

Pleasant View Proclaimer

Pleasant View church of Christ

Fundamental Aspects Of Prayer

March 22, 2015

Issue 205

Brilliant Bible scholars have written thousands of books on the power of prayer. It seems like God's people have looked to Him for relief, guidance, and understanding through prayer since the earliest days of man (Gen. 4:26). Faith makes no sense and has no value apart from a devoted prayer life.

As we read Scripture, we notice several fundamental aspects of prayer that we often take for granted or have never fully understood. Consider these:

(1) Prayer is *sacrificial*. After Jesus gave us the ever-challenging command to love our enemies, He added, "...and pray for

those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). Praying for those who have mistreated you is a sacrificial act. You must put aside your instinctive desire for retribution and pray for God to bless your enemy. Are your prayers sacrificial?

(2) Prayer is *spiritual*. Paul spends most of Romans 8 teaching us the blessing of being in Christ (Rom. 8:1). After stating that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, he went on to write that "the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words" (Rom. 8:26). Have you ever prayed for the right answer? Of

course you have. But with the Holy Spirit, we also are given the right question.

(3) Prayer is *meaningful*. Jesus commanded us to avoid "meaningless repetition" when we pray (Matt. 6:7). Prayer is not a check-it-off-the-list type of daily routine. It is communication with the Creator of the universe, and its content should reflect the seriousness of the situation.

(4) Prayer is *continual*. I Thessalonians 5:17 is short but profound: "Pray without ceasing." Prayer should not be your last resort; it should be your first instinct (Phil. 4:6).

James Hayes

Items of Note:

- Elizabeth Demonbreum's grandfather, Leon Salings, is in failing health.
- Congratulations to Luke Newell and Dana Famer on their marriage yesterday!
- Check the directory on the back wall. Make sure all of your information is up-dated.
- VBS is scheduled for June 21-25.
- Our Gospel Meeting will be the last week of July.

Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, April 2; Give Candy To Kim Walker Building Fund Contribution Next Week

THOSE WHO WILL SERVE THE CONGREGATION

Sunday School

Read: Brown

Pray: Cartwright

Morning Worship

Wait on the Table: E. Walker

Serve: Trent, Reed, Gupton

Pray: M. Newell

Pleasant View church of Christ
2500 Highway 49 East
P.O. Box 189
Pleasant View, TN 37146

Sunday School: 9:30
A.M. Worship: 10:30
P.M. Worship: 6:00
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm
Phone: 924-9714

Philippians 2:14-15
“Do all things without
grumbling or disputing; so
that you will prove
yourselves to be blameless
or innocent, children of God
above reproach in the midst
of a crooked and perverse
generation...”

*“Those blessings are sweetest that are won with
prayer and worn with thanks.”*

Thomas Goodwin

*“When I intentionally thank God for the good
gifts that come from being His child, I find it
impossible to maintain my sour disposition.”*

Lori Hatcher

The Future Is Now

What are you going to do this week? Don't answer too fast. Look at your schedule. How many of those plans are guaranteed to happen? I'll go ahead and answer for you: none! It is easy for us to think that if we plan something, it *must* happen. If it doesn't happen, we get frustrated. The planning and the frustration stem from the subconscious-yet-real assumption that we control the future.

The book of James reminds me of Mark Twain's famous statement: “It ain't the parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand.” Anyone can understand the book of James; there are very few theological dilemmas for the reader. What

James says about our plans hits every 21st century American between the eyes.

“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.’ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.’”

All we know for sure about life is that we've made it this far. We also know that the only one who knows the future is God Himself. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't plan

or “count the cost”. As James wrote, we simply have to live with an “if the Lord wills” perspective.

Life is like one giant parade. We are standing on the side of the road, watching the events pass by. We cannot see the where the parade ends; we can only see the part that's in front of us. God, however, sees where the parade began, and He knows where it ends.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight” (Prov. 3:5-6).

James Hayes
