

Prayer Power Tower

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Preparation

Rarely would we treat good news as a secret. Information that causes us great joy would also typically propel us to want to share that joy with others. As you come to this time preparing for an hour of prayer, what great joy swells in your heart? Especially if you can honestly say that none comes to mind, listen to the psalmist as he expresses his delight in One who eternally brings joy: *"I'll write the book on Your righteousness, talk up Your salvation the livelong day, never run out of good things to write or say. I come in the power of the Lord GOD, I post signs marking His right-of-way. You got me when I was an unformed youth, God, and taught me everything I know. Now I'm telling the world Your wonders; I'll keep at it until I'm old and gray. God, don't walk off and leave me until I get out the news of Your strong right arm to this world, news of Your power to the world yet to come, Your famous and righteous ways, O God. God, You've done it all! Who is quite like You? You, who made me stare trouble in the face, turn me around; now let me look life in the face. I've been to the bottom; bring me up, streaming with honors; turn to me, be tender to me, and I'll take up the lute and thank You to the tune of Your faithfulness, God. I'll make music for You on a harp, Holy One of Israel. When I open up in song to You, I let out lungful of praise, my rescued life a song. All day long I'm chanting about You and Your righteous ways, while those who tried to do me in slink off looking ashamed"* (Psalm 71:14-24 *The Message*). Eugene Peterson's contemporary paraphrase of the psalm has a way of bluntly speaking the truth. As you come before the Holy God who is righteous, who cares for you, who knew you before you knew you, share your words of joy in His being, and in His being in you!

Scripture

Paul's initial greeting in his letter to the Romans concludes with just two simple verses – or so it seems. These two sentences (Romans 1:16-17) could be considered the theme of the whole of the letter. As you read God's holy word, consider how you would summarize your life's work in two sentences.

- "We're having a baby!" "I got the job!" Good news is exactly that – good. If you were the bearer of either of those bits of glad tidings, you would surely be overwhelmed with joy and excitement. Paul now shares similar joy with us when he says he is not ashamed of the gospel (1:16). The apostle is proud to

proclaim the good news, in which he has complete confidence. Consider now your confidence in that same message of truth.

- There is power in the gospel, power to bring salvation. The same power, through which Jesus was declared Son of God (1:4), now empowers us for salvation. As believers we must acknowledge the power in God's word. How might you more faithfully do that today? This week?
- The righteousness of God (1:17) is a phrase Paul uses frequently. To the apostle, this righteousness is not only God's own perfect holiness, but also His justice shown to humankind, and a gift to the faithful. God's righteousness is also displayed in Jesus Christ. Accepting God's righteousness allows us to have a right relationship with Him – a relationship revealed through faith in Jesus Christ. In whose righteousness are you trusting before our holy God: Christ's? Or your own?

Adoration

Love and faith are intangible. However, God gives us a lasting symbol of our faith, and of our Savior's love for us. It is a symbol that should evoke strong emotions! As you sing praises to the One who gave His very life for you, let the final lines of Isaac Watt's beloved hymn remind you of the extent to which we are to worship Him, and teach you the practical outworking of that worship.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Isaac Watts, 1707

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.
See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?
His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er His body on the tree;
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.
Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Confession

In your day-to-day life, how often do you make it known that you rely on biblical teaching and prayer in your life's journey? The Apostle Paul gives us a look at the way he embraces the good news of Jesus Christ. He is "*not ashamed of the gospel*" (Romans 1:16); to the contrary, he is proud to say that he is driven by that gospel. Are you willing to share your beliefs with others and let them think what they will? Perhaps you don't consciously hide that fact; you just never make it publicly known! Paul suggests that we are to live our lives based on the gospel each day, not relying on our own righteousness, but rather depending solely on the righteousness of God. The prophet Habakkuk delivered God's message centuries before Paul lived, making a very similar point to believers: "*Look at that man, bloated by self-importance – full of himself but soul-empty. But the person in right standing before God through loyal and steady believing is fully alive, really alive*" (2:4 *The Message*). At this time of confession, in whom do you put your complete faith? Come to the One who went to the cross for you, so that you might have access to God's own righteousness.

When you've finished your prayers of confession, rejoice in this invitation to us from Christ Himself:

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30 NKJV)

Rejoice in the Good News: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Thanksgiving

In great joy, Paul shares his thankfulness with those he has never met. Take time to share your own gratitude at the many riches you have before you.

- Give thanks for the many translations of God's Word that we have at our disposal in order to dig deeper into the Scriptures in contemporary language.
- Thank God for the plethora of modern communication media that inform us daily, even instantly.
- Thank Him for the many statements of good news that the Lord sends your way each day.
- Thank God that we can even receive a daily infusion of His word on our cell phones or computers automatically.
- Think of the many ways that you can share the Good News, even with those outside your familiar circle of friends.
- "[Jesus] said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation'" (Mark 16:15 NIV).

Supplication

The Bible assures us that "*The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results*" (James 5:16b NLT). Intimidated by the "righteous" part? Be encouraged by the truth that God gives to all believers the very righteousness of Christ, and pray confidently, even boldly – especially for those who stand shoulder to shoulder with you in this great ministry of prayer.

Daniel Adams, Kristen Agnew, Audrey and Bill Allen, Corinne Baker, Jon Baker, Cyndy Beech, Joyce Bett, Ed and Goldie Black, Betty Bowser, Barbara and David 'Skip' Byers, Jan Carr, Lisa Cook, Ray and Jane Cornelius, Jennifer and John Culp, Ed Daggitt, Gina Brenda Dolan, Jane Dunmire, Ruth Dykstra Entwistle, Mickey Edmiston, Becky Elliott, Janice Good, Dorothy Gooden, Kathleen Graham, Dorothy Henderson, John and Marilyn Hicks, Joy Holland, Suzanne Howat, Gail Jablonovsky, Alberta Keener, Louise Keough, Joann Kettler, Dana Krepps, Michelle Kurtz, Donna Lewis, Jean Longnecker, Linda Longwell, Nancy MacRae, Rich Madsen, Don McAninch, Myrna Jane McCamey, Greg McElroy, Colleen McGaffic, Bob and Joanne Miller, Sandy Minor, Shirley Minshull, Jane and John Moser, Alan and Terry Northcott, Sean O'Brien, Edna Orange, Phyllis Osborne, Hazel Palmer, Joan Pashley, Jeannette Patterson, Nancy Rankin, Joanne Raymer, Andrea and Tod Reiser, Rachael Renick, Megan (Illsley) Sateia, Erin Scott, John Snow, Mary Jane Surrena, Charles Timmons, Beth Utsch, Betty Walters, Toni Walters, Alice Winger, Tami Witzke and Chris Yeakle.

- Please pray for all who serve with our Mission Team, and ask God to use them to help lead us all to grow in our involvement in His mission to the whole world.
- Please pray for our organist Lisa Stratton (and her husband Keith) as she helps lead us in worship.
- Please ask God to powerfully touch our hearts through prayer during our worship services.
- Please pray for all who serve with *Call of Hope*: for Stefano Fehr; for Brother Abdul as he witnesses to the Muslim people of Nigeria; and for the ongoing work in Azerbaijan.
- Please pray that you will be growing each day – along with the rest of us! – as one of Jesus' *Daring Disciples*.
- Please ask Christ to guide our session and trustees, and all of us as His church, as we weigh specific plans for a proposed elevator and new building entryway.
- Please pray for all from our church and community who are graduating from various schools in this season, that they will seek and follow God's call on their lives.
- Please ask God to continue to bring great people to us.