

Prayer Changes things!

March 19, 2017

I listened to a dynamic speaker on video this past week that had a stirring testimony of the power of God to deliver a powerless baby's life from death and she was giving God praise and glory for his wonderful love and care over her. Her mother had gone to a "Planned Parenthood" clinic when she was full term and asked for an abortion. They gave her the solution that would destroy the baby in the womb, and the abortionist left the building. The mother went into labor but the baby was born alive and the most amazing thing was the solution didn't destroy the baby and the nurse sent the newborn to a nearby hospital where she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy due to the procedure. The speaker talked about her life being saved by God when all the people surrounding her birth hated her and wanted her life to be snuffed out. She knows what it feels like to be hated and looked down on because of a disability caused by Planned Parenthood and the voice that points a finger of accusation at their organization. There are people who show disdain and lack of compassion towards her for the fact that she openly states the truth concerning abortions. They also show lack of compassion due to the fact that cerebral palsy is a part of her life due to the decision a woman made to end her life. The first family that was in charge of caring for her decided that she was too much of an inconvenience and that she would never be able to function on her own, so they returned her to the adoption center. Finally a loving, caring woman of God took her home, became a loving mother and taught her to pray and communicate with her heavenly Father who loves her and has promised her an eternal inheritance in his kingdom. As she stood before the audience, she told of the love she has for Jesus Christ and his saving power even when she was not able to defend herself or even able to ask for his help. He alone showed compassion and pity on her and delivered her from those who sought to kill her. Because of the love and dedication of her adopted mother, she learned to walk and miracles happened for her. She is a public speaker and travels here and abroad with her story. She is a beautiful person and her testimony is genuine as she refers to the love that God has shown to her along her life's path. God is using her to speak the truth to those who have the responsibility to make laws and she reminds all of us of God's gift of life and only he gives breath to humanity. The gift of life is precious to her and she gives glory and honor to her Savior wherever she goes. I pray that everyone who stood and gave her a standing ovation at the conclusion of her talk will remember it in the days to come when the question arises concerning the unborn child. They will be held responsible for the knowledge that she imparted to them today.

Prayer is the main vehicle that we have to communicate with God. Hebrews 11:1-3 says this:

(CEV) "Faith makes us sure of what we hope for and gives us proof of what we cannot see. It was their faith that made our ancestors pleasing to God. Because of our faith, we know

that the world was made at God's command. We also know that what can be seen was made out of what cannot be seen." In Hebrews 1: 6, it tells us that "without faith it is impossible to please God. He that comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." If you continue reading this chapter, you will read some amazing stories of people whose faith in God held them in the dark trials of their lives." If you read Genesis chapter 1, you will read that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. The earth was barren with no form of life. It was under a roaring ocean covered with darkness. But the Spirit of God was moving over the water."

"Faith comes by hearing and hearing from the word of God." Romans 10:17.

What is God's purpose for man? We must have a right view of God and we must order our acts to conform to his will. In Deuteronomy 29:29 it tells us that God hasn't explained the present or the future, but he has commanded us to obey the laws he gave to us and our descendants.

In Ecclesiastes 12:13, the wise king said this: "Respect and obey God! This is what life is all about. God will judge everything we do, even what is done in secret, whether good or bad."

What is the purpose of prayer? To glorify God and enjoy him and also to enjoy knowing he will answer our prayers.

Psalms 100: "Shout praises to the LORD, everyone on this earth. Be joyful and sing as you come in to worship the LORD. You know the LORD is God! He created us, and we belong to him; we are his people, the sheep in his pasture. Be thankful and praise the LORD as you enter his temple. The LORD is good! His love and faithfulness will last forever."

John 14:13 tells us to ask in Jesus name and he will answer our requests. This way the Son gives honor to the Father. He promises to do whatever you ask according to his will when you ask in his name.

In chapter 16, Jesus told the disciples that in this world, they would have to suffer but he told them to cheer up for he defeated the world. Suffering is part of discipleship, but Jesus will never leave us nor forsake those who put their trust in him.

