

Prayer Power Tower

Volume 8, No. 31

August 1, 2010

Preparation

Did you ever think of a flashlight as a lifesaver – you know, when a power outage kills the lights on ‘a dark and stormy night,’ or you trip a breaker or blow a fuse by turning on one too many appliances? Then a flashlight is there to light the way – to give you light until you find the source of the blackout, or it passes. But at such times, it’s not just the flashlight that is the lifesaver. It’s also the action you take, perhaps replacing a fuse or light bulb or flipping a breaker, using the flashlight as a guide that allows you to return to normal. How very often we rely on those handy lights in tubes! But should you forget to check its batteries regularly, the flashlight is of no help. In your spiritual life, what is the ‘flashlight’ that provides light to guide you along your way? The Apostle Paul would tell us it’s God’s Law. The author of Lamentations would imply that it is none other than the faithfulness of God – who never fails, never needs batteries or bulbs replaced: *“I’ll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness, the taste of ashes, the poison I’ve swallowed. I remember it all – oh, how well I remember – the feeling of hitting the bottom. But there’s one other thing I remember, and remembering, I keep a grip on hope: God’s loyal love couldn’t have run out, His merciful love couldn’t have dried up. They’re created new every morning. How great Your faithfulness! I’m sticking with God (I say it over and over). He’s all I’ve got left”* (Lamentations 3:19-24 *The Message*). If God’s mercies to us are renewed, refreshed daily, are we taking advantage of that recharging? As you come to this hour of focused conversation with God, use it to regenerate the energy and the love that surges through you when you’re “plugged in” to God.

Scripture

Knowing himself what issues he will address with the church at Rome, the Apostle Paul introduces (Romans 3:1-8) themes he will take up later in his letter. This preview should incline the Jewish Christians in Rome to listen intently as he shares important theological truth. As you read and study Paul’s letter, incline *your* ears toward the word of God.

- The overall theme in these verses is that, although the Gentiles have sinned against the law written in their hearts, the Jews have sinned against the law given to Moses by God (3:1-4). No one has reason to be proud or boast of a higher standing before

the holy God! The Jews have been entrusted with Scripture, God’s own word. But that didn’t guarantee that they (or we) would be perfectly faithful. Nor does human unfaithfulness rule out God’s eternal faithfulness to humankind!

- Paul first addresses any suggestion that God’s righteousness is given apart from the law because the law was given for no good reason, or that the law should be overthrown (3:5-6). Even if you possess something wonderful, if you don’t use it for its intended goodness, how wonderful, in effect, is it?
- Paul then explains to those who may have misunderstood his gospel that the fact that God overcomes evil (3:7-8) does not mean we can – or should! – sin as much as we want, imagining that this will make God appear all the more righteous as He forgives us. If we love the Lord, our hearts will be filled with a joy that also reminds us of the heartache God feels when we do violate His holy will. Ask the Lord to deliver you from any attempt to rationalize sin in your life.

Adoration

In the course of an average day, how many of today’s modern conveniences do you take for granted? Ask yourself as well how much of God’s abundant grace and mercy you casually take for granted. Throughout history, we mortals have found innumerable ways to ignore God’s law in our hearts. But He never forsakes us! Come to Him now in praise, rejoicing at His steadfast love.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Thomas O. Chisholm

*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father!
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou has been Thou forever wilt be.*

Refrain: Great is Thy faithfulness, Great is Thy faithfulness,
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided –
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

*Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness*

To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. Refrain

*Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow –
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain*

Confession

In our reading for this week, the Apostle Paul continues to share valuable insights with us. His reminding the Jews in the Roman church that having the law did not make them better would have surely stung! But at this time of confession, when we come before God to be cleansed of our sins, how do his words challenge you? We have God's laws written on our hearts through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But are we responding in the proper way to that law? Think of the number of gifts and talents you have been given by your Creator. Perhaps you have the gift of compassion. As you thank God for that wonderful gift, ask Him if you have been using it properly to show care and concern for your brothers and sisters. If your gift is wisdom, consider whether you have been sharing knowledge in helpful ways, so that others growing in the faith may find new understanding through your insights. If you have been given the gift of love – and haven't we all? – take some time to confess ways in which you may have acted in a less-than-loving manner to another. Seek Christ's forgiveness now, and look to Him for your strength and power.

When you've finished your prayers of confession, praise God for this command and this tremendous promise in His eternal word:

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. (James 4:8-10 NKJV)

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

Thanksgiving

Daily distractions may cause us to *forget* God's bounty and blessing in our lives. But as a receiver of His goodness, take time now to give focused thanksgiving for the abundance in your life.

- Thank God for joy of *living* in Christ.
- Thank Him for all the good things He has given you – things you can use to help others along life's way.
- Give thanks for the continued and constant faithfulness of the Lord in your life.
- Thank God for His unceasing mercies.
- Thank Him for the faithfulness of your prayer partners.
- Praise God for the blessings that you have received by reading His word.
- Join with the ancient Israelites. When "*accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: 'He is good; His love endures forever'*" (2 Chronicles 5:13 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, 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, **DJ Wagner, Betty Walters, Toni Walters, Alice Winger, Tami Witzke and Chris Yeakle. ****New to our praying team!☺☺**

- Please thank God for His leading in our July 25 congregational meeting, and ask His continued guidance and blessing as we move ahead.
- Please pray for all who serve in the work of Christian hospitality with our Ministry of Care.
- Please lift up prayer partner and Financial Secretary Don McAninch as he serves in this important ministry of oversight.
- Please ask God to powerfully touch our hearts through prayer during our worship services.
- Please pray for prayer partner Ruth (Dykstra) Entwistle and husband Ryan and the vital mission work of Deep Springs International.
- 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.)
- Please ask Jesus to show us each what it means to be growing as His *Daring Disciples*.