



THE FOREST HILL NEWS

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**Forest Hill
Church of Christ**
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Eddie F. Ray III

Ministers:

Barry M. Grider,
Pulpit Evangelist
Matthew Jones,
Personal Evangelist

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship.... 10:30 A.M.
Afternoon Worship.....1:30 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

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6 Reasons Why Some Prayers Are Never Answered (cont.)

Wayne Jackson

Lethargic Prayer Life

A key word connected with powerful prayer is **perseverance**. In response to the disciples' request that he teach them to pray, Christ gave the story of the friend at midnight. The purpose of this parable was to encourage the faithful to **keep on patiently praying**. The man in the story had an unexpected midnight visitor. Because he had not food to set before his guest, he went to a neighbor's, who had already gone to bed. The man asked his neighbor for three loaves of bread. The neighbor, however, would not be troubled. But the man continued to knock. Finally, because of such persistence, the neighbor arose and gave him what he needed. (Lk. 11:5ff). This narrative isn't teaching us God is wearied by our prayers. But it is a study of contrasts. In the parable, the one making the request was but only a friend. We are God's children.

*The request came at an inconvenient midnight hour, but with God, there is no night. (Psa. 74:16).

*The man's needs were small and were answered—grudgingly. Our needs are great, yet are answered **lovingly and generously** (Jas. 1:5).

The thrust of the parable is this. “**Ask** and ye shall receive, **Seek** and ye shall find, **knock** and it shall be opened unto you.” Each of these imperatives in the Greek present tense. Literally, therefore, **keep on asking, seeking and knocking**.* The story of the unjust judge teaches a similar lesson (cf. Lk. 18:1ff). Perhaps we sometimes rob ourselves of many good things simply because we lack the confident determination to persevere in prayer! God may be testing our resolve by withholding from us for a season.

Unforgiving Attitudes Overthrow Prayer

One of the most utterly devastating things that the Christian can do to hinder, indeed, to virtually cancel the effect of his prayers is to harbor a surly, unforgiving attitude toward others he feels have sinned against him (whether it is real or imagined). Christ taught the disciples to pray: “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” In conclusion he warned: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Mt. 6:12, 15). Judgment is without mercy to him that shows no mercy (Jas. 2:13). Peter once asked the Lord: “How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?” The Jewish rabbis felt that three times to forgive was quite sufficient (cf. Barclay, 213). Likely, Peter assumed he was being generous, but the Lord cautioned that forgiveness was to be extended seventy times seven (i.e., limitless!). Then in order to illustrate the gravity of having an unforgiving spirit, Jesus told the parable of the unmerciful servant. A king made a reckoning with his servants. Among them was found a fellow who owed the enormous debt of 10,000 talents. (perhaps some \$20,000,000). When called to account, he acknowledged that he could not pay, but he promised, if given time, to clear the debt.

(continued page 2)

This rash promise indicated his lack of appreciation of the enormity of his indebtedness. A laboring man's daily wages were only a denarius (Mt. 20:2)—perhaps thirty cents in today's money (2018). So the debt could scarcely have been liquidated in less than two hundred thousand years! Amazingly, his Lord forgave the debt anyway! Then, in a truly shocking turn of events, that forgiven man went and found a fellow-servant who owed him the trifling sum of 100 denarii (about \$30). He demanded payment. When his debtor confessed that he was unable to pay, the unmerciful wretch had him cast into prison. When the king heard of this reprehensible conduct, he commanded that the servant be cast into prison himself until he should pay all, which would be never (see Mt. 18:23ff). In this divine narrative, the king represents God. The first servant and his vast debt is you and me and the fact that our sins have put us head-over-heels in debt to God. It is a debt that we can never pay off by acts of human merit. It must be a matter of forgiveness. The second indebtedness calls attention to the trespasses others commit against us. How astounding it is that we, who have been given Heaven's saving grace are sometimes so unwilling to forgive others. The Lord warns that we cannot receive his forgiveness unless we are willing, from the heart, to forgive each other. Yes, improper actions and attitudes toward others can surely sabotage prayer. Marred or broken relationships—social, domestic, or spiritual—can hinder effectual prayers.

