



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

March 3, 2019

The Promise that Gave Birth to the Church

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. –Joel 2:28-32a

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! –Luke 11:13

Little Kara, our granddaughter, injured her arm last Friday. She waited bravely through long hours at the medical center, being examined and getting x-rayed. Finally, doctor mended the arm and made it feel better by applying a splint. Then at home, when all was over, the three-year-old applied her new medical understanding, by “splinting” her baby brother’s head “so much that it will never hurt.” So cute!

And so simple. Kara, of course, had no idea of what was really happening. What that big machine did that took pictures of her little arm. What Mommy and the doctor were talking about, as they looked at the shadowy pictures. Her grasp on this vast and complex world is growing, but it’s as small as she is.

Prayer means coming to God as a child, so trust is essential. The real world is vast, beyond our growing but helplessly simple human understanding. We really *do not know what to pray for as we ought* (Romans 8:26a). We pray for what we need or want. But only God knows how things work, where things are going, and what is really best.

As Israel pined away in exile, God gave them a spectacular promise. It came in the form of a prophecy they could barely understand. It’s fulfillment came in a way no one could have expected, through a chain of events that was impossible to anticipate. But God worked through centuries to bring it about.

He also worked through people, their deeds, and their prayers. By faith, a few understood that Jesus was the promised Messiah, God’s Son, but all rejected the idea that He would die on a cross for the sins of the world, rise from the grave, appear to many, then ascend into heaven. But that’s how their prayers were answered and Joel’s prophecy was fulfilled—God’s mysterious plan to send the Holy Spirit to inhabit His people and create His Church.

Our grasp on the divine plan is as simple as the medical knowledge of a three-year-old. Yet we still play a crucial part in the unfolding work of God’s kingdom. God does what’s needed to advance His kingdom, as we pray for what we want and feel we need. Like children, we know in part, and our prayers reflect our limited understanding. But God answers in ways that use our prayers and actions to accomplish His great and mysterious plans for Good.

Fulfilled prophecy is answered prayer—prayer that God inspires as well as answers. God’s people are not passive, but it is God who makes everything we pray and all we do effective. God cares for you infinitely, but you also play a part in His eternal plans. Out of love, He listens to your prayers with intense love and interest, but He also knows what He’ll accomplish by the way He answers.

As with you and your life at this time, God is the author of this point in Northpoint’s history, too. What seems vague and uncertain to us has a clear and definite purpose in God’s unfolding plan. He’s listening to our prayers and leading our plans. He will guide and He will answer in miraculous ways that we really could never imagine, to the praise of His glory. He’s that amazing!

Praying on the Promises

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

–Jeremiah 29:11-12

God's plans are all good, and we play a part in them. This fact is true, no matter what happens. As we take on each day, we have no idea what will take place. By its very nature, life itself is an act of faith. Every moment depends on the workings of our great God, His infinite wisdom, perfect love, and omnipotent hand.

Nothing in life is ordinary. That's why we pray.

Continue to pray for encouragement and faith for those who lead us as a church. Pray for eyes to see God's plan and faith to act confidently in everything that unfolds. Ask God to use them in mighty ways.

- 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, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Tamene Menna, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn.

Praise 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

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!

–Psalm 118:21-25