

Time With God

Robert Notgrass

Did you know that there are 1,440 minutes in each and every day? That seems like a lot of time, so why is it that we have such a difficult time finding a few minutes for God each twenty-four hour period? You say, "Well, life is busy." Indeed, with school, extracurricular activities, homework, church, downtime with friends, etc . . . there are so many things one can do that there is hardly enough time for sleeping and eating, let alone spending a few minutes with our Maker. So, in your busy life, you have to consciously make time.

Are you spending time with what you love the most? Is it God? Grab a calendar. If you don't have one, buy one and write "Time With God" (TWG) every day for the next month. Begin with five or ten minutes of prayer and Bible study. For as Paul said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom . . ." (Colossians 3:16). You see, once you make an

appointment with God, you are more likely to keep it. Soon, you will look forward to spending time with God and may even wish to increase that time.

But, something else happens when you make time for God. It seems that He multiplies your time right back to you as a reward for your faithfulness to Him. A woman once shared that she committed herself to reading the four Gospel accounts each month. But, on one occasion, they had to move, and pack everything up and then unpack everything after the move. In addition, she was raising two small children at home and working on a rather large furniture project. Yet, she still managed to read the Gospel accounts in thirty days.

God will help you make the most of your time if you give Him some time each day. Make Him first on your list of priorities.

The Miraculous Prayer

by Jon Mitchell

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24).

Whenever I read this passage of scripture, I’m reminded of a scene from Mark Twain’s classic *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*:

Then Miss Watson she took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it warn’t so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It warn’t any good to me without hooks. I tried for the hooks three or four times, but somehow I couldn’t make it work. By and by, one day, I asked Miss Watson to try for me, but she said I was a fool. She never told me why, and I couldn’t make it out no way.

I set down one time back in the woods, and had a long think about it. I says to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for, why don’t Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can’t the widow get back her silver snuffbox that was stole? Why can’t Miss Watson fat up? No, says I to myself, there ain’t nothing in it. I went and told the widow about it, and she said the thing a body to get by praying for it was “spiritual gifts.” This was too many for me, but she told me what she meant – I must help other people, and do everything I could for other people, and look out for them all the time, and never think about myself. This was including Miss Watson, as I took it. I went out in the woods and turned it over in my mind a long time, but I couldn’t see no advantage about it – except for the other people; so at last I reckoned I wouldn’t worry about it anymore, but just let it go.

While humorous, the above excerpt does reveal a tidbit of truth about how many interpret today’s verse. Many pray as if God were a genie in a bottle, ready and willing to grant them any and all wishes...and then they get discouraged and upset when it doesn’t turn out that way. Let’s remember that as with all passages of the Bible, context is key when applying proper hermeneutics (interpretation) to any passage of scripture, including this one. The entirety of God’s Word is truth (Ps. 119:160), and so not only immediate but the overall context must be considered.

In the immediate context of this passage, we read that during the previous day Jesus had said to a fig tree, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again,” upon seeing that there was nothing to eat on it (Mark 11:12-14). The next morning, they saw the fig tree withered away and Peter pointed out to Jesus that the fig tree which he had cursed had withered. Jesus replied, “Have faith in God. Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:20-24).

What Jesus had done to the fig tree was a miracle...a violation of the laws of science and nature which God had

put into place at creation. Scientifically, fig trees don’t wither away overnight based on the word of a man, just as the Red Sea doesn’t naturally part due to a man holding a stick over it and a man doesn’t scientifically come back from the dead three days after he had died on a cross. What Christ had talked about his apostles doing (telling a mountain to be taken up and thrown into the sea without doubt in his heart and it coming to pass) was also miraculous in nature. Thus, the statement in today’s verse about receiving whatever you ask in prayer if you believe that you have received it must also be taken to refer to the apostles being able to perform miracles.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, we read of spiritual gifts which were miraculous in nature being given to some of