

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)

OPTIMISM

Gabriel Rodriguez

Inside This Issue:

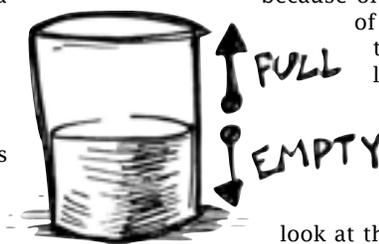
The Nature and Efficacy of Prayer (6)

Shepherd's Corner:
How Does One Find Peace?

It's easy to get down on ourselves or quit when a situation is not favorable. Too many times individuals decide to travel the path of least resistance when confronted with difficult moments of life. The main reason why this occurs solely depends on our outlook in life. Some will see a daunting situation too enormous to conquer, while others will see the same situation and accept the challenge, rising to the occasion. The latter is called *optimism*. *Optimism* is defined as a disposition to expect the best in all things. The example of a cup being half full or half empty is a great illustration here. It's the way we look at our situations that will determine the outcome.

A great Biblical example of this would be the Apostle Paul. In the book of Philippians we learn that Paul was “in chains and bonds” for the sake of the gospel (1:7,12-13,16). This situation could have stymied Paul's outlook in life and buried in pessimism, questioning why he was doing what he was doing, yet he “rejoiced in the Lord always” (4:4). Instead of focusing on his negative experiences, Paul focused on the positives, namely his relationship with God (1:21) and the ultimate prize of heaven as his final home (3:20).

It's important for us to realize how effective optimism really is, putting it into practice. When we experience difficult moments in life, it's best to focus on the positives. When we



do this, we are less likely to allow negative experiences to direct us in a wrong direction. Now, there are various types of negatives situation we'll encounter in life - those we create ourselves and those which we have no control over. In the situations we create ourselves, it's best to learn from our mistakes, avoiding repeating the same, but for those we have no control over, which usually involves other people's decisions and actions, is when optimism is truly needed. For example, if we experience a car accident because of someone's negligence, instead of getting irate and angry over the entire situation, it's best to look at the positives, namely that you survived and the wrecked car can be fixed. If you experience a layoff from work, instead of worrying about the future,

look at the positive of still being able to work and find a new position somewhere else. If your spouse cheats on you, instead of questioning yourself and what you did and didn't do, look at the positive side that you are the one that remained faithful to God and your spouse, and you don't have to live with the guilt and shame of being unfaithful. We could give more examples, but I believe the point has been made.

It's the way we respond to a situation that will determine our sanity or chaos in posterity. If we remain optimistic in every situation we face, then we'll be better for it, not allowing negative emotions to drown us in despair. May God be praised!

THE NATURE AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER (6)

Church News and Announcements

CONGREGATION

The fifth Sunday fellowship/game night will be tonight after evening services. Bring games to play. The menu is sandwiches and salads.

Volunteers are needed for August: a host for the young adult devotional, a host for the fellowship luncheon, someone to prepare the communion, and a brother to be in charge of the services. See one of the elders if you can serve in any way.

YOUTH

There will be no July devotional because most of our kids will be out of town.

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

There will be no July young adult devotional.

AREA NEWS

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

Let's recap. Since miracles have ceased (1 Cor. 13:9-10) and were given for a specific purpose, to support the scheme of redemption (1 Kgs. 17:24; Jn. 3:2; Heb. 2:4), then why does prayer continue to be connected with the supernatural? Because many believe, outside of the church (i.e., denominational world), as well as members of the one true church, that God can do all things. The passage they often cite is Genesis 18:14, when the Lord said, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" While at *prima facie* this argument sounds legitimate, there are a couple of things that haven't been considered. *First*, while God can do anything He desires, the point is not what can He do, but **what has He chosen to do**. And what He has chosen to do concerning the physical side of life is to give us a fully prepared world to handle all of its physical needs (cf. Acts 14:17). *Second*, this statement was made during the days and context in which God worked supernaturally. So applying this passage to our current day and time (the non-miraculous) is a misapplication of the text.

