

# 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 (1)

*Gabriel Rodriguez*

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The Apostle Peter in 1 Peter, chapter 1, makes an excellent case concerning the importance of “purifying” our souls (lives). But what does it mean to “purify our souls”? He begins explaining the **purification process** in verse 2 when he said, “*sanctification of the spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*” (v.2). The word “*sanctification*” comes from the Greek word *hagios*, which means to be morally and ethically pure. But what must be pure? Our “*spirits*”, meaning our minds. Once the mind is pure, then the actions of the body through “*obedience*” can be manifested (Heb. 5:9). And if we remain obedient to God and His will until death (Rev. 2:10), then we have “*fellowship one with another, and the blood of Christ cleans us from all sin*” (1 Jn. 1:7). In other words, Christ’s blood, which signifies “*life*” (Lev. 17:11), is bestowed only on those who’ve “*purified their minds*” (Matt. 5:8), and this is evidenced by actions of life (2 Cor. 5:10). And this is the point Peter makes in verses 3-9.

Peter speaks of the reward of heaven (vs. 3-5) given only to those who’ve **maintained** their purity of mind/actions through the “*manifold temptations*” of life (vs. 6-9). In other words, our lives will be “*tested with fire*” (metaphorically speaking) through the trials, but if our minds/action remain pure, then we’ll be rewarded with the gift of eternal life.

The process in maintaining our minds/actions impeccable before God is taken up in verse

13ff. It is here that Peter says, “*Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*” (v.13). Peter makes mention of several things here. First, he says that we should “*gird up the loins of our minds*.” The phrase “*gird up*” meant to be prepared to move freely without any inhibitions. The word “*loin*” (thigh area) referred to power, and the word “*mind*” meant one’s thought process. As we put all of this together, Peter was encouraging Christians that in the midst of their trials of life, a powerful thought process was not to be inhibited. In other words, they were to not allow their circumstances to stifle their righteous mindset. We know this because Peter said secondly, “*As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance*” (v.14).

What tends to happen when we begin to experience friction and complications in our journey toward God, we begin to lose focus and our thought process begins to fade into how we once were. Instead of remaining committed to God and His will, we allow our minds to be taken captive (2 Tim. 2:26) and “*our former lusts in our ignorance*” takes over. This is why Peter would say, “*But as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living. Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy*” (vs. 15-16). The goal in life is to remain pure (in mind and action) as God. May God be praised!



# THE NATURE AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER (7)

## Church News and Announcements

### CONGREGATION

The fellowship luncheon, hosted by the Williams family, will be next Sunday, August 13th. The menu is healthy potluck.

The teachers' meeting to work on curriculum will be today at 2:30 pm.

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.

### YOUTH

The youth devotional, hosted by the Maldonados will be on August 11 at 7:00 pm.

Our young people are invited to a Summer Youth Devotional at the Northern Oaks congregation on August 12th from 4:30-7:30. If you are interested in attending, please speak with Gabriel.

### 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.

Hopefully, the nature and efficacy of prayer is beginning to look much clearer at this juncture. So the question that usually follows at this point is, *so why pray?* If God has prepared us fully, both physically and spiritually, and in short, has answered our prayers already, then why should we pray? Unbeknownst to people asking this question is their ignorance of what our prayer life should consist of and its true reason. As I've noted already, prayer is usually connected with petitioning God for assistance in helping them physically, but rarely is it used for "**true spiritual purposes**". And so what are some examples of "true spiritual purposes" in connection with prayer. First, let's discuss some things that are NOT included in this discussion: (1) *Petitioning God to send souls for conversion*. When one thinks about this carefully and logically, the world is inundated with people and our contact with people (neighbors, work, school, etc.), which happens daily, should give us opportunity to sow the seed of the kingdom (Lk. 8:11). (2) *Petitioning God to open the minds of those we sow the seed to*. Once again, think about this carefully and logically, God has already provided each person with a mind, which according to their freewill, they must choose open or close their minds to what is being presented (cf. Acts 16:14, Rev. 3:20). (3) *Petitioning God to help us with sin*. Once again, God has provided us with a mind and His word, and when used together, there is no temptation we cannot overcome (1 Cor. 10:13). So as you can see, when we think carefully about many the things we ask God for, even in the spiritual realm, God has already provided a plan and method for something to take place; therefore, it is up to us to make things happen. So if this is the case, then what "*true spiritual*



*purposes*" are left in connection with prayer?

