

men@trinity

Newsletter

May 2007

Future events 11th May Cafe night
 2nd & 3rd June Sailing weekend

Here is an extract from an article which featured in Crosswalk an on-line e-letter from Campus Crusade for Christ.

What to Pray For

John Piper

If you are like me, you find that from time to time your prayer life needs a jolt out of the rut it has fallen into. We tend to use the same phrases over and over. We tend to default to worn out phrases (like the word *default*). We fall into patterns of mindless repetition.

The devil hates prayer. Our own flesh does not naturally love it. Therefore, it does not come full-born and complete and passionate from the womb of our heart. It takes ever renewed discipline.

Years ago, when I wrote [*Let the Nations Be Glad*](#), I argued that prayer is a wartime walkie-talkie, not a domestic intercom. God is more like a general in Command Central than a butler waiting to bring you another pillow in the den. Of course, he is also Father, Lover, Friend, Physician, Shepherd, Helper, King, Saviour, Lord, Counsellor. But in this fallen “world with devils filled,” prayer will function best when we keep the frequency tuned to Command Central in the fight of faith.

So when I wrote that book, I gathered into one place all the things the early church prayed for. I printed this out for myself, and it has proven to be one of those “jolts” that I need. I thought you might find it helpful. You might want to print it out and keep it for a while in your Bible to guide you in your praying.

It is a great confidence-builder in prayer to know that you are not quirky in your praying. To pray what the New Testament prays is a safe and powerful way to pray.

Prayer remains one of the great and glorious mysteries of the universe—that the all-knowing, all-wise, all-sovereign God should ordain to run his world in response to our prayers is mind-boggling. But that is the uniform witness of Scripture. God hears and answers the prayers of his people. O do not neglect this amazing way of influencing nations and movements and institutions and churches and people’s hearts, especially your own.

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If you want to pray for what the early church prayed for . . .

Pray that God would exalt his name in the world.

Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.” (Matthew 6:9)

Pray that God would extend his kingdom in the world.

Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:10)

Pray that the gospel would speed ahead and be honoured.

Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honoured, as happened among you. (2 Thessalonians 3:1)

Pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (Luke 11:13; cf. Ephesians 3:19)

Pray that God would vindicate his people in their cause.

And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? (Luke 18:7 RSV)

Pray that God would save unbelievers.

Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. (Romans 10:1)

Pray that God would direct the use of the sword.

Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. (Ephesians 6:17-18)

New World Musings from Canada

Mark 12:13-17 is a fascinating passage. In GB it is local election time and no doubt lots of righteous words are being spoken. Interesting alliances are being formed. Here in Canada 2 political parties recently made a pact which was claimed to be an environmental issue but was aimed at getting rid of an opponent. In Mark, Jesus meets an unholy alliance. Pharisees who were obsessed with observance of the rules of religion and Herodians who so hated the Romans that they formed a party to promote the kingship of Herod (who they didn't like either). They were extreme Nationalists and the possession of the land was more important with the lives of people.. The only thing they agreed on was a hatred of Jesus. So they come to him to set a trap. However, despite the hypocrisy of their actions they were agreed on some things.

1. Jesus was a man of integrity. (verse 14)
2. He was not influenced by people's opinions of him.
3. He taught the way of God truthfully.

Impressive qualities, but how easily they are ignored when we have a self-righteous agenda. So they set a trap using the old favourites of politics and religion and everyone's favourite moan...taxes!

What I find wonderful is that the answer Jesus gives, of giving Caesar his due and God what is His are perfectly in line with what they already knew. Integrity, honesty and truth. And they are amazed.

These 3 qualities are amazing and powerful. Unfortunately self-righteous people seem to find them a threat not a comfort. I know that when I slip into self-righteousness I get uncomfortable with them and have to confess my need of cleansing and forgiveness. So this morning 2 verses came to mind that I have prayed through again to focus my heart on Jesus. Matthew 6:33: "But seek first HIS KINGDOM and HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS and all these things will be added unto you." It is His kingdom not mine that matters and His righteousness not my religious bias. Acts 24:16. "So I always take pains to have a clear conscience towards God and towards men." Honesty and integrity in the way I live towards people. High ideals, but the call to anyone who wants to follow Jesus. What really matters is what Jesus thinks of me, not others.

A high calling and a hard one for a clay pot like me, but that is the disciples journey.



If you have any articles you would like to contribute to men@trinity newsletter, please email to men@trinitymethodist.org.uk, or drop into pigeon hole B for the attention of Mike Bartrop.



FROM THE POTTING SHED

Greetings!

May – the month of glorious colour especially in our woods and hedgerows. You can hear the cuckoo and know summer is near. Also after no rain in April we'll no doubt be warned of hosepipe bans before long so don't forget to conserve water.

Plants of Interest

May is Rhododendron month so get out and see them in all their glory in one of the big public gardens like Sheffield Park or Leonardslea. There are so many varieties that you can't do justice in a small space, you need to see them in the best setting.

Other highlights for May include climbers such as Wisteria and Clematis montana which are covered in flowers. Woodland gardens are carpeted with bluebells; ramsons, Solomon's seal, and Smilacina are in flower; and lily-of-the-valley scents the air. In the borders perennials start to flower such as Aquilegias and Geraniums and Peonies are also in bloom. Trees and shrubs in flower include Laburnum, Weigela and Ceanothus. Alpine pinks, thrift and Aubrietia provide colour in the rock gardens. It's a great time for colour in the garden.

God bless and happy gardening.