

TRIUMPH

“Do you know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it” (1 Cor. 9:24)

PURIFYING OUR SOULS (2)

Inside This Issue:

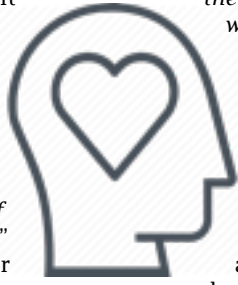
The Nature and Efficacy of Prayer (8)

Shepherd's Corner:

It's Possible To Have Peace With Ourselves

The goal, according to Peter in 1 Peter 1: 1-16, is for our minds to remain focused, strong, and righteous in the midst of trials of life. As we go through these moments, God is taking note of our actions and will judge us based on how we respond (v.17a). This is why Peter said to *“pass the time of our sojourning in fear”* (v.17b). In other words, whatever we encounter in life, we must react with a respect of what God would have me to do. But as soon as people complain and make excuses as to the impossibility of remaining focused, strong, and righteous in difficult moments, the subject of Jesus is brought forth.

Peter recognized that during moments of difficulty, no *“corruptible thing as silver and gold could redeem us”* (v.18), rather the only item that could was *“the precious blood of Christ”* (v.19a). The word *“precious”* is key in understanding what Peter meant. It is the Greek word *timeos* and is defined as valuable, esteemed, and honorable in reputation/character. The word *“blood”* means and symbolizes *“life”* (Lev. 17:11). Therefore, as God anticipated Christian’s complaints concerning the impossibility of overcoming life, the subject of Christ’s life was showcased to demonstrate how he remained powerful and faithful to God throughout his life. This is why Peter qualified the blood of Christ with *“righteous”* and *“without blemish and without spot”* (v. 19b). Christ didn’t have any moral fault and was free of any vice whenever he



encountered his difficult moments of life. And because Christ remained pure and holy in mind and action, even until death (cf. Lk. 23:47; Rev. 2:10), God *“raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory that your faith and hope might be in God”* (v. 21). Christ’s life should be an example to us all, and if we follow this life, then we as well will experience that same as Christ. But, once again, what would it take? Peter said, *“Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently”* (v.22).

Our souls (life), which is directed by spirit (our minds), must be purified (cleansed) by obeying God’s word when we go through difficult moments of life. The end result God looks for is *“genuineness of faith,”* not *“unfeigned (hypocrisy) love of the brethren”* (v. 22b). In other words, among the fraternity of God, God desires his people to remain pure and holy in the midst of crisis. Don’t be one way among God’s people and another way when you are away from them. We must always demonstrate a *“pure heart fervently”* in all occasions and times (v. 22c). And if we showcase this, then what we are demonstrating is that God’s word, *“the incorruptible seed”* (v.23, cf. Lk. 8:11) lives within our minds; and even if our lives succumb to death, God’s word that lived within us will raise us up from the dead and we shall live forevermore (vs. 24-25). May God be praised!

THE NATURE AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER (8)

Church News and Announcements

CONGREGATION

The fellowship luncheon is today after our morning service. All visitors are invited to enjoy a meal with us and fellowship.

The family home devotional, hosted by the Dorries, will be on August 25th at 7:00 pm at Rose Smith's Community Center. The menu is healthy potluck.

Volunteers are needed to host the fellowship luncheon in September and a brother to be in charge of services. See one of the elders if you can serve in any way.

The elders, deacons, and preacher meeting will be next Sunday, August 20 at 4:00 pm.

A brother is needed to be in charge of services during the month of September. See one of the elders if you can serve in this way.

The Ladies' Bible Class and the Men's Training Class will be at 4:00 pm on August 27. The ladies are studying Lesson 10 and the men will be studying Lesson 3 by Sam Amos.

YOUTH

The youth devotional, hosted by the Maldonados has been changed to August 26th at 7:00 pm. They are needing a head count of kids that will be going to do laser tag.

YOUNG ADULT

The young adult devotional, hosted by the Dorries, will be on August 18th at 7:00 pm in annex. The menu is healthy potluck.

AREA NEWS

See the bulletin board in the foyer for events in our area.

