

Words of Life

Westside church of Christ

Aug. 25, 2019

Vol. 1, No. 30

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

John 6:68



“Pray for One Another”

R. J. Evans

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (Jas. 5:16).

Prayer is one of the most important duties and privileges of a Christian. And I am convinced that praying for others should take up a large portion of our prayer time. There are some valid reasons for believing this.

The Apostle Paul said, *“Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men” (1 Tim. 2:1).* In the next verse, he mentions some in particular: *“for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Tim. 2:2).* In Ephesians 6:18, Paul instructs Christians to pray for one another: *“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—and for me” (Eph. 6:18-19).* There are a number of examples which set forth the importance of praying on behalf of others (intercessory prayers). Jesus prayed for the Apostle Peter, for those who crucified Him, and for all His disciples and future believers (Lk. 22:32; 23:34; Jn. 17). The church prayed fervently for Peter while he was imprisoned (Acts 12:5). Thus, it is a duty commanded by God for every Christian to pray for others.

Our prayers for others manifest brotherly love and an unselfish attitude. These two areas are so important in the life of a Christian. The Apostle Paul said, *“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Phil. 2:3-4).* This being true, the requests we make for others are just as important as the requests we make for ourselves. When the Lord answers our prayers for others, no doubt, our faith is increased. Jesus said loving our neighbor as our self is the second greatest commandment (Mk. 12:31).

The Apostle Paul prayed for all the churches where he labored. For example, in his letter to the Ephesians, he assured them of his prayers on their behalf. He said I *“do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that*

Trends

A recent survey asked “Do you believe moral truths are absolutes that are unchanging or relative to the circumstances.” Results:

Moral truth is...	All	Born again	Not born again
☛ Unchanging:	6%	9%	4%
☛ Depends on situation:	83%	76%	87%
☛ Don't know:	11%	15%	9%

- via Barna Research

Psalm 1:1-3: “Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.”

Sentence Sermons

“People don't want to hear the truth because they don't want their illusions destroyed.”

—Friedrich Nietzsche

Matthew 5:6: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.”

News & Notes

Please pray for Zachary Wallace. He is not faithfully attending services as he should (Heb. 10:24-25). “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (Jas. 5:16)

Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She is an encouragement to all of us!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?! Let me know.

Anyone need prayers? Let us know so we can announce it and post it.

Words of Life is published by the **Westside Church of Christ** meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

Times of Service: Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

Editor: Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); craigthomas82000@gmail.com

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him” (Eph. 1:16-17). The list of things he asked God to do for the Colossians was similar (Col. 1:9-12). Epaphras offered fervent prayers for the Colossian brethren. Paul told them, “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” (Col. 4:12).

I have no doubt that Christians enjoy many blessings from God because some brother or sister in Christ prayed for them. May we not forget that praying for others should be a big part of our lives. I am reminded of the hymn that we sometimes sing that expresses the sentiments of this article. What encouraging words when some faithful brother or sister expresses to us the title and words of this song, “I’M PRAYING FOR YOU.”

Practical “Tools” for Bible Study

Ronny E. Hinds

(1) Pray for wisdom and understanding. Before you ever open your Bible, pray. “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Col. 1:9). Do not neglect this. It is absolutely necessary for understanding.

(2) Read it. That is right. Read it. Now read it again. What do the individual words mean? If you do not know, look them up in a dictionary. What do they mean together? How do the sentences tie together? Are there parallel thoughts in the context or elsewhere? Note carefully, what I call signal words, like “therefore, for, and, by, that, in, be, from, to,” etc., to help you understand. Read it!!

(3) Keep the text in its context. That may be the verse before or after or both, or a paragraph of verses, or a chapter, or a book. And, study the same topic in other parts of the Bible.

(4) Start with what is easy to understand. Start with something you already think you understand. Search to see if your understanding is correct. For example, find, learn, remember where those texts are that teach a person how to become a Christian. Leave harder, more complex topics for future study.

(5) Make notes - in your Bible and/or a notebook. No one can remember everything. Use your Bible’s margin for recording other texts or ideas you have found that are helpful to understand the text you are studying. The next time you read that text those notes will be there.

(6) Always observe who is talking in the text you are reading. Sometimes the Devil is quoted, or sinners speak, or uninspired people. Note their words but obey only God’s words or the words of His inspired people.

(7) Always remember in which Bible time you are studying. Is it during patriarchal times, before Moses? Is it during Israel’s time, before Christ? Remember we are Christians, followers of Christ, and what He authorizes, in His words or through His inspired writers, is what is acceptable for us to believe and do.

(8) Apply it. All you have done to this point is useless unless you are willing to apply it to your life. Does what you read change and remove from your life unacceptable attitudes and conduct? Does what you read lead to improving and strengthening good attitudes, to increasing your doing of right things? This is the final, all important test of the quantity and quality of your faith and whether you are really studying the Bible. Knowledge of facts alone will not save.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15

Characteristics of a Compromiser

Larry Ray Hafley

(A brother sent me a copy of something I wrote nearly 30 years ago, back when I had hair and none of it was gray. The truth and men who compromise it haven’t changed, have they?)

(1) His teaching is vague and general. It is pleasing to all and rarely, if ever, offends anyone (Cf. Matt. 15:12).

(2) He urges “love” and “understanding” (as if they were cure-all salves) without any appeal for open reproof and plain rebuke. He speaks of “too much negative preaching” and decries “attacks” against error as being “self-defeating.”

(3) Unrest results from his preaching. Brethren sense “something is wrong.” They notice the lack of distinctive doctrine, but they say they “can’t put their finger on anything.” Others express fears they have been too narrow-minded, and they indicate they will re-evaluate their position with regard to errors such as institutionalism. They begin to feel embarrassed when they hear an “old timey” gospel preacher describe the unique features of the churches of Christ and deny the doctrines of denominationalism.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”

Roman 16:17-18

(4) The compromiser, if questioned, gives all the “right answers,” but he objects (mildly, of course) to “strict, unbending interpretations” of Scripture and expresses fear that some who contend for the faith are much like the Pharisees. He appeals to the “general tenor” or the “spirit of Christ” as his reasons for not being as “firm” as some might like him to be on some issues. “But oh,” he cries, “don’t misunderstand me. I agree with your basic doctrinal conclusions.” If he truly does, you would never guess it or learn it by listening to his meatless sermons.