



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

February 25, 2018

Coming to Terms with God

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. —John 3:16-17

You haven't lived until you've come to terms with your Maker. Figuring out life means appreciating what matters to the God who gives life. "Love" is prominent in God's scheme of things. *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength and your neighbor as yourself* (Matthew 22:36-40). So are "sin,"—*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*, "holiness"—*You are to be holy as I am holy* (Leviticus 19:2)—and "redemption"—*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace* (Ephesians 1:7). And the term that brings these widely divergent terms together is "Gospel."

The Gospel is as big as the God who created it and as wide as the gap between perfect heaven and sinful earth. And the Gospel is a story that can be expressed in different ways, from different perspectives, and for different purposes. The term "Gospel" refers to ...

A Story from the Past: *Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. —1st Corinthians 15:1-2*

That Man on the Cross ... He really did live. He literally came from heaven to walk the earth. He talked with people and taught God's truth—good news and bad. And he really did suffer and die on the cross—for US. It actually happened. He died for our sins, and they buried His dead body. But on the third day ...

HE ROSE FROM THE GRAVE. Eyewitness testimony confirms this fact. And He did all this for you. He died to receive God's just judgment for sin. He died to pay the penalty for all evil, for all time, everywhere. Then He rose from the grave to set free from sin and death and hell—forever.

This testimony is the essence of the Gospel and the basis for the only hope there is on earth. Put your faith in Jesus—the Man on the cross—and He will forgive all your sins. Look to Him and live.

A Message for the Present: *And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. —Acts 4:12*

We express the Gospel as a brief outline to guide others to faith in Christ. "The Bridge" and "The Four Spiritual Laws" are common examples that give its essence. 1) God created the world out of love and gave it to Man as a gift. 2) Man disobeyed God, separating us from Him, bringing sin and evil into His perfect creation. 3) God has provided a way to reconcile us back to Himself by sending His Son as a sacrifice for our sin, and 4) He makes His forgiveness available through faith in Christ. This is Gospel as presentation—the plan of salvation.

The Grace in Which We Stand: *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. —Romans 5:1-2*

Every moment of every day, believers live in hope. God walks with us because Christ died for us. Since He gave His own Son for us, *how will he not also with him graciously give us all things* (Romans 8:32)? He doesn't knock us down when we sin. He forgives us and sets us free to try again. Our troubles and difficulties aren't punishment. They're the path to glory, as He uses this world's struggles to shape us for heaven and make us like His Son. This is Gospel as life and peace, as God walks close beside us.

Gospel is the air Christians breathe, as we take in God's grace and live out the new life He gives, moment by moment, day after day. It gives us a calm and confident stride as we run the race, grow in grace, and prepare to sing forever *to the praise of His glory*.

Prayer for the Week

Sunday (Church): Pray for Marti Wiegman (Women's Ministry Director), that God will use her ministry to transform the women of our church into the image of Christ.

Monday (Home and Family): Confess our sin as a community. We delight in the blessings God has given us yet neglect to love God or others.

Tuesday (Job/School): Ask God to raise up a multitude of Christian leaders to follow in the footsteps of Billy Graham and lift up the name of Jesus to the nations.

Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community): Pray that our community leaders will seek God in all their decisions and policies, so Christ will be exalted in Corona.

Thursday (Our Nation): Pray for revival in the Church in America, so we shine the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ to those around us who need Him.

Friday (The World): Pray for boldness, protection, and strength for Christians in areas troubled by violence and unrest.

Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing): Praise God for the freedom and plenty we still enjoy in America.

Faith Is ...

Trusting God to enable us to live Godly in this life, in the same way we trust Him to save us to live forever in the next.

Prayer Record

Record specific prayers you have below. Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. –Colossians 2:6-7