So noting the previous information, the next obvious question is, so how must we pray? If God has already prepared us fully to be successful in this life, and now it's up to us to make things happen, then how should our prayers and the words we use look like and sound? The obvious answer is, they must reflect the truth in how God works today. You see, when we use language that is inconsistent with how God works today then several, misfortunate things happen. We begin to show God in ways that He never intended. For example, when we use words in our prayer petition for God to help us with some physical thing and we say "if it be thy will," then the impression that is left is, if I don't receive what I asked for, then this must not have been in God's will, and if I do receive what I have asked for, then the conclusion is that it must have been in God's will. But this sort of reasoning has several problems. *First*, you haven't taken into consideration the Scriptures that say that God no longer works supernaturally. *Second*, you haven't taken into consideration that time and chance happen to all men, including God's people. *Third*, you are making assumptions on what has taken place, and really don't know if it was God's will or not. For example, if we pray for God to send me a spouse to marry and we find someone we thought God sent, and then years later divorce, then what happened to the belief that God sent this person to you? And *fourth*, we put God in a bad light if something negative occurs in connection with prayer. For example, if we pray that God bless someone on their journey, but then find out that they got into a horrible accident that killed them or others, then the obvious question is, why didn't God prevent this from happening? Therefore, based on these reasons we put God in precarious situations.

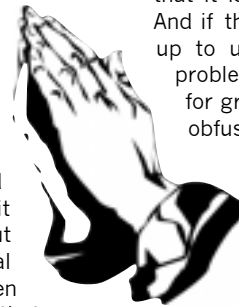
This is why when we pray, our prayers must be consistent with how God works today? Instead of giving people false hope and dreams, why not be genuine in our prayers and give people true expectations of our situations. Instead of asking God for "travel safety", why not say in our prayers, "May we safely guide ourselves to our desired destinations by using the blessings of God

and accept the outcome for better or worse"? Instead of asking God to "heal us", why not thank God for giving us a beautiful and wonderful body, and remind ourselves that it is our responsibility to care, protect, and prevent disease? Instead of saying "if it be thy will", why not say "Whatever the outcome, I will face it with courage and duty according to thy will"?

When we pray this way, it gives people a reality check that it is up to us to use the blessings God has given us. It reminds us that it is up to us to make things happen. And if things don't go as planned, then it is up to us to figure out a solution to our problem(s). For too long, we've taken God for granted and used prayers as a way to obfuscate the obvious. We have made prayers into a "give me, give me" practice, instead of using prayer to help remind us and keep us focused in what I need to be doing in this life. It's much too easy to think that God will do something for you, rather than taking charge of your life. Unfortunately, we see this same mentality in our world today. Instead of making things happen in life, everyone wants a hand out. This is called laziness, and according to the Scriptures laziness is rejected by God.

Don't allow our prayer lives to reflect God in a bad light, rather use our prayer life to help us focus on what is truly important in life, that it is up to us to save ourselves and make things happen. Next week, we'll discuss Luke 11 in which Jesus' disciples ask him to "teach them how to pray" (v.1) . What might we learn from what Jesus response and does this passage support everything we've discussed in this written series. Was the plan of God to wait on our beckon call, or was the plan of God to bless us with everything we need, and prayer became a conduit for motivating us to remain focused and faithful to God? May God be praised!

Bro. G. Rodriguez



What Must I Do?

Nearly two thousand years ago an important question was raised before the Apostles after they had delivered the good news of Jesus's life, death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:21-36). The hearer's conscience were pricked of sinful conduct (2 Cor. 7: 10-11) and asked: "*Men and brethren, what shall we do* (in order to be saved)? (Acts 2:37). Without hesitation, Peter elevated his voice and proclaimed: "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38).

Upon hearing the words of Peter, the people obeyed. This demonstrated their belief in Christ (Jn. 8:24). Hence, they repented of sin and confessed allegiance to the name of Christ (Matt. 10:32-33). Afterwards, the people were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:41, cf. Mrk. 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21) and given the hope of eternal life (Acts 2:38).

The people's submission to the words of salvation granted them a relationship with God the Father by accessing citizenship into the church of Christ (Acts 2:47, cf. Matt. 16:18; Mrk. 9:1; Acts. 2:1-4). As a member of Christ's body (Acts 8:4) the people were then encouraged to live faithful unto death by conquering sin in their lives (Rev. 2:10; Rom. 6: 4-12; 2 Tim. 4: 6-8). We then await for the coming day in which all men shall be judged the word of God (Jn 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10). Will we be ready?

