

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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March 31, 2024

“The Importance Of Prayer To The Christian”

By Brian Meade



Things that are important to us are the ones we do not neglect. But even more than that, we are often found doing the things important to us, and they characterize our lives.

Jesus was found by his parents doing important things, when he said to them, *“Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”* (Luke 2:49).

I also believe there is a real danger of underestimating how important prayer is to our life as a Christian. It could very well be the reason why many fail to pray as they ought. And it may be because they have never really considered how special prayer really is.

I. Prayer Is Our Only Avenue To Talk With God.

When you study the Scriptures carefully, you will find that there is not a 101 different ways to communicate with God. We read of men and women in the Bible who petitioned God for their needs and concerns, and even prayed for others (Genesis 18; 20:17; 24:12-14; Numbers 11:2; 21:7; Judges 13:8; 1 Samuel 1:10; 2 Kings 6:18....).

It Is true that God speaks to us today through His Word (Psalm 119:104; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 20:32). And God wants and expects us to pray to Him in adoration, praise, petition, and intercessory type prayers.

Paul instructs Timothy concerning this in 1 Timothy 2:1-4, *“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

So prayer is to be respected as our communication-line to God for Him to hear us. Jesus even stated concerning prayer, *“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”* (Matthew 6:6).

Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3:12, *“For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”* This reminds us that God will hear our prayers as we live for Him.

II. Prayer Is An Extremely Valuable Help In Times Of Temptation.

When we consider the importance of prayer, let us not underestimate how effective prayer can be to overcome the devil’s lures to sin.

As we often will go to the word of God to find strength and resolve to do right (Psalm 119:11; Matthew 4:4; 4:7; 4:10), we should equally consider the element of prayer as well. Both of them together can be a very effective means of helping us endure very tempting sins we may struggle with (Matthew 6:13; Matthew 26:41).

It can very well be the help that Hebrews 4:16, *“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

The context for verse 16 is led up by what the writer says in verses 14-15, *“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest*

who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” The Hebrew writer reminds of Jesus’ stay here on the earth, and how He was tempted like us, and knows our weaknesses.

We should desire to go to our heavenly Father with perhaps, even the specific temptations we are facing, and say, “Lord, help me to endure this temptation to _____, and remain faithful to You!”

Prayer could make all the difference how we handle saying “No” to some threatening sin we are dealing with in our daily lives. It can very well be “the way of escape” that Paul speaks of 1 Corinthians 10:13. So let us never fail to pray in the times we need strength from God.

III. Prayer Is Indispensable In Times Of Our Suffering.

Another crucial time when prayer will be of great comfort is when we are going through hard times of suffering. It is when we are hurting from the pain of friends or family forsaking us, when we lose loved ones so dear to us, when our enemies viciously malign and persecute us for righteousness sake (Matthew 5:10-12).

Those can be extremely trying times to try to cope with on our own, but the good news is— we are not on our own through suffering! For the Christian suffering, God really is just a prayer away! (John 9:31; 1 Peter 3:12).

Our great example Jesus relied on prayer in times of His suffering, especially before the cross in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46).

It is the times before the cross, that Hebrews 5:7-8 directly foreshadows Jesus’ suffering and enduring it, by saying, *“who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.”*

Peter reminds us to trust God through our times of suffering in 1 Peter 4:19, *“Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”*

IV. Prayer Is Our Means Of Asking For Our Needs.

When most people think of prayer, they generally think of prayer as simply asking God for all our needs we may desire. To some, prayer is a even a means to get luxurious and outrageous requests for things they don’t even need at all! (James 4:3).

But proper prayer to God *is* about asking God to supply what we need, to what is according to His will; as God wants us to ask Him.

Note such passages as Matthew 6:8, *“...for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.”*

Jesus said to the twelve, *“And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”* (John 16:23-24).

James says to us, *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;”* (James 1:5-7).

V. Prayer Is Following Jesus’ Great Example.

1. Getting up early to pray- Mark 1:35.

“In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.”

Jesus chose the first thing He did to be His prayers— showing prayer as a priority!

2. Going to a mountain top or secluded place- Mark 6:46.

“After bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.”

Jesus wanted to pray without distractions— because it was so important to have those times alone with His Father.

3. Prayed before choosing the twelve disciples- Luke 6:12-16.

Jesus teaches us to pray about our important decisions as well.

4. Prayed all night- Luke 6:12.

“It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.” He had much to speak to His Father about.

Those Who Need Our Prayers & Encouragement:

Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Mary Ann Holley, LuAnne Parrish, Robert Howard, Billy Grisham, keep Tim Harris Sr. in your prayers for his upcoming eye surgery, & Fred Johnson. Nellie Cottrell was sick last week and has recovered from the Flu.

Conner Whitemore obeyed the gospel last Wednesday night!