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus told his disciples that all authority was given to him in heaven and in earth. He gave them instructions on sharing the gospel with others and promised to be with them until the end. That promise is to every believer. Jesus prayed for his disciples and every believer in the garden of Gethsemane. (John 17: 6-26.)

(Colossians 3: 12-17) In these verses you are told that God loves us and has chosen us to be his special people. We are to be gentle, kind, humble, meek and patient. Put up with each other, and forgive anyone who does you wrong, just as Christ has forgiven you. Love is more important than anything else. It is what ties everything completely together. We are all a part of the body of Christ. We were chosen to live together in peace. So let the

peace that comes from Christ control your thoughts. And be grateful. Let the message of Christ completely fill your life, while you use all your wisdom to teach and instruct each other. With thankful hearts, sing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to the God.

Colossians 3:17 tells us that whatever we do in word or in deed, we are to do it for the glory of God in the name of Jesus giving thanks to God the Father because of him.

How should we prepare our hearts for prayer?

1. Pray that God's will be done and that your requests and petitions will be for his honor and glory.
2. Take time to be thankful. In Luke 17:11, there is a story of 10 lepers who came toward Jesus as he travelled between Samaria and Galilee. They stood at a distance and cried out, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us." Jesus looked at them and told them to go show themselves to the priest. On their way, they were healed and when one of them discovered that he was healed, he returned and bowed before Jesus to thank him for healing him. He was from the country of Samaria. Then Jesus asked, "Weren't there 10 men healed? Where are the other nine? Why was this foreigner the only one to give thanks to God?" He then told the man to get up and go for his faith had made him well.
3. Confession (see 1 John 1:9) "If we confess our sins to God he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away. If we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar and his message isn't in our hearts."

Read Paul's prayers in the following passages of Scripture and write down what he focused on in his prayers.

Ephesians 1:15-23 _____

Ephesians 3:14-21 _____

Philippians 1:9-11 _____

Colossians 1:9-12

It is interesting to note that 2 prayers that Paul prayed were not granted. He asked the saints to pray with him that he would be delivered from wicked ones at Jerusalem. See Romans 15:30-31.

In 2 Corinthians 12:8 he begged the Lord 3 times to make his suffering go away. But God told him this, "My grace is sufficient for you. My power is strongest when you are weak."

Jesus told a story to some people who thought they were better than others and who looked down on those they felt were beneath them.

Two men went into the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee (a religious pious person) and the other a tax collector. (Tax collectors were hated because they charged more than what was due so they could gain wealth).

The Pharisee stood over by himself and prayed, "God I thank you that I am not greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful in marriage like other people. And I am really glad that I am not like that tax collector over there. I go without eating twice a week and I give you one tenth of all I earn."

The tax collector stood off in a distance and did not think he was good enough even to look up toward heaven. He was so sorry for what he had done that he pounded on his chest and prayed, "God have mercy on me! I am such a sinner!"

Then Jesus said, "When the two men went home, it was the tax collector and not the Pharisee who was pleasing to God. If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you humble yourself, you will be honored."

My hope is that you will gain understanding in offering prayers to Jesus Christ that will be effective in getting answers.

Paul's Prayers

Ephesians 1:15-23 New International Version (NIV)

Thanksgiving and Prayer

15 For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. 17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit[a] of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 3:14-21 New International Version (NIV)

A Prayer for the Ephesians

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family^[a] in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Footnotes:

1. Ephesians 3:15 The Greek for *family* (*patria*) is derived from the Greek for *father* (*pater*).

Philippians 1:9-11 New International Version (NIV)

⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 1:9-12 New International Version (NIV)

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ^[a] ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you ^[b] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.

Footnotes:

- 1. Colossians 1:9 Or *all spiritual wisdom and understanding***
- 2. Colossians 1:12 Some manuscripts *us***