



# prayer *life!*

## Weekly Prayer Focus

September 9, 2018

**No.**

*And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. –Hebrews 11:39-40*

We call it “unanswered prayer,” but God never leaves a prayer unanswered. There are times, though, when He says, “No.”

We walk by faith in a living, personal God. He is love. He is righteous and holy, He is mighty and able and wise. All His attributes guide all He does, including when He says “No” when we pray. How difficult!

As needy and dependent creatures, we learn through prayer to rely on our God. Through prayer, we lay aside our pride and self-sufficiency and learn to depend on our Creator. Depending on God is a tough, life-long lesson to learn.

And then God throws in a “No” to our prayers.

God uses “No” to teach us a different kind of faith—faith in more than His power and ability to provide. He’s teaching us to trust Him—His wisdom and the greatness of a greater plan that includes more than just us and our concerns. God says “No” to loosen our grip on the things we want—or maybe to loosen their grip on us.

God is so much greater than anything we can get from Him—even life’s essentials.

We consider liberty essential. But consider how God gave comfort to generations of slaves who longed for freedom yet never knew it. Their faith held them to something greater than the unalienable rights from which they were alienated. God Himself.

In recent years, the song, *Kum By Yah*, has come to express a kind of clichéd faith. But a cliché is a saying that’s so true we forget how much it matters. When someone’s praying, or someone’s crying, or someone’s dying, they need the presence of the living God in their situation. At those times, “Come By Here” is a cry of infinite need to the infinite God, who draws close to the needy.

He gives comfort and strength, even when our prayers are denied. He gives strength and hope inexpressible. Believing slaves—of which there were countless thousands—received the ability to hope through generations. Countless martyrs received courage and even joy in death, because God Himself is sufficient through anything. Only “No” can teach the hard but eternal truth that God’s love is greater than life itself.

Stories and examples abound, but only one truly matters. One night a man at the height of His strength entered a garden to pray. We know Him well. In fact we pray in His name. That night He prayed with excruciating fervor to His Father for deliverance. We’re so familiar with the account that we easily overlook the fact that the answer He received was a resounding, ironclad, “NO.” Still, He went obediently forward.

Although Jesus never sinned, He became sin for us, and as sin, He was rejected by His Father. So was His prayer. God the Father told Jesus His Son, “No” in answer to His earnest prayer—the most earnest and deserved request ever expressed. “I don’t want to die like this!” “I know, Son. Still you must.”

And with that “No,” Jesus bought our salvation. To the praise of His glory.

*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him –Hebrews 5:7-9*

## Surrendering to God's

*Not as I will, but as you will.* —Matthew 26:39b

Surrender to God's will requires faith in God Himself and all of who He is. Absolute surrender brings absolute freedom, because only someone with nothing has nothing to lose. And having nothing, because everything is surrendered to God means having God Himself in all His fullness—the *one pearl of great value* that's worth everything we own (Matthew 13:46).

We at Northpoint have so much. Ask God to teach us freedom in Christ, as we surrender everything we've received from Him in exchange for all of who He is. There is no better time than now for us to ask God to teach us as a church to let go of the things of earth, so we can receive the riches of heaven and serve Him completely.

Ask God to make us so heavenly minded that we can be of great earthly good.

## Prayer for Northpoint

Ask God to be everything our leaders at Northpoint.

1. **Our Pastors and Directors:** Scott Williams, Tony Chute, Terilyn Brown, Geoff Grant, Taylor Mendoza, and Marti Wiegman.
2. **Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Mike Russell, and Vinoj Zechariah.
3. **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Andria Brucks, Jacob Williams, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn.

Ask God to draw them close to Him in prayer, so they seek *the one thing that is necessary ... the good portion, which will not be taken away* (Luke 10:42).

## Prayer Record

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

Date	Request	Date	Answer

*Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

—2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 12:8-10