Another passage often given to cite that God can do some amazing things behind the scenes, implying that God works in secret supernaturally, is Deuteronomy 29:29, "*The secret things being unto the Lord: but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever...*" Once again, at *prima facie* it seems that a legitimate argument has been given, but rarely do individuals speak of this verse in its full context. So let's examine the context. The book of Deuteronomy was the second giving of Moses' law to the new generation who would inhabit the land of Canaan. In this book Moses set the cultural and living parameters for God's people, as well as for God's religious matters. At the end of this

book God, beginning in chapter 27, God summarizes His expectations for His people. He also gives warnings and consequences for disobedience, as well as encouragement and blessings for obedience. In chapter 29, God reviewed His work with the nation of Israel and reminded them that because of Him they were blessed with the land of Canaan (vs. 1-8). But the caveat was: "*Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do*" (v.9). He then talked about the seriousness of the covenant they entered, which required full dedication to God (vs. 10-16). In contrast to solely worshipping God, Moses spent a considerable time elaborating on the sin of idolatry (4:15-19; 5: 7-8; 7:4-5; 8:19; 11:16; 12:2-3; 13:6-7; 27:15ff). Therefore, in chapter 29: 18-28, God discloses the ills of idolatry

and its consequences, but it is in verse 19 that sets the tone for verse 29. In verse 19, God revealed a case in which someone who heard the consequences of serving idols but disregarded them by "*blessing himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart...*" In other words, if someone attempted to "*secretly*" enjoin himself to idols (cf. Deut. 13:6-9; 27:14), God would know about his actions, resulting in punishment and curses. Moses then said in verse 29, "*the secret things belong to God*" meaning God knows all and sees all (Heb. 4:11), and no one, among the nation of Israel could escape the all seeing eye of God. Hence, the nation of Israel was to cling on to the things that had been revealed, His word and commandments, that they may live forever (v. 29b). So you see, this passage had nothing to do with God working mysteriously, rather God knowing all things. 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

How Does One Find Peace

One of the greatest searches of humankind is the search for peace. Seldom has there been greater emphasis on peace with so little of it in reality. Wars tear nations apart, brother is set against brother, wife and husband head for the divorce courts, a neighbor builds a "spite fence" and even children get into the act. All such turmoil is but an enlarged picture of the war that rages within us. There is very little of that vital "inner peace" that keeps us attuned to what life is really about. Therapists are booked up months in advance as people try to learn to live at peace with themselves and others.

In the long ago a prophet cried, "They have healed the hurt of my daughter slightly, saying Peace, Peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14). Lasting peace will never be found in compromise and accommodation, for, "The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). True peace is possible only in "the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6), Jesus Christ. When He was born at Bethlehem, angels sang of peace (Lk. 2:14). After His death and resurrection the "gospel of peace" (Acts 10:36) was preached throughout the world. If we would sincerely seek for peace, we must look to Him as the Author and the Giver of peace.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn. 14:27).

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



July 30

AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *W. Holmes*
 Opening Prayer: *J. Guillen*
 Song Leader: *R. Trevino*
 Communion Leader: *G. Rodriguez*
 Lord's Supper Servers: *R. Baltierra Jr.; N. Esenowo; D. Mathis; Z. Watkins*

Scripture: *Romans 5:6-11*
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *B. Dorries*

PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *W. Holmes*
 Opening Prayer: *E. Castillo*
 Song Leader: *Cong. Singing*
 Lord's Supper: *J. Guillen; G. Rodriguez*

Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *Z. Watkins*

After Greeter: *S. Amos*
 Greeter/Usher: *B. Dorries*
 AV Duty: *M. de la Garza*
 In Charge of Invitation: *E. Hipp*

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

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 (1)

PM Sermon:

Congregational Singing

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

July 26: R. Baltierra Jr.

August 2: T. Mayces

August 9: E. Castillo

FOR THE RECORD

JULY 23/26

Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study 40
 Sunday AM Worship 60
 Sunday PM Worship 39
 Wednesday Bible Study 28
 Budget/Offering: **\$2,140.02/ \$2,438.26**

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