



Harvest Warriors

NEWSLETTER



www.harvestwarriors.com

warriors@artelco.com

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Warring to Harvest

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Lord Teach Us To Pray

How many Christians have wrestled with the thought, “Why pray at all?” Most Christians believe the basic purpose of prayer is only to get things from God! Certainly the Bible assures us that God hears us and in response, gives us what we want, not need. But, is this the basic reason Jesus taught us to pray?

How any Christian ever realized what true prayer is all about? What if God knows prayer to be the thing we need first and most? What if the main object in God’s idea of prayer is a supplying of our great, our endless need – that is, of Himself? Hunger may drive the runaway child home, and he may or may not be fed at once, but he needs his parents for more than his dinner. Communication with God is the one need of the soul beyond all other needs. Prayer is the beginning of true communion with God. We need to talk with God. A coming to one with the Great Creator — this is the sole end of prayer, and yes, the very existence of prayer itself is for this reason. We must ask that we may receive, but the receiving of our lower needs is not God’s end in making us pray. He could give us everything we want without prayer. To bring His children to their knees, sometimes God has to withhold their needs. He will do whatever it takes to get us to talk to Him.

God wants us for Himself. He truly desires communion with us. *His purpose in prayer is not to make us sit up and beg. He wants us to know Him.* Prayer is His method of accomplishing just that.

One thing I remember as a young man before I accepted Christ, a friend of mine had two little girls. When I went to visit them I always took some hard rock candy with me. I would hold the candy in my



closed hands and allow them to pull my fingers apart to get it. Sometimes I would make it easy for them and other times quite hard. Those two little girls would sit on my lap and would work and pry feverishly to get a couple of pieces of candy. Once they were successful with their capture they would scream with delight and jump down with their treasure, that great prize they worked for. I loved watching Tammy and Janet laugh and play while sitting on my lap wrestling to achieve a prize. The candy was insignificant.

Today it reminds me that when we pray, we often concentrate on the gifts in God’s hand and ignore the hand of God Himself. We pray fervently for a new job or for health, a new car, and many other things. When we gain the prize, we are delighted, and we have little more to do with God. *If we are only after the gifts, God’s hand serves only as a way to pay the rent, heal the sickness, or to get through some crisis. After the need has been met, the hand itself means little to us.*

While God in His grace does give good gifts to His children, He offers us more than that. He offers us Himself! Those who are merely satisfied with the treats in the Father's hand miss the best reward of prayer – the reward of communicating and communing with the God of the universe.

I admire men and women who give prayer high priority in their lives. To be honest, I like a lot of other Christians, have found that prayer has proven to be the most demanding of disciplines in my life. At different times I found it strenuous, even boring, sometimes frustrating, and confusing. Over the years a solid prayer life has been more intermittent than persistent. A lot of times I have grabbed hold of the hem of Jesus' garment, only to discover I could not sustain the grip. Out of my experience I have learned that you cannot just simply "say your prayers." Prayer, real prayer, is a tough hard business.

In the life of Jesus, prayer was the work and the ministry the prize. For me, prayer serves as the preparation for the battle, but for Jesus, it was the battle itself. Having prayed, He went about His ministry as an honor student might go to receive a reward, or as a marathon runner, having won the race, accepts the gold metal.

Where was it that Jesus' sweat became like great drops of blood? Not in Pilate's hall, nor on his way to Golgotha. It was in the Garden of Gethsemane. There He "offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death." (Hebrews 5:7) Had I been there and witnessed that struggle, I would have been worried about our future. If He is so broken up when all He is doing is praying, I would have said something like, "What will He do when He faces a real crisis? Why can't He approach this ordeal with the calm confidence of His three sleeping friends?" And yet, when the test came, Jesus walked to the cross with courage, and His three friends fell apart and ran away.

In Luke 11, after Jesus had spent time praying, one of His disciples asked Him five little words: "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples to pray." There are two things worth noting about this

request. First, one section of John the Baptist's curriculum in disciple-making focused on teaching his followers to pray. Second, now this was the request from Jesus' disciples. They had been with Jesus for over two years by now. They had front seats when He taught and preached. Yet as far as we know from God's word, the disciples never took Him aside and asked "Lord teach us to preach," or "Lord show us how to minister." They did come and request, "Lord teach us to pray."

Because prayer was central to His ministry, He wanted it to be vital in theirs. So He responded by giving them what is known as "The Lord's Prayer." Actually, I believe the prayer is misnamed because Jesus didn't need to say a prayer such as this. As we all know, the Son of God is without sin. He didn't have to join in this petition of prayer – "Forgive us our sins." I believe it should have been called "The Disciple's prayer." It is a primer on prayer for people like us. It serves us in praying as does an outline serve a pastor when he preaches a sermon. It is our blueprint to the Father. It guides us to God's heart.

**"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us day by day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one." Luke 11:2-4**

The prayer given to us by Luke opens with an address to God: "Father" The prayer then has two main sections. First, we talk to the Father about Himself – His person, His program, and His purpose. "Hallowed be your name." "Your kingdom come." "Your will be done."

Then we speak to the Father about His family: the children's need for provision, pardon and protection. "Give us this day our daily bread." "Forgive us our sins." "Lead us not into temptation." "Deliver us from the evil one."

To really learn about prayer, you must pray. Take it seriously and carve out some time each day to pray.

