



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

March 4, 2018

Coming Clean

If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me! —Psalm 66:18-20

We have a world to take on. The world cannot be fixed. It needs to be conquered. Trying to fix it means losing the battle, because in order to fix the world, you have to love it and *if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him* (1st John 2:15). Loving the Father means taking on the world by forsaking sin and leading others to do the same by the power of Christ.

William Carey took on the world by setting sail from England to bring the message of Jesus Christ to India. In the process, he laid the foundation for the modern missionary movement, which eventually took the Gospel around the world. And this was his motto: “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.” We are the Church of the living God, and as such, we need to call on Him to do great things.

Prayer is not just sitting in a circle and talking our wishes into the air. Prayer takes on the world, striving to obtain things from God, in the service of His kingdom, which lasts forever. *The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever* (1st John 2:17).

Coming clean from sin is essential. How can we really mean what we pray, if we call on God while embracing the world. *We cherish iniquity in our hearts* when we cling to the things of earth more tightly than we cling to God. No one can embrace two things at one time. Fully embracing God means letting go of everything else for His sake, because He matters above all else. And that’s when prayer has true power. Bible history is replete with examples.

One time, when God’s people were completely surrounded, Israel’s king Hezekiah asked the LORD to save them—and He did. Of all the ancient empires, Assyria was the greatest, and by far the most savage. The Assyrians perfected the art of terror in order to make people fear the consequences of rebellion. They publically peeled the skin off of people or impaled them on spikes, so all could watch them die in agony.

And there they were, surrounding Jerusalem. They had Hezekiah trapped “like a bird in a cage,” and so they taunted him openly and mocked the God he served. So Hezekiah went into the temple, brought the situation before the LORD, and called on Him for deliverance. The following morning, 185,000 Assyrian soldiers woke up dead, and their king simply slunk back home. So much for the savage Assyrians!

The important prequel to this miracle was when God’s people came clean. Hezekiah dedicated his reign to getting rid of the idols that lured Israel to love the base things of world. Altars to Baal and the ceremonial prostitution that went with them were torn down. Child sacrifice to the Phoenician god Molech was gone. Hezekiah cleansed the temple and rededicated it to the worship of the one true God.

Now the LORD’S just judgments were in control. His perfect law set the standard. Faithfulness and truth replaced the fickle whims of the days when *everyone did what was right in his own eyes* (Judges 17:6). Again, the covenant bond between God and His people was pure and strong, and in His *hesed*—His steadfast covenant faithfulness—the LORD God of Israel delighted to bless and protect His people.

God has bound Himself to us in a covenant. Covenants bind two parties together, and both are obligated to keep it. If one participant fails—as Israel did, as Man constantly does—the other is free from the covenant’s demands. In Christ, God and Man are one, and in Him, the LORD has fulfilled both sides of the deal. In Christ, *steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other* (Psalm 85:10).

The power of prayer is the power of God unleashed through His people at their request, and *holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts* (Isaiah 6:3a). Come clean. Let go of everything else and embrace Him. By faith, receive Christ’s death that conquered the world, and His resurrection that conquered death. Then pray, expecting Him to respond in power and *to the praise of His glory*.

Prayer for the Week

- Sunday (Church):** Pray for Mike Russell (Lay Elder) to have wisdom for a Godly life and effective ministry, leading Northpoint to raise up disciples who make disciples of Jesus.
- Monday (Home and Family):** Ask God to lead future generations of your family to Himself. May He establish a dynasty of faith that seeks His will.
- Tuesday (Job/School):** Pray for the movement of God’s Spirit among your school or employer. Ask God to use you for His purposes.
- Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community):** Pray that Christ will be known and exalted in our local schools, the district, and school board. Ask God to accomplish His will in their plans and dealings.
- Thursday (Our Nation):** Confess Jesus Christ as the true Lord and Leader of this great country, so His truth shines through our land to the ends of the earth.
- Friday (The World):** Ask God to lift up Jesus Christ and draw all men to Himself throughout the world, from East to West and North to South.
- Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing):** Rejoice in the fact that God created music and every form of beauty (Psalm 104).