SHEPHERD'S CORNER

It's Possible To Have Peace with Ourselves

Most likely the principle reason for strife between people is the strife within people. It is very difficult to be at peace with others when there is a war raging within us. The apostle Paul said, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat...Herein do I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and man always" (Rom. 14:22-23; Acts 24:16). One just cannot have peace within himself while he lives in a way that he believes to be wrong. Living at variance to what we have learned is right is a sure guarantee that we will be at war constantly with ourselves.

The "Prince of Peace" grants peace through our faith in Him: "Casting all your care on him, for he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7). When we see that "God hath made him both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36) and that He has "all authority, both in heaven and on earth" (Matt.28:18), we have the basis for real peace. "If God is for us who us, who is against us?...Lo, I am with you alway...Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me" (Rom. 8:31; Matt. 28:20; Jno. 14:1). You see, nothing can hurt you, if Christ is your Protector, if He cares for you and has the power to take care of you in all circumstances. And He does! Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jno. 14:27). The assurance that Jesus cares, that He protects and that "He is able to save to the uttermost" (Heb. 7:25) should give us that "Peace of God which passeth understanding" (Phil. 4:7).

Bro. W. Holmes

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

BISHOPS/SHEPHERDS/ ELDERS

(1 Tim. 3: 1-6)

Brother Elwyn Hipp (830) 510-6311
Brother Wayne Holmes (210) 696-8597

DEACONS

(Acts 6: 1-5; 1 Tim. 3: 7-12)

Brother Raul Baltierra

(210) 843-9730

Brother Bill Dorries

(210) 253-0173

GOSPEL PREACHER

(1 Cor. 9:1-16; 2 Tim. 4: 2-5)

Brother Gabriel Rodriguez

(210) 315-4453



August 13

AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *T. Mayces*
 Opening Prayer: *A. Maldonado*
 Song Leader: *R. Trevino*
 Communion Leader: *E. Hipp*
 Lord's Supper Servers: *B. Dorries; N. Esenowo; S. Amos;*

Scripture: *Luke 23:44-49*
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *Z. Watkins*

PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *T. Mayces*
 Opening Prayer: *R. Baltierra*
 Song Leader: *G. Rodriguez*
 Lord's Supper: *J. Guillen; E. Castillo*
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *M. de la Garza*

After Greeter: *B & B Dorries*
 Greeter/Usher: *D. Mathis*
 AV Duty: *J. Guillen*
 In Charge of Invitation: *G. Rodriguez*

REMEMBERING OUR BELOVED

(by writing, calling, and praying)

Wayne Holmes
 Joe Guillen
 Ina Dial
 David and Elijah Sudhoff
 Caral O'Banon
 Sam Amos *(awaiting surgery)*
 Parents of David Lyssy
 Sandra Welch
 Lavender Nelson
 Tita Cortez *(sister of Sam Ramirez)*
 Dolly Gribble *(back)*

BATTLING CANCER:

Johna Dorries Abigail Reyes
 Graciola Anderson Sonny Cary
 Arturo Hernandez
 Renalto *(brother-in-law of Joe Guillen)*
 David Trevino *(brother of Ray)*
 James Watkins

SHUT-INS:

Dazel Ball
 Mildred Geest
 Sarah Cannon

TRAVELING:

Art Jacob; Mayces

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES AUGUST

Organizing Monthly Luncheon:
Williams
 Preparing Lord's Supper:
S. Schandua
 Auditorium Service Duties:
Open
 Wash baptismal garments; clean cry
 room
Open
 Brother in charge of services:
B. Dorries

AM Theme:

The Hall of Fame:
Crown of Glory: The King of My Life

PM Theme:

The Canon of Scripture:
Which Books Are Inspired of God?

AM Sermon:

King David (3)

PM Sermon:

Introduction (4)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

August 16: *A. Maldonado*

August 23: *R. Baltierra*

August 30: *D. Mathis*

FOR THE RECORD

AUGUST 6/9

Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study 33
 Sunday AM Worship 50
 Sunday PM Worship 33
 Wednesday Bible Study 45
 Budget/Offering: **\$2,140.02/ \$2,861.00**

Weekly Bible Readers: NA (Adult Bible class)

SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Church email Address:

shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Sunday: Bible Study at 9:30 am; Worship at 10:30 am;
 Worship at 5:00 pm.

Wednesday: Bible Study at 7:00 pm