Christ once said: So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift (Mt. 5:23, 24). If you know that someone has a legitimate grievance against you, how can you sincerely approach God in prayer? Uncorrected problems with brethren are extremely detrimental. One is reminded of the stubborn elder brother, who, because he was envious of his prodigal (though penitent) brother, refused brotherly association. In doing so, he deprived himself of Fatherly communion (Lk. 15:28)! Peter certainly stressed that discordant home relationships could hinder prayers (1 Pet. 3:7). Where domestic wrangling and bitterness prevail, prayer can never be effective. Listen. We cannot pray to God while harboring ugly thoughts toward others.

The Sabotage of Selfish Prayers

Finally, some short-circuit their prayers due to their own selfishness. James says: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures" (Jas. 4:3). The word for pleasures is **hedone**. Here it suggests the desire of one who is so wrapped up in the physical world that he has little interest in fulfilling his true purpose on earth (cf. Isa.43:7; Eccl. 12:13). Though "religious," the individual here considered prays only out of a base spirit of selfishness.

Perhaps we need to analyze the motivation behind our prayers. When we petition for material things, is it that we might use them to the glory of God or that we might be more comfortable? That the prayers of many members of the church to this end are selfish prayers is clearly evinced by the fact that most of their possessions are employed to accommodate themselves, while only a pittance is offered to the Lord. But if our petitions are directed to the end that we may effectively serve our Savior, God can open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings in abundance (Mal. 3:10; Prov. 3:9, 10; Lk. 6:38).

Conclusion

If we really want access to our Heavenly Father's throne of grace, may we ever strive to conform our heart, mind, soul and body to serve him and others. May our prayers and lives reflect the spirit of Christ and the will of our God.

REFERENCES

- Barclay, William. 1975. *Matthew*. Vol. 2. Ediburch: Saint Andrew Press.
- Brown, Collin. 1976. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Vol. II. Exeter: Paternoster Press).

(Christian Courier)

New Zones

An announcement was made this past Sunday about the restructuring of our zone program. The new zones we believe will be a more effective and simpler model to fulfill the program's original purpose. Remember if you live west of Forest Hill-Irene and north of the Tenn-Miss line you are in zone 1. If you live east of Forest Hill-Irene and north of the Tenn-Miss line you are in zone 2. If you live south of the Tenn-Miss line (Olive Branch-Byhalia area) you are in zone 3. All MSOP students are in zone 4.

Appreciation to Toreda Earls

Sister Toreda Earls has been a part of the Knight Arnold/Forest Hill church for just about the entirety of her life. On Sunday, September 2 we sadly had to announce that she had decided to move to be near a sister who lives in the Cincinnati, Ohio area. Earlier this year, Toreda's mother and our long time church secretary, Jewel Earls, passed away. Toreda had given much care and attention to her aging mother. Now that sister Jewel has passed, the time seemed right for Toreda to make this move. We salute Toreda for her steadfastness in the faith. Particularly we are grateful for the many years she labored directing the pre-school and elementary division of our Bible class department. We pray God's blessings upon Toreda. She leaves with a special place in our hearts.

PRESIDE: Steve Ulrich
ASSIST: Paul Davenport
 Zakaria Diallo
 John Pope

Chris Weight
 Dan Dawson
 Houston McClure
 Dennis Woods

A.M. OPENING: Harold Mangrum
A.M. CLOSING: Bob Bergstrom
P.M. OPENING: Mike Reed
P.M. CLOSING: Marv Sowell

If you are unable to lead prayer or serve at the Lord's table, please contact Cedric Huff or Paul Connell.

RECORD, WEEK of September 9, 2018

BIBLE STUDY: 195
 A.M. WORSHIP: 250
 P.M. WORSHIP: 200
 CONTRIBUTION: \$18,638.00

HOMEBOUND

Virginia Ditto Albert & Ruth House
 Hazel Eskew Betty Jones
 Doris Jean Cole Jerry & Betty Robbins
 Anita Hopper Velton & Dorothy Trimm

OUR SICK

Ill at home: Leta Fay Anderson, Mary Elliott, Phil Houston, Martha McKelvey and Rufus Washington.

Patsy DeShields, St Francis Hospital, Barry Building, Room 405.

Betty Jones, Ave Maria Home Care, Bartlett.

Betty Ferguson, of Union City, TN and former member, suffered a mini stroke and will be undergoing some tests.

