

**September 8, 2009**

**SERMONS FOR SUNDAY**

**September 13, 2009**

a.m. *"Use the Scriptures"*

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

p.m. *"Seeing the Invisible"*

Scripture: Hebrews 11:23-29

**Prayer Is The Christian's Vital Breath**

Don Hatch

It is incumbent upon Christians to know how dependent they are on God. Prayer is not only a privilege, it is a necessary application for without it we are cut off from a vital source of life, love and an eternal destiny with God. Reading the Bible illustrates how that through the ages mankind who were in fellowship with God prayed and received from God spiritual and physical blessings. They made it their chief business to seek God. Christ constantly sought favor with God and prayed to the Father. From Him we learn the necessity of prayer. Jesus left glory to come to earth and wrapped Himself in the form of man. He lived, died and manifested His total dependency on the Father and His life demonstrated the absence of self-dependence

The Bible is a guide to the believer on how, why, when, where, to whom and for what to ask. It unfolds the nature and necessity of prayer. The eloquence of praise is not in the words but rather in the soul surrendering to the will of God. Within the pages of such a sublime Book we find all mankind needs to know about the many aspects of approaching God the Father through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit inspired the writing of the Old and New Testaments and thus one can find the ways and means to appear before God in a holy and pious manner. Within man is an innate desire to serve and laud God. This is the reason that even ungodly men instinctively pray when some trouble or sore trial prevails. Even as a plant in the darkest dungeon seeks the light so should a Christian seek to walk in the light with God.

The blood of Jesus Christ procured an avenue to the Father, for it removed sin and brought fellowship (1 Jn 1:1-10). By virtue of Christ we have a Mediator through His death on the cross, His ascension and being at the right hand of the Father (1 Tim 2:1-8). God's mercy wipes out sin. The Greek word *exaleiphein* [exaleiphein] means to wipe out or to obliterate. It carries with it the idea of wiping the memory of an experience from one's remembrance. In repentance the sins committed are "obliterated, wiped out, and blotted out". In New Testament times documents were written on papyrus. The ink used was made of soot, mixed with gum and diluted with water. The characteristic of this ink was that it had no acid and therefore did not bite into the papyrus. It lasted a long time, however if done soon after the mark was made a

wet sponge could be passed over the page and the writing could be completely removed. The same was true of clay tablets when dampened the writing could be obliterated and a "new slate" created. Hence the characteristic of prayer is to seek a complete removal of any and all sin which might remain in one's life. The word for crossed-out is different because it leaves evidence of what had been, whereas "blotting out" removes the record. As one crosses out a thing, beneath the line is the evidence and there remains a visible record. There are those who forgive but never forget the injury and the record remains visible for anyone to read [see]. With God the debt of sin is forgiven and forgotten [wiped out]. God's forgiveness is supreme because it forgives and forgets. Therefore prayer is vital for the Christian's life.

God in His mercy has given the Christians an advantage above all. He has allowed them to be His children and delights in their honoring Him through Jesus Christ. The Father takes pleasure in Christians honoring Him in the name of Jesus Christ. It is because of this name that multitudes have found God a loving and forgiving God. Christ continues to be an intercessor on behalf of the Christian (Rom 8:34).

It is no vain thing to serve and wait upon God. The vastness of God's providence is opened by prayer. Prayer is prominent in most of the serious and important places in the Scriptures. Prayer is as vital to the Christian's life as obedience, for obedience is manifested in prayerful surrender to God. Those who do not forget God are never forgotten by God (Lk 18:7; Rom 8:4, 28). Prayers of the saints and merit of the blood of Christ seem to mingle before the throne and cause an overwhelming stream of blessings to flow. Great Bible characters had no doubt of the reality of prayers being answered and the efficacy of prayer. They never engaged in aimless prayers for such never reach their goal. Asking amiss is a sure cause for not receiving (Jas 4:3, 4). How could anyone who asks amiss expect to receive anything from God? Volumes could be written about the vain and shallow and prayers which are mere "counting of beads".

Saintly people entreat God about temporal, spiritual and eternal things. Every aspect of life was prayed about by the godly. Many prayers teach us to pray for others as well as ourselves. The heart, mind and soul of the redeemed hold a vast array of people, circumstances and needs upon which they ponder and pray daily. Prayers for one to "stand perfect and complete in the will of the Lord", "be sanctified wholly", "qualified to serve" and much else fills the prayers of the New Testament writings (Col 4:12; Rom 1:6-15; 1 Thes 5:23; Acts 6:6; 20:17-32).

Prayer is a habit which must have three ingredients. Desire, knowledge and skill are combined to make one's prayer life more effective. The Bible never labors to prove that prayer is effective. It demonstrates the effects of prayers. It describes the conditions of prayer being answered and offers clear illustrations of how vital prayer is to the Christian.

