



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

January 19, 2020

Down to the River to Pray

And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. —Acts 16:13-14

When Lydia went down to the river to pray, she knew nothing about “that good old way” that’s sung about today. She was coming to worship God, along with some other women who gathered *on the Sabbath*. Little did Lydia or any of the women who prayed with her know what God was doing in answer to their prayers. But He had been working mightily behind the scenes. God had a people to save.

Paul and Silas and Timothy had been traveling around what we now call Turkey, pursuing a path for the Gospel with only a sense of where not to go. For reasons entirely unknown to them, the Holy Spirit stopped them at every turn. They stayed in the familiar *region of Phrygia and Galatia*, because the Holy Spirit wouldn’t let them go west and enter Asia. When they tried moving north to Bythina, on the Black Sea, the *Spirit of Jesus did not allow them*.

We don’t know how God led them or communicated His guidance, but His “No” was definite. They had to turn west again and travel through Mysia, until they came to Troas—ancient Troy. There, Paul had a vision of a man urging him to “*Come over to Macedonia and help us.*” Finally, God’s leading was clear, so they entered Europe for the first time and ended up in the proud Roman city of Philippi—where Lydia lived.

Finding no Jewish synagogue there, Paul joined the prayer meeting outside the city gate, down by the river, and he preached the Gospel there. Lydia’s prayers were answered, when *the Lord opened her heart to believe the Gospel*. When Lydia and her household were baptized, the Philippian church was born.

As we pray, we may have a sense of what we need or desire, but we have no idea of the role our prayers play in the divine scheme of events. We worship Almighty God, and the Lord who hears our prayers superintends all the events of heaven and earth. Our prayers are an integral part of divine superintendence, as God *works all things according to the counsel of His will* (Ephesians 1:11a).

Undistracted by the functions of the universe, the Lord listened intently to the prayers of *a seller of purple goods* and brought His apostles from Asia to Europe to meet her need. Praise God for answered prayer! God’s mysterious, purposeful guidance led Paul and his companions to Lydia. Her soul was saved, a church was planted, and the work of the Gospel continued to unfold.

Little did Lydia know the outcome of her prayers. No one could anticipate the spiritual confrontation, the souls saved, and the lives changed as a result. Perhaps one consequence will come from Lydia’s prayer in our day, when we learn to sing the old Gospel chorus with new faith—faith and prayers for our day.

As I went down in the river to pray, studying about that Good Old way
And who shall wear the starry crown, Good Lord, show me the way!
O sisters let’s go down, let’s go down, come on down.
O sisters let’s go down, down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray, studying about that Good Old way
And who shall wear the robe and crown, Good Lord, show me the way!
O brothers let’s go down, let’s go down, come on down.
Come on brothers let’s go down, down in the river to pray.

Who knows what God is up to, or how He will “show us the way” in answer to our prayers?

To the praise of His Glory!

Prayer for the Week

Faith Is following God's way when it's unclear and difficult, knowing He's never misled you in the past.

Sunday (Church): Ask God to use Taylor Mendoza, Pastor of Student Ministries, to lead our students to love Christ, trust Him, and follow His ways.

Monday (Home and Family): Pray for God's eternal blessing for your extended family: uncles, aunts, cousins, and their families.

Tuesday (Job/School): Ask Christ to reveal Himself through you to your fellow students or those you serve through your job.

Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community): Pray for Spiritual, physical, and emotional safety for local community workers, city leaders, teachers, police and fire departments

Thursday (Our Nation): Ask God to use His blessings on our nation to serve others and glorify Himself, so that our wealth and freedom serve others and honor Christ.

Friday (The World): Ask God to protect and build His Church in Middle East and to establish liberty, stability, and peace in that region.

Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing): Thank God for your family and friends. They are special gifts from God to you.

Prayer for Our Leaders

Pray that God's hand will be on all our leaders. Pray for wisdom and guidance for choosing new elders.

1. **Our Pastors and Directors:** Tony Chute, Taylor Mendoza, Terilyn Brown, and Marti Wiegman.
2. **Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Vinoj Zechariah, and new elders who will soon come onto the board.
3. **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Tamene Menna, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, Karen Sherwood, and Dani Tiqui.

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

Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD. –Proverbs 24:3-4