We Have Changed The Dates:

Our Gospel Meeting With Stacy Crim is scheduled for April 28—May 1st.
(Sunday to Wednesday)

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Dan Cottrell
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *“Seeing The Grace Of God”*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
Author: Herschel Patton
Starting Page & Question: *Page 59, Question #1*

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Jerry Kennemur
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Tim Harris Jr.
Scripture Reading: *Matthew 28:1-8.*
Song Leader: Lee Busby
Lord’s Supper: Fred Johnson
Assisting: ————
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *“What The Resurrection Of Christ Should Mean To You”*
Closing Prayer: Doug George

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

April 3, 2024

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Johnson
Workbook: The Book Of Daniel
Author: By Daniel H. King
Starting Page & Question: *Page #54, Question #6b*
Invitation: Doug George
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Closing Prayer: Blake Briggs

Gospel
Meeting

Speaker: **Stacy Crim**

Location: **Meeks Street Church of Christ**

Date: **April 28st-- May 1st.**

Starting Time: **9:00 A.M. Sunday Morning**

7:00 PM Monday–Wednesday

(No Sunday Evening Service)

“Seeing The Grace Of God”

Lesson Text: **Acts 11:19-23.**

I. How Did Barnabas See God’s Grace?

- **Vs. 23**, Barnabas Saw The Grace Of God At Antioch.
- What Is Grace?

charis (χάρις, 5485), “grace,” indicating favor on the part of the giver,”

(**Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Vol. 2, p. 7).**)

- We Are Saved By Grace- **Ephesians 1:7; 2:5; 2:7-9.**

- We Also Need To Think Of Access- **prosagoge** (προσαγωγή, 4318),

lit., “a leading or bringing into the presence of” (*pros*, “to,” *ago*, “to lead”), denotes “access,” with which is associated the thought of freedom to enter through the assistance or favor of another. It is used three times, (a) Rom. 5:2, of the “access” which we have by faith, through our Lord Jesus Christ, into grace; (b) Eph. 2:18, of our “access” in one Spirit through Christ, unto the Father; (c) Eph. 3:12, of the same “access,” there said to be “in Christ,” and which we have “in confidence through our faith in Him.”

(**Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Vol. 2, pp. 7–8).**)

- Barnabas Saw People Coming To The Lord By Obeying The Gospel- **Acts 11:20-21.**

- **Acts 20:24; Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; Acts 19:1-5.**

II. God’s Grace Changes People’s Lives.

- **Titus 2:11-12.**
- **2 Corinthians 5:17.** Grace Changes Behavior, Priorities, Desires, Masters, Destinies....
- That’s What Repentance And Baptism Does- **Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:38—Acts 3:19.**
- What Happens When We Don’t Change? **Romans 6:1-6.**

III. Barnabas Encouraged Them To Continue In God’s Grace.

- **Acts 11:22-24.** Again in **Acts 13:43; 14:21-22.**
- Barnabas Didn’t Teach “Once In Grace, Always In Grace.”
- It Is Possible To:
 - **2 Corinthians 6:1; Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 10:29; Hebrews 12:15.**

IV. God’s Grace Makes Christians.

- **Acts 11:25-26.**
- The Context Is All About What God Was Doing And Working In Their Lives!
- Not Given By The Enemies Of Jesus, But God Himself- **Isaiah 62:2.**
- It Is The Name We Still Wear- **Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16.**
- Not In Name Only— But Christ-Like... **Luke 6:40; 1 Corinthians 11:1.**

IV. Can People See The Grace Of God In Your Life?

- Have You Truly Been Converted? **Acts 11:21; Titus 2:11-12.**
- Are You Continuing With The Lord? **Acts 11:23; John 8:31-32.**
- Are You A Faithful Christian? **Acts 11:26; Revelation 2:10.**

“What The Resurrection Of Jesus Should Mean To You”

Lesson Text: **Matthew 28:1-8.**

I. What Jesus Death Meant To His Disciples.

- It Was seemingly A Great Shock And Surprise When Jesus Was Arrested & Crucified.
 - Even Though Jesus Told Them Plainly- **Luke 9:22; 22:15; Matthew 26:55-56.**
- It Meant Their Master And Teacher Was Taken Away From Them **John 18:12-24.**
- It Was A Time Of Great Sorrow, Loss, And Unfulfilled Hope **Luke 24:13-24.**
- They Had Stopped Following Jesus For A Time. **Matthew 26:31-35; John 21:3.**

II. What Jesus’ Resurrection Meant To His Disciples.

- An Empty Tomb They Could See **John 20:1-9.**
- Their Master Had Returned From The Dead **John 20:11-18; 19-20; Acts 1:1-3.**
- They Were Witnesses Of A Resurrected, Living Savior. **Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8.**
- A Return To The Work Jesus Prepared Them For **John 20:24-29; John 21:15-17.**
- Strong Persecution From Preaching Jesus’ Resurrection **Acts 4:1-4.**

III. What Jesus’ Resurrection Means To Everyone.

- That We Have A Resurrected Savior! Jesus Was The Christ! **Matt. 12:38-40; Rom.1:4.**
- The Forgiveness Of Sins Is God’s Valid Offer To You. **1 Corinthians 15:12-19.**
- There Is Life And Hope Beyond The Grave. **1 Corinthians 15:20-26.**
- That Salvation Can Only Come From Following Jesus. **Luke 18:29-30; Mark 16:16.**

IV. What Does It Mean To You?

- **1 Corinthians 15:1-4.**
- If We Deny Jesus Was Resurrected From The Dead— We Deny Truth Of The Gospel!
- If We Stay Away From Jesus, It Doesn’t Mean That Much To Us.
- If We Don’t Preach It, We Are Neglecting Our Duty!
- But If We Believe The Facts Of The Gospel, Obey The Commands, And Trust In The Promises.... The Resurrection Means Everything To Us!