

Midtown Messenger

Volume 1

July 29, 2018

Issue 20

HOW DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYERS?

Ronnie Scherffius

“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers:” (1 Pet. 3:12)

In the Psalms, David wrote “Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness...But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him” (Psa. 4:1, 3); and again, “Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation. Harken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning” (Psa. 5:1-3). We know and we believe that God hears **and** answers our prayers...or do we? How confident are we that God is *hearing* our prayers? How confident are we that God is *answering* our prayers? Do you sometimes feel as the psalmist when he wrote, “O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not” (Psa. 22:2)? How do I know that God answers my prayers?

Note first Paul’s request of the Romans for prayers on his behalf: “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; That I may **be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea**; and that **my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints**; That I **may come unto you with joy by the will of God**, and may with you be refreshed” (Rom. 15:30-32). Here we find three particular requests Paul desires from God. When we consider how God answered these we discover that God answers our prayers in three various ways.

In answer to our prayers God sometimes says “No.” Paul prayed to “be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea” (Rom.

15:31). The entrance of the Gentiles into the church was received with mixed feelings by the Jewish saints: “And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved... But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses” (Acts 15:1, 5). These brethren caused Paul much trouble. He spoke of being “in perils among false brethren” (2 Cor. 11:26) and “of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage” (Gal. 2:4). As problematic as these brethren were they were not near the threat to Paul’s personal life as the unbelieving Jews. From the beginning of the apostle’s travels we learn this to be true. In Antioch of Pisidia, the envious and unbelieving Jews “stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts” (Acts 13:50). Traveling thence to Iconium we find that “the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren...And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them, They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe” (Acts 14:2, 5-7). But Lystra was not near far enough to escape these ill affected Jews: “And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been

dead.” (Act 14:9). Paul’s desire and prayer for these unbelieving Jews was that they accept the gospel (Rom. 10:1) but he expected nothing but trouble from them.

Finally, the very thing for which Paul prayed not to happen, did indeed come to pass: “And when the seven days were almost ended, **the Jews which were of Asia**, when they saw him in the temple, **stirred up all the people**, and **laid hands on him**, Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) And **all the city was moved**, and **the people ran together**: and **they took Paul**, and **drew him out of the temple**: and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they **went about to kill him**, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, **they left beating of Paul**” (Acts 21:27-32).

Sometimes God says “No” to our prayers. In such cases what do we do? First, we should *not* assume that it is a lack of love and concern of God for us! Paul was persuaded that nothing could: “separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:35-39) including “tribulation, distress, and persecution” (Rom. 8:35). An answer of “No” does *not* mean God does not love us. Second, an answer of “No” does not mean that God has forsaken you. The Hebrews writer said, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb. 13:5). **Remember** God knows best—He knows “what things ye have need of, before ye ask him” (Mt. 6:8) **AND** He will always do right (Gen. 18:25). Third, and most importantly, remember God’s will supersedes our own. Even Jesus prayed: “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:

nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Mt. 26:39).

Sometimes God’s answer to our prayer is “No.” This is not an unanswered prayer neither is it some special message from God that He is angry with us. It is simply a “No” to our request.

Next week we will look at two more ways that God answers our prayers.

Christian Admonition

STOP! For a moment, anywhere, to worship God in prayer.

LOOK! All around you when depressed to realize how you have been blessed.

BEWARE! Of that strong urge to say, why is God treating me this way?

LISTEN! To that small voice within, before you slander, curse, or sin.

BELIEVE! Your Lord has done what’s best no matter how severe the test.

REJOICE! That guilty conscience cease to rob you of both rest and peace.

BEHAVE! As you think others should, and you will be both kind and good.

BEHOLD! In God a refuge, safe and strong. Rely on Him when things go wrong.

-Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of July 29, 2018

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Jeff Harris
Scripture Reading: Isaac Jobes

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Tom Pitchford
Fruit of the Vine: Clifton Rutherford
Offering: Lupe Escojido
Assist: BJ Davis, Scott DeDear, Sammy Scherffius

Sunday Evening: Tom Pitchford, Clifton Rutherford

Prayer

A.M. Opening: Doug Jobes
A.M. Closing: Larry Nuckels
P.M. Opening: Dennis Bryson
P.M. Closing: Mark FitzSimmons

Ushers: Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional: Adrian Cannady

Open/Close Building: Cannady Family

Sound System: Trenton Jenkins

Greeters:

Will Cleveland
Allen Clifton
Don Lynn

Prepare Communion: Pitchford Family

To Our Visitors: We welcome you to our service. Perhaps this is the first time you have visited us. It is our desire to have you return often and give us a chance to become better acquainted with you. You will find visitor cards on the back of the pew in front of you. Please fill one out.

Think

“When tempted to lose patience with the other person, just pause and think about how patient God has been with you.”

-Selected-

Please join us Wednesday, August 1st, after evening worship for a farewell get together for Alex Scherffius as she heads off to Southwest Bible School. There will be a basket for cards and best wishes.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

RON WHITE, on the passing of his mother, Violet White, last Monday in Arizona. She was the grandmother of Nia FitzSimmons; JEFF AND KATHY LAWS, Jeff's brain surgery will be rescheduled. Cards and calls are appreciated.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 1: Farewell get together for Alex Scherffius
Aug. 5: The Forever Young group (formerly known as the 55+ group) will meet after evening worship @ the building
Aug. 11: Men's Prayer Breakfast @ 8am at the building
Aug. 12: Jr/Sr. High Youth Devotional

IN THE AREA

Aug 2: Area wide Summer Youth Series @ Beeville
Aug 5-10: Evidence for Life gospel meeting @ Riverside
Sept: 15: Ladies' Day @ Southwest C of C

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Ashton Barton (30); Bryce Dolan (31); Joyce Neel (Aug. 1); Mark FitzSimmons, Kathy Laws (Aug. 2); Tristan Cannady, Peyton Foerster (Aug. 3); Mako Garcia, Anna Jacobs (Aug. 4)

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS

Jeff Cannady Della Rampley
Dee Gilpatrick Clark Withers
Ann Pantel

SHUT-INS

Lucille Hawkins Sandy Malone
Faye Henderson Bob Smith

FRIENDS & FAMILY

Victor Benitez Vikram Gottam
(brother of Virginia Escojido) (brother-in-law of Archana Verma)
Kim Neel-Farthing Antonio Benitez
(daughter of Joyce) (brother of Virginia Escojido)

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders:

Will Cleveland
Tom Pitchford

Deacons:

Adrian Cannady
Mark FitzSimmons
Doug Jobs
Bryant Siegel

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius**Secretary:** Nina Siegel**TIMES OF SERVICES**

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of July 22, 2018

Bible Class.....132
A.M. Worship.....164
P.M. Worship.....84
Wednesday Bible Study.....93

Offering \$3,659

QUICK REFERENCE

Use this quick reference to help you grow in knowledge:

Eternity

Eternal/Everlasting.....Mat. 25:46
Mark 10:29f; Luke 16:22-26; Jude 7

**SUPPORTED WORKS**

India - Mani Pagidipalli
New Zealand - James & Emily Cammock
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Cody Kilgore

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