



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

February 23, 2020

Things That Make for Peace

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. —Philippians 4:8-9

We're familiar with the so-called shortest verse in the Bible, and we know that Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus, even though He would soon raise Him from the grave. In Christ, we rejoice in hope that one day, those who hope in Christ will also rise.

But Jesus came to conquer sin as well as death. Sin and its destruction also broke Jesus' heart and caused Him to weep. On His final approach to Jerusalem before the crucifixion, Jesus paused amid the crowds cheering Him and looked up at the so-called "Holy City." The sight brought tears to His eyes.

His "Triumphal Entry" was devoid of genuine worship from His people. Their cheers of "Hosanna" would soon turn to cries to "Crucify, Crucify Him!" His response to the sight of His city was pointed and chilling. *Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes* (Luke 19:42). Their Messiah had come, and they weren't ready to receive Him (John 1:11). Really, they wanted nothing to do with Him.

Since Jesus is God, He looks on the heart, not on the outward appearance. He knew what was inside their adoration. It wasn't a passion for God's kingdom and righteousness, but something else. Something that had nothing to do with holiness or *the things that make for peace*—peace with God or with Man. Little did the lauding crowd know they were on the eve of destruction. *For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation* (Luke 19:43-44).

What we delight in—what occupies our time and attention—reveals what matters to us most, and there's more to being a Christian than merely professing—or even praising—Jesus. Our appetites need to be trained and our desires weaned from earthly to heavenly things. The great temptation for the people of God has always been to use Him for our own purposes and co-opt the gifts of heaven for our earthly pleasures.

And since we live all our lives on earth and breathe in its air every day, the things of earth dominate our intake. Just going about the business of living becomes a primary preoccupation that determines everything we take in. Then there's down time, relaxing, and fitting into our surroundings and the people in them, and filling our minds with whatever the world puts out there.

What we take in influences us, and the things of earth naturally displace the things that make for peace—the things that draw us close to God and prepare us for when He comes. To shape the hearts of the Philippian believers, Paul refocused their attention. He directed them away from temporal distractions and onto things of eternal worth. He urged them to give careful, reasoned attention to *whatever is ...*

- *honorable*: deserving respect, pleasing to God
- *true*: honest and reliable, enabling us reject what's false, deceptive, and uncertain
- *just*: conforming to God's values and perfect standards
- *pure*: wholesome, spiritually healthy, with no trace of moral impurity
- *lovely* promoting peace and harmony with others, dispelling conflict
- *commendable*: well spoken of, positive and constructive, not negative and destructive
- *excellent* and *worthy of praise*: anything worth focusing our minds on

As we turn from earthly things and *think about these things*, in loving anticipation of Christ's return, we learn to *practice these things*—the things that make for peace. That's how the hope of Jesus' return changes us, purifies us, and prepares us to meet Him, as we live to the praise of His glory.

Prayer for the Week

Pray for God's clear guidance and provision for the new direction we are taking as a church. Ask God to show His hand and reveal His will in the way things take shape in our plans for future leadership.

Monday (Home and 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.

Family): The particular needs of members of your family. Ask God to meet those needs by His great power and use them to draw your family members closer to Himself.

Tuesday (Job/School): Ask God to use organizations like the Harvest Crusades, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and many others to reach every American home with the Gospel of Christ.

Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community): Pray for conviction of sin during this season of Lent. Pray for Christians throughout our community to seek God in all we do, so Christ will be exalted in Corona.

Thursday (Our Nation): Pray for conviction of sin and revival of the Church in the United States, so we shine the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ on our own hearts and to those around us.

Friday (The World): Pray for boldness, protection, and strength for Christians in areas troubled by violence and unrest. Ask Christ to teach His Church the way of the cross.

Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing): Praise the Lord for His total forgiveness in Christ, freedom from sin, and our eternal relationship with Him.

Prayer for Our Leaders

Pray that God's hand will be on our leaders, to give them His strength and protection.

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

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. -1st John 3:2-3