Paul Hayes, son of Carolyn Hayes, will be having hip surgery this week.

OUR SYMPATHY IS EXTENDED TO :

MSOP students, Adam and Kenny Bancroft, in the passing of their grandfather, evangelist Darrell Conley.

Margie Holliday in the passing of her sister, Mildred Hunter of Tacoma, WA.

CONGRATULATIONS to the 3rd and 4th grade class. Daniel Berch and Aneesa McLaurin who learned all the memory verses. Daniel Berch, Aneesa McLaurin, Anna Ulrich and James Weight learned all the cards. Lauren Weight of the 5 year old class learned all her cards.

HEARTS AND HANDS

REORGANIZATION LUNCHEON, Sunday, September 16 following the morning service. Kathy Maund, RN, will be available to administer flu shots on this day. Please sign up on the bulletin board. Zone 3 is responsible for set up and clean up.

EVENTS

LADIES AND MEN'S CLASSES resumed Tuesday, September 11. However, classes will not meet Tuesday, September 18.

YOUNG ADULT DEVOTIONAL Saturday, September 15 at the home of Chris and Steffanie Weight at 6:00 p.m.

SALT (for ladies) will meet Tuesday, September 18 at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

JC'S KINDNESS EVENT Sunday, September 23 after the morning service in the Education break room. We will enjoy lunch and make cards. Following the second service we will caravan to visit our homebound members.

KIRBY PINES Retirement Community worship service each fourth Sunday 8:00-8:45 a.m., conducted by Forest Hill. Our next service will be Sunday, September 23.

YOUTH RETREAT October 12-14. Details forthcoming.

TN CHILDREN'S HOME FALL FOOD DRIVE will continue through October 14. Please see the list of items on the bulletin board.

2ND ANNUAL JC'S CAMP OUT Friday, October 19 at the home of Kalon and Melissa Brown. Details forthcoming.

I would like to thank everyone for the prayers, cards, calls, food and visits. I have been with this congregation for 45 years and the love is still there. Love you all.

In Christian Love, Lisa Howard

Last week's solution:

Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find? The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him. Proverbs 20:6-7

CORNERSTONE

Scryptogram: Each letter in the passage is replaced with another.

BK XQ UZBH YIQ FKMPQ BA BEK WBKS OQJEJ PIKRJY,
 YIMY, YIBEFI IQ HMJ KRPI, XQY ABK XBK JMUQJ IQ
 CQPMTQ LBBK, YIMY XQ YIKBEFI IRJ LBDQKYX TRFIY CQ
 KRPI.

X=Y Solution next week. U=K

Just One Vote

Barry Grider

During the recent Senate confirmation hearings of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the United States Supreme Court, an interesting statement from a Judiciary committee member caught my attention. Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HA), while grilling the nominee, was bemoaning that the “right wing” in this country has been waiting for just this moment, to have a justice like Kavanaugh who might, with his vote on the high court, secure overturning Roe vs. Wade, the landmark decision that legalized abortion on demand. Her statement proves how fearful liberals in this country are at the rapid pace the judiciary is changing under President Donald Trump. For liberals, more important than government controlled health care and gay marriage, is the “right” of a women to terminate her pregnancy at any time during the gestation period. In the opinion of Senator Hirono, the high court is just one vote short of overturning Roe and to her and to her ilk that would be devastating. Much of the political grandstanding and demagoguery seen and heard in last week’s hearings centered upon this one issue. Liberal politicians have long sought for a far left Supreme Court that would legislate instead of fulfilling its constitutional role of interpreting what the law means. Speaking of the right wing or conservatives (which she would include conservative Bible believers and pro-life citizens among that number) Senator Hirono said they have been working for years to change the direction of this country. The senator is 70 years old. She should know that those with her political ideology are the ones who have changed the direction of the country over the course of the last 50 years to that which is anti-God, anti-Bible, anti-family, anti-freedom and anti-American. Some of us have been fighting, working, and praying to restore the common sense principles upon which the nation was founded and to return some sanity to our society again, which includes putting an end to the slaughter of unborn babies. If the confirmation of Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court will help in this effort (and many of us pray that it will), it does not mean that our work in this area is complete, but it does prove that we should never give up in our quest for what we know is good and right. In the words of the illustrious Churchill, “never, never, never give up.”

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