Faith Is ...

Opening up our hearts for God to examine, knowing that what we give up for Him is nothing compared to the peace and joy of having His presence in our lives.

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

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. —James 4:1-4

Christians know freedom and abandonment, because we live free in Christ. The Gospel is “once for all good news,” because of what Jesus did in history by dying for our sins. But it’s also daily good news, because He lives in heaven right now, listening to our prayer and interceding for us with the Father.

Rejoice, Christians! God’s Son, who died for us, reign over us, and lives in us through the Holy Spirit, who fills us and will never leave us.

Dave Dussault
Northpoint Prayer Ministries

God made us to live, but we live in a dying world.

Beatitudes chapeau

They are promises.

An expression of The love of God

Heaven is the promised land for Christians

Beatitudes me

Living for another world. We were born to live. But we live in a dying world. Christ died to this dying world and rose again to a new one. Through faith in him we died and die to this world and live to the new one.

Living for the love of Christ. The beatitudes describe life lived for the love of God and holding him to be our greatest treasure, believing him to be more valuable than anything else this world offers.

The Holy Spirit is our present realization of the ultimate blessing we will one day Receive . Our portion. Present realization of a future reality bought by Christ and the blessing the beatitudes promise.

The come what may qualify of our faith that embraces both good and bad is based on the fact that this world is not our home. We evaluate what happens in this life based on something other than the good we experience or don't in this life.

Lift up your heads and behold the Baby Jesus. *He is the King of Glory!*

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For The Beatitudes

Interest

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

–Matthew 13:44-46

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

–Matthew 6:19-21

We live for a different world.

God made us to live, but we live in a dying world. Jesus died to this dying world and rose again to a new one that will never pass away. The Christian life—living by faith in Christ—is dying to this world and living for the new world that Christ created when He rose again. Living by faith in Christ means daily releasing the treasures that tie us to the world we live in and receiving the eternal treasures God promised us in Christ. We let go in order to receive.

We live for the love of Christ.

We let go in order to receive Christ. Jesus is our first love, our true treasure, the one essential thing in life. He is the Author of life and the Creator of the world. No one matters more in this world. Jesus Christ is the One who loved us and traveled the infinite distance from heaven to earth to make us His own. He became a man, died in our place to pay a debt we owe but can't repay. All things in heaven and earth belong to Him, so by possessing Christ, the believer owns all things. No one matters more.

Prayer is pursuing Christ. Prayer brings the reality of heaven into our daily lives. It makes the next world part of this one by making Christ our goal on earth and His kingdom the essence of all we seek. Answered prayer is receiving Him.

The Holy Spirit is God in us—our present realization of the ultimate blessing we will receive one day. He is our “portion,” the present realization of a future reality bought by Christ. He is the blessing the beatitudes promise.

There is a “come what may” quality to the faith that overcomes the world. It trusts God when He takes things away and expects Him to replace them with better things in His time. As we pursue the tasks and challenges that come with life, we look to Christ to take care of us—to provide for us—knowing that the last thing we will release to Him is our life on this earth and trusting that the first thing we will receive afterward is life forever.

Expectant prayer embraces both good and bad, accepting the fact that this world is not our home. We evaluate what happens in this life based on something other than the good we do or don't experience on earth. It prays, “not my will but yours be done,” like Christ did in Gethsemane, with the same faith that led Jesus to the cross to conquer death. This prayer and this faith led the apostles to follow Christ in death and built the Church. It's the faith that sees what isn't but will be. It is the faith that obtains things through prayer and accomplishes God's work on earth.

The beatitudes describe life lived for the love of God that considers him our greatest treasure and believes him to be more valuable than anything else this world has to offer. This faith brings hope into the coming year, as we live and pray, hope and aspire *for the praise of God's glory*.

Faith Is: Giving thanks in everything that happens, believing that it is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1st Thessalonians 5:18).