## **FAMILY CARE: A Message from Our Shepherds**

### **Grace and Works of Faith**

Naaman was a leper. He was instructed by Elisha the prophet to dip seven times in the river Jordan. When he complied with the specified condition, "his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean" (2 Kings 5:14). Was it not essential for Naaman to submit to the prophet's instructions in order to be healed of his leprosy? Did not Naaman's

obedience involve human effort? Was the power to heal in the water of Jordan? Did Naaman's obedience of faith repeal God's grace and transform his gift of healing into human merit?

Initially, Naaman refused to comply with God's instructions through the prophet. His refusal left him a leper. Of course he had to obey God. He was not healed until his faith became visible in action. "Show me thy faith" (James 2:18). The water of Jordan was impotent as far as Naaman's leprosy was concerned. The power to heal was God's alone. In his obedience of faith, Naaman was not attempting to nullify grace, he was cooperating with grace. His trust for healing was not in the Jordan, nor his dipping therein, though both were necessary. His trust was in God, in His grace, and in His power to heal. However, it was Naaman's obedient faith that enabled him to appropriate the blessings of God's grace and power to his disease-ridden body.

It is imperative that we discern the distinction between works of merit and works of faith. Works of merit have man trusting in himself and his own efforts. Such an attitude nullifies grace and leads to self-righteousness. The Pharisee of Luke 18:10-12 is a classic example. It was this very kind of works that Paul had in mind when he said, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt" (Romans 4:4); again, "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9).

Conversely, works of faith have man trusting in God, His grace, and the provisions thereof in Christ and the cross. Though acknowledging the necessity of submitting to such divinely ordained words, man's trust is not in himself, nor his performance of works. God is the sole object of his trust. These are the works of James 2:14-26. Frank Chesser

"What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man says he hath faith, but have not works? can that faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself. Yea, a man will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith". (Jas 2:14-18)

### **Each Season Of The Year**

Each **season** of the year has a special activity for the Belt Line Road Church of Christ. These good times fill our hearts with fond memories and give our spirits a boost. The entire congregation can find something in which to participate.

In the **Spring** we had the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Ladies' ½ Day. During the year prior to this the ladies worked hard on developing a plan and working the plan. Countless small items have to be taken care of to make the day a special time of building the faith of so many who attend. Ladies from several congregations and some denominational ladies attended. The speakers fortify the faith, touch hearts and give a spiritual lift to all. Those who attend go away praising our ladies. Others have taken the guidelines and started a Ladies Day in their congregation. It is complementary to be imitated.

Our youth have special activities each **Summer**. This year as usual we began with **Vacation Bible School**. Many hours and a great deal of work go into making the VBS something special

for those who attend. The youth are always trying to find others to come with them. This healthy competition is what we call “evangelism” because they often bring a child who does not attend here. The summer continued with the **Tuesday Night Summer Youth Series** and the children went from congregation to congregation listening to good speakers teaching on special subjects suited for them. This year we had four of our youth go to **Cisco Christian Youth Camp**. They came back with glowing reports. Camp is a special time for our youth to meet other younger people from around our area. The **3<sup>rd</sup> Summertime Gospel Preaching Series** was exciting and edifying this year. It started in June and ran for 13 weeks with different preachers and continued through August. This year the gospel preachers presented the **Parables of Jesus**. Each stirred our hearts, minds and kindled deeper faith in Christ. They made the parables practical and come to life.

Our **Fall Gospel Meeting** will be held October 25-28 (Sunday through Wednesday) with brother Bill Burk from Seagoville, TX. The theme of his lessons will be “**What It Means To Follow Jesus**”. The lesson titles are: Following Jesus: A look at the man; Following Jesus; what it really means, Following Jesus in the home, Following Jesus in the community, Following Jesus in difficult times and Following Jesus as a member of His church. Be considering who you might invite to hear these lessons. Brother Burk is one of the men this congregation helped to attend a School of Preaching. He has been in Seagoville for the past 11 years and also serves as one of the instructors at the Brown Trail School of Preaching. He also goes to Ghana frequently to teach and preach.

We can be thankful for all the engaging activities we have during the various **seasons** of the year. Our week to week programs also make us a busy congregation.

~ Don Hatch

## **GREETER ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Sunday, September 13, 2009**

**Front foyer:** Richard & Carolyn Renfro

**Back foyer:** Nancy Pond; Roberta Price

### **Sunday, September 20, 2009**

**Front foyer:** Robert & Betty Ruckman

**Back foyer:** Bill & Linda Matthews

## Family News:

### MISSION PRINTING

Mission Printing will meet **Sunday** at 4:00 p.m. in the Jr. Auditorium.

### SINGING SESSION

The **Sunday afternoon** singing session will meet in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.

### MENS' GATHERING/DEVOTIONAL

The **Monday morning** devotional will meet at 6:00 a.m. in the Annex.

### LADIES' BIBLE CLASS

Ladies' Bible Class will resume on **Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>** at 11:00 with a lesson by Jerry McKey and a luncheon.

