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” Matthew 5:44

May Birthdays

2 Peggy Woodruff

15 Kena Brown

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
(Vacant)

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Coronavirus Prayer

By Doug Dingley

We all know that *“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much”* (James 5:16). We know that God hears and answers the prayers of His children (Matthew 7:7-11). Even when they are so weak, weary, and without hope that they no longer know how or what to pray for, God still: hears them, helps them, and gives them the strength to bear up and come bursting through their worst of conflicts as more than conquerors in Christ (Romans 8:24-39).

It obviously goes without saying that many of us are praying daily for a very swift and sudden end to this Coronavirus chaos so that we can get back to life as “usual.” But because we have yet to see many real and positive results from those prayers, we may be tempted to think that God is either not listening like He said He would, or that our prayers as His blood-bought children are not reaching Him for some reason. If you are living in accordance with His word as much as you possibly can and know how, but have grown a bit weary and/or ready to give up praying because of a lack of seeing any real, positive, tangible results over this (or anything else for that matter), then understand this: Whenever you are seeing no positive results in response to your prayers, it does not mean that God is not listening; it simply means that God’s purposes have not yet been accomplished.

Do you remember the souls of the saints, slain for their faithfulness, who cried out from under the altar, *“How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth”* in Revelation 6:9-10? God’s answer? It was going to be *“a little while longer,”* because all He wanted was not yet *“completed”* (vs. 11). What about the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10? He repeatedly prayed that his *“thorn in the flesh”* would be removed. God apparently heard His prayer

because He responded to it. But He did not remove Paul's thorn because He had something far better in mind for him at the time. Finally, there is Jesus – the perfect, sinless, flawless Son of the living God. He also prayed fervently and repeatedly that God might find another way for Him other than the cross (Matthew 26:36-44). We know without a doubt that God heard His prayers – according to Scripture (Hebrews 5:7-8). But we also know that no matter how difficult the ordeal He would have to endure (Hebrews 12:1-3), that God had millions of reasons why He simply could not answer His only begotten Son's heartfelt prayers "yes" at the time... and we were one of them (Romans 5:6-11; Galatians 3:26-27).

Aren't we grateful that our Father in heaven is wise enough, and loving enough, to know when to say 'No,' or, 'We must wait just a little while longer,' in order to accomplish His purposes, whatever they may be? Then pray on without ceasing brethren – and just trust Him like Jesus did! Do ourselves a huge favor: Take a moment right now to read Isaiah 40:26-31 and see just how true these things are! God bless!

Let Us Put Honor Back in Prayer

By Sam Willcut

I thank God continually for my godly parents who reared me. As the son of a preacher, I have had many opportunities that most children never have had. One such type of opportunity was having preachers, elders, deacons and other faithful Christians into our home for meals—I still enjoy this blessing. Right before we ate a delicious meal, my father would usually ask our guest, "Would you do the honor of giving thanks?"

The question asked implies that it is an honor to lead prayers. Do we really believe today that it is an honor not just to pray, but to be able to lead prayers? Many ask preachers periodically to lead benedictions for various events and programs. These are most often honorable invitations. Many have even led prayers for Congress. Is it not an honor today to lead the prayer during our worship and devotionals? The audience who is praying with us does not make it honorable, but the audience to which we are praying makes it honorable.

In Luke 11, one of the disciples of Jesus requested of Him, "*Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples*" (Luke 11:1). Jesus then taught them to pray to Jehovah God in such a way as they never had before: "*And he said unto them, 'When ye pray, say, "Our Father which art in heaven..."'*" (Luke 11:2). Those Jewish disciples were able to learn and know that God truly was their heavenly Father. What an honor to be His children, and to call our God "Father!"

Notice with me a few reasons why approaching our Father in prayer is honorable. First, God listens to and answers our prayers. The Bible is rich with passages informing us that God has always listened to the prayers of His children, and He will still listen to our prayers today. During the days of Abraham, God tells Abimelech in a dream that he will be blessed because of Abraham's prayer for him (Gen. 20:7, 17). Hannah prayed for a son in First Samuel, and God blessed her. Hezekiah prayed for longer life and God granted it to him (2 Kings 20:3-5; Isa. 38:2-5). David says in Psalm 5:2, "*Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.*" Solomon says, "*The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight. The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous*" (Prov. 15:8, 29). Peter says in First Peter 3:12, "*For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.*"

Another reason that prayer is honorable is that we, as Christians who sin, can still approach God for cleansing and forgiveness. The publican prayed in Luke 18:13, "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*" John says in 1 John 1:9, "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

Jesus certainly warns against those in Matthew 6:5 who misuse the honor of prayer. This honor to pray is not one of self-praise, but rather is one of praise to God. Therefore, when people ask us to lead a prayer, let us not look upon it as a burden, but rather, let us look upon it as an honor!