Jesus gave us a blueprint for prayer. Use it that way. Begin by praying “Our Father in heaven.” Let your mind focus on what it means to talk to the God of the universe as Father. Then pray to the Father about the Father, pray about His person. “Hallowed by your name.” Pray about His program — “Your kingdom come.” Pray about His purpose – “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Then pray to the Father about His family. Pray for provision. “Give us day by day our daily bread.” Pray for pardon – “And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. (that is, has sinned against us)” And pray for protection – Lead us not into temptation BUT deliver us from the evil one.”

If you let this prayer serve as your blueprint, you will discover that its elements have a purifying effect on what you pray for. You won't be able to pray for things that exalt your name, advance your kingdom, or promote your will. To ask for daily bread if you're living in defiance to God would be like a traitor ask-

ing for the strength to betray his own country. You won't be able to ask God to forgive you when you are not willing to forgive someone else. AND to ask God for His protection from the evil one would be contradictory if you are cultivating temptations.

Prayer is hard work, but our communication with God is as essential to our spiritual well-being as breathing is to our physical life.

The disciples asked Jesus: “Teach us to pray.” Five simple words. What other simple requests can you make:

Lord teach us to be friends
Lord teach us to trust You
Lord teach us to . . .

What would you like the Lord to teach you? Think about it. Take a few minutes right now and think about what you would like the Lord to teach you, then take a few more minutes and ask Him to do it. He delights in these sorts of prayers.



We have been fervently thanking the Lord for His recent blessing on our nation by allowing a man of prayer to once again enter the highest office of this land. We receive many testimonies about this man, and want to share just one of them here:

”You won't hear about this one on the evening news . . .

Date: Wed. 15 Sept, 2004

Last week, on Tuesday, our school had a field trip to see President Bush speak at the Farm Progress Show in Alleman, Iowa. It was even educational to learn about all the security we had to go through

at the outdoor event.

It was a typical campaign stop for the President. He spoke for 45 minutes, much of his speech was about agriculture because there were many farmers there, along with thousands of other people.

A few days later we learned something very interesting about George W. Bush's visit to Iowa.

Carson's former teacher had some friends there at the speech, whose son had been killed in Iraq as a Marine last April. The couple's son was named Ben.

Ben's parents had blue tickets, which meant they

would be standing outside on the ground with the rest of the crowd to hear the speech. At some point their tickets were upgraded, and they were given tickets where they could be seated on the stage with the president. About 45 minutes before President Bush came on stage, two secret service men asked them to leave the stage, and come inside a white trailer behind the stage. The parents were told to wait there, and also told that when the door of the trailer opened, they would want to stand up.

When the door opened, there was President Bush. He greeted them warmly, sat down with them at a table, and said, "Tell me all about Ben." The parents told of how Ben knew all the reasons why he was going to Iraq, and how he was glad to be doing what he, as a Marine, had been called to do. They told of how they had a complete peace about his death, and how they were absolutely certain he was in a much better place now.

After about 20 minutes of conversation, Ben's dad said, "We want to tell you, Mr. President, that my

wife and I pray for you every day." Then President Bush said, "Let's pray right now."

They gathered hands around the table. Ben's dad opened the prayer and the President closed.

This quiet encounter happened on a day when the President had major campaign stops in Tennessee and Pennsylvania, as well as Iowa. He also made an appearance at the Republican National Convention that evening by satellite.

We were amazed to hear of this kind of heartfelt deed, which is one of many that the President does without any reporters present, and a deed that will not likely ever hit the mainstream media. It was a lesson to my children, that a truly great leader is a humble person, one who will go out of his way to seek out the hurting, and lastly, a man of prayer who loves and trusts God.

I hope that by sharing this, you will see a glimpse of this leader behind a closed door. I hope that we can also ponder, as Ben's parents did even in their sorrow, that God has a plan for our lives, and for our country."

Roy C. Cash



Thanks to All of You

We want to take a moment here at the end of another year to thank all of you who have supported us with your prayers and your finances. We deeply appreciate both, and want you to know that we could not continue to keep going in this ministry without your help. It is our prayer that all of you have a wonderful and blessed holiday season. We are looking forward to great things this next year. We feel that God has answered the countless prayers lifted up to Him this year. This has been evidenced by the election results. It is our belief that God has, in His great mercy, once again extended His hand of mercy on our nation and withheld the judgment we so rightly deserve. Therefore, let us all rise up and work to win souls and bring revival to this country in the extended time we have been given.

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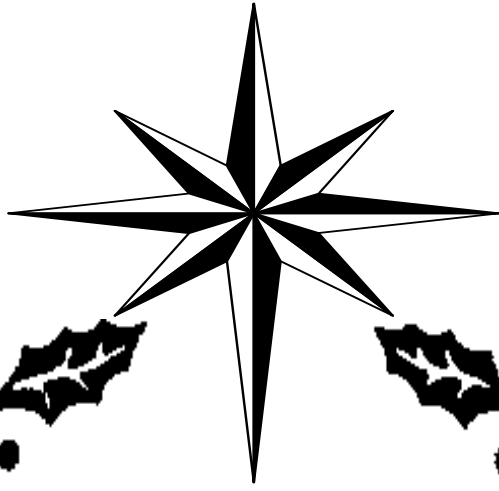
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We are a faith-supported ministry. That means, we are directly dependant on your obedience to God to meet our needs and keep the many facets of this ministry going. We ask you to pray to God and ask Him what He would have you do to support this work. We deeply appreciate those of you who do support us. As you send your gifts, we pray over each one, asking the Lord to richly bless the sender in return. Please send your offering in the enclosed envelope.

We are warring to harvest!



*Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year*

from

Daniel & Rebecca Yoder