### KELLER LADIES' INTREAT

All Ladies are invited to attend the Keller Church of Christ Ladies Intreat on **Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup>** from 9:00 a.m. till 12:30 p.m. Guest speaker is Jill Hall and the theme is "This Little Light of Mine". If planning to attend, please RSVP to Janet Harvey at 682-286-1351 or Raeanne Dunnavent at 817-337-0160.

### ROWLETT FORUM

The Church of Christ at Rowlett is hosting their annual forum on **Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>** from 8:30 a.m. till 1:30 p.m. as a public debate on the theme of "Marriage, Divorce & Remarriage" between Jack Evans, Sr. and Melvin Sapp. Please see the bulletin board in the back foyer for more details.

### CONGRATULATIONS

BC & Grady Fowler welcomed their 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandbaby into the world last week. It's a girl, and her name is Autumn Rain.

### NEW BIBLE CLASS

Henry Seidmeyer will begin a new study in the Auditorium this Wednesday evening on the book of Hebrews.

### WITH SYMPATHY

**Patricia Lanier** (Roy Lanier's wife) passed away last week.

### NEWS OF THE SICK

•**Judy Hancock's** health is declining.

•**Max Melton** was hit by a car last week & is suffering with a shoulder injury.

- Dessie Ross** still suffers with her fractured shoulder.
- Cathy Taylor** is not feeling well & is still recouping at home.
- Leo Townsend** remains in Methodist Hospital/Dallas, room #4023; no visitors at this time, please.
- Peggy Arnold** (Margaret Lewis' sister) is in Medical City Plaza in Ft. Worth.
- Raeanne Dunnavent** (Ty Harvey's sister) is suffering with kidney stones.
- Ethel Hancock** (Don's mother) is now on round-the-clock hospice care in Odessa.
- CD Hancock** (Don's father) now has full blown dementia.
- Judy Morris** (Carolyn Montgomery's niece) is very ill & requests continued prayers.
- Mrs. Winston** (Frances Tipton's friend) is in Baylor Hospital with a head wound & cannot speak.

**Continuing Prayer Concerns:**

Gwen Bingham, Grady Fowler, Fauna Garrett, Billie Gilliam, Don & Judy Hancock, Jean Kelly, Jack & Frances LaFerney, Garldean Latham, Everett Newton, Tom Prince, Thomas West, Brad Anderson (Bill Paschall's friend), Charlie & Mary DiPalma (missionaries), Louise Gierling (former member & Tom Gierling's mother), Ilya Yakimenko (son of missionaries in Russia), & our shut-ins.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Be sure and mark your calendar -**

- September 13: Mission Printing in the Jr. Auditorium at 4:00 p.m.
- September 13: Singing session in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.

**LORD'S TABLE/MORNING**

**Front Table**

- Purman Cofer
- Jerry Baker
- Dorris Walker
- Marvin Brown
- Mike Garrison
- Bill Matthews
- Ty Harvey
- Rob Farmer

**Rear Table**

- JC Ross
- Robert Taylor
- Max Melton
- Keith Vaughn
- Derrol Allen
- Brandon Howard
- Bobby Bowen
- Virgil LaFerney

**SUNDAY A.M. PRAYERS**

- Jerry McKey
- Denzil Myers
- Rob Farmer

**A.M. SCRIPTURE READING**

- John Mayer
- 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

**A.M. SONG LEADER**

· Garl Latham

**SUNDAY P.M. PRAYERS**

· Robert Ruckman

· Bill Paschall

**P.M. SCRIPTURE READING**

· Ty Harvey

Hebrews 11:23-29

**P.M. SONG LEADER(S)**

· Jerry Baker

**LORD'S TABLE/EVENING**

· Darrell Allen

· Garl Latham

**COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS**

· Mike Batot

**FOR THE RECORD: WEEK ENDING ATTENDANCE & BUDGET**

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>This Week</u>	<u>YTD Avg.</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Sun. Class	99	83	92	125
A.M. Worship	161	144	156	210
P.M. Worship	80	91	86	112
Wed. Class	88	94	81	110
Ladies Bible Class	-	-	30	35
Contribution	\$5594	\$5329	\$5360	\$5474

***MISSIONS***

Charlie &amp; Mary DiPalma - India

Willie Gley – Ghana/Togo, Africa

Roland &amp; Rose Mohsen – France

Gary &amp; Nadya Workman – Ukraine

Glen &amp; KuinTattersall – Australia

Oleg &amp; Natasha Yakimenko - Russia

Wil &amp; Telanda Sadler – Military Missions

Christ's Haven Children's Home - Keller, TX

Foster's Home for Children – Stephenille, TX

Bitragunta Church of Christ, Bitragunta, India

Ian &amp; Mabel McPherson – Tasmania Australia

Wayne Jackson – Christian Courier on the Web

Ted Lingren - Sisophon Bible School – Cambodia

Mission Printing Worldwide Literature Distribution

Terry &amp; Pam Laurence – Bear Valley School of Preaching

Dennis &amp; Beth Johnson - Chennai Teacher Training School – India