

# Prayer Power Tower

Volume 8, No. 27

July 4, 2010

## Preparation

Every so often a trend toward self-sufficiency makes its rounds. People, fed up with overly processed foods and a belief that public utility lines can lead to cancer, vow to give up the “good” life and learn to live off the land, meeting their needs by their own hands. This sounds like a healthy way to live and raise children. But is it possible to be truly self-sufficient, not needing anything from anyone else? We were created to be in social community, growing and nurturing each other as we love and care for our fellow humans. And if we should ever think that we really don’t need anything from any other person, what about God? If it’s *difficult* to survive physically by your own hand, it’s utterly *impossible* to save your soul by yourself! Only the Lord can grant salvation, based on our relationships with Him. Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: *“Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank You, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don’t cheat, I don’t sin, and I don’t commit adultery. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give You a tenth of my income.’ But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted”* (Luke 18:10-14 NLT). The Pharisee was no doubt telling the truth about his fasting and tithing. But as to not sinning, he was definitely off the mark! By contrast, the humble tax collector came before God seeking His mercy – and received it. As you come to this time of prayer, remember that we all stand before the holy God on equal ground – as sinners. May God hear your humble words of praise to Him, and lift you to Himself as you come before Him in prayer.

## Scripture

The letter to the Romans establishes some foundational principles of Christian doctrine. As Saint Paul continues his diatribe against those who might consider themselves above the law (Romans 2:6-11), we may be confused by his words. Ask God for

clearer understanding as you read His word to you through the apostle.

- It may appear from this passage (2:6-7) that our works are more important than justification by faith. But we need to understand that Paul is speaking here of a life apart from Christ. Later in the letter he will clarify the way faith is better than perfect obedience to the law. May you continue in faith, even as you work in love.
- The final outcome for those who are persistent in doing good is dramatically different from that facing those who are self-seeking and reject the truth (2:8-9). God’s wrath awaits those who reject Him and turn to evil. Seek to grow in faith and love, doing good not to earn salvation, but as an appropriate response to the love God has shown you in Christ. Seek as well insight and strength to share the Gospel with any unbelievers you may know.
- Neither Jewish people who had the Law, nor Gentiles who did not, will be excused from it (2:10-11). What good is knowledge if not used, or faith without its being burned onto your heart? It is not enough for us to merely *hear* God’s word; we have to *live* it! Ask for the grace to grow in that direction.

## Adoration

We do not have a God who is exalted but out-of-reach! Rather, He sent His Son in human form so that He could walk among us. May we ever and always sing praises to our Savior, the One who is divine, yet also flesh and blood!

### Praise to Thee and Adoration

Thomas H. Kingo, 1689

*Praise to Thee and adoration,  
Blessed Jesus, Son of God,  
Who, to serve Thine own creation,  
Didst partake of flesh and blood.  
Teach me that I never may  
From Thy fold or pastures stray,  
But with zeal and joy exceeding  
Follow where Thy steps are leading.*

*Let me never, Lord, forsake Thee,  
E’en though bitter pain and strife  
On my way shall overtake me;  
But may I through all my life  
Walk in fervent love to Thee,  
In all woes for comfort flee  
To Thy birth, Thy death, and Passion,  
Till I see Thy full salvation.*

## Confession

In a world where people are recognized for their hard work, dedication to their job and productivity, it may seem hard to accept that our works do not earn our justification. Many continue to believe that they must work hard to earn God's favor. Grace and mercy *by definition* cannot be earned! Rather they are gifts given with no regard for merit and for no particular reason, other than, in the case of believers, because of God's love for us. As you come to this time of confession, seeking the Lord's forgiveness for sins and indiscretions of daily life, be reminded that our God is *full* of love for His children! Grace is a gift freely given, not asked for, not earned, never deserved. God's grace is the gift of a lifetime for those who trust in the Lord, faithfully seeking to follow and heed His call in all areas of our lives. Seek His forgiveness now, and be ready to accept His great and abundant mercy.

When you have finished your prayers of confession, draw great comfort and strength from this promise to us in God's eternal word:

*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* (1 John 1:8-9 NKJV)

Know that in Jesus Christ you are forgiven, and be at peace!

## Thanksgiving

We could be like the Pharisee of Jesus' parable and thank God because we aren't like others (Luke 18:10-14), but that would be a foolish lie. We *are* like others, in more ways than we may care to admit! But God is an impartial and loving Father of all His children.

- Give thanks for the privilege of being called a child of God.
- Thank God for the many ways that your life has been enriched because you have extended your hand in Christian love.
- Give thanks for all the times your brothers and sisters were there to lift you up and bring you through times of particular darkness.
- Thank God for giving you access to Himself through Jesus the Son.
- Thank Him for those who have treated you fairly in their dealings with you.
- Thank God for explaining to us, through His inspired apostle, the life-changing truth of the Gospel.
- Rejoice that *"It's God's own truth, nothing could be plainer: God plays no favorites! It makes no difference who you are or where you're from – if you want God and are ready to do as He says, the door is open."* (Acts 10:34 *The Message*)

## 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 Ketter, Dana Krepps, Michelle Kurtz, Donna Lewis, Jean Longnecker, Linda Longwell, 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 grieve the loss of prayer partner Nancy MacRae, who entered into eternity on June 27.
- Please pray for our Stephen Ministry, especially the new Stephen Ministers set to be commissioned on July 11.
- Please pray for Pastor John and his whole family.
- Please ask God to bless our children in particular in worship this week.
- Please pray for John and Esther Waldrop and their family, as they serve in mission to Prague.
- 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 ask God to be preparing the hearts and minds of all the children and adults who will be part of our Vacation Bible School, starting on July 12.
- Please lift to God the enclosed prayer concerns shared by the Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship. You might mention one or two of the needs each day this week. (If you receive Prayer Power Tower by e-mail, please see the separate attachment.)