First, let's begin with defining what the word "*spiritual*" (*pneuma*) means to help us get a sense of what we are talking about here. The word "*spiritual*" correctly denotes a person's mental ability and faculty. So how is prayer connected with this? **The true aspect of prayer is to help "strengthen" the mind of man in a world of sin.** How is this accomplished? Prayer does this by helping to remind us our expectations and goals in life. These include: *sanctification* (1 Tim. 4:5), *thankfulness* (1 Thess. 5:18; Col. 4:2), *being reminded/awake* (Col. 4:2; Eph. 6:18), *focused/disciplined* (Matt. 21:22; Lk. 22:45; Acts 6:4; 1 Cor. 7:5; Eph. 6:18), *patience* (Rom. 12:12), and *restoration/contrition* (Lk. 18:9-14; Jas. 5:16).

Our prayer life should reflect a life committed and dedicated unto God. We should use prayer to keep us sanctified, express thanks to God, keep us awake, focused, and disciplined, patient, and express sorrow when we have committed sin against God. These are all areas which speak to what God ultimately desires from His people. Why? Because as we've noted, the only thing that matters to God is how we live our lives, by putting Him first in all things and sustaining ourselves in a word filled with great trials. So how does prayer fit in? It helps us to remain "locked in" to our true purpose in life - that I am not here to serve my interests, rather I am here as God's workmanship to serve him in all things (Eph. 2:10). This is why when we use prayer solely for our physical needs and desires, we've missed the true meaning of life. Our goal is not to allow the physical to dominate my life, rather my goal is to make sure that my spiritual life is ready to meet the Lord at any moment (cf. Lk. 12:20). 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 Other People

The psalmist exclaimed, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psa. 133:1). Ever since "Cain rose up against his brother, and slew him" (Gen. 4:8), man has been seeking ways to be at peace with his fellow-man. When trouble arose over the grazing rights of Abraham and Lot, the former said, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, for we be brethren" (Gen. 13:8). When the apostle Paul found strife in the church at Corinth, he wrote, "Let there be no divisions among you" (1 Cor. 1:10).

We can never have peace with those around us while ignoring the principles of peace which are set forth by the Prince of Peace. Jesus said, "As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also likewise unto them...Love thy neighbor as thyself...Turn the other cheek...Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive" (Matt. 7:12;22:39;5:39;6:12). Following these principles will certainly change us, but it also will change those with whom we del every day! When we "serve one another" (1 Pet. 5:5) and "bear ye one another's burdens" Gal. 6:2), it will change the way people respond to us.

It isn't only what we do, but how we react to what is done to us, that makes for peace. Jesus, hanging on the cross, prayed for those who put Him there: "Father, forgive them, they know what they do" (Lk. 23:34). When the world is moved by that kind of spirit, man will be at peace with his fellows. Jesus tells us to "love one another, even as I have loved you" (Jno. 13:34). He then explains that "love suffers long and is kind..., seeketh not her own, is not puffed up...taketh not account of evil" (1 Cor. 13:4-5). That is the real peace formula: seeking the good of the others while refusing to be offended. That will make for peace in our time: in our families, in our communities, in our nation and in our world

**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 6

### AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *E. Hipp*  
 Opening Prayer: *R. Trevino*  
 Song Leader: *E. Castillo*  
 Communion Leader: *B. Dorries*  
 Lord's Supper Servers: *C. Burnet; R. Baltierra; A. Maldonado; R. Baltierra Jr.*  
 Scripture: *Isaiah 53:10-12*  
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Benediction: *S. Amos*

### PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *E. Hipp*  
 Opening Prayer: *N. Esenowo*  
 Song Leader: *R. Trevino*  
 Lord's Supper: *B. Dorries; Watkins*  
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Benediction: *J. Guillen*

After Greeter: *T. Mayces*  
 Greeter/Usher: *J. Guillen*  
 AV Duty: *T. Mayces*  
 In Charge of Invitation: *W. Holmes*

### 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 Jacobrt

### 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 (2)*

### PM Sermon:

*Introduction (3)*

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

**August 16:** *A. Maldonado*

**August 23:** *R. Baltierra*

**August 30:** *D. Mathis*

## FOR THE RECORD

### JULY 30/AUG 2

#### Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study      45  
 Sunday AM Worship      57  
 Sunday PM Worship      37  
 Wednesday Bible Study      37  
 Budget/Offering:      **\$2,140.02/ \$1,1915.00**

Weekly Bible Readers: NA (Adult Bible class)

## SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**Fax: (210) 696-5181**

**Church email Address:**

**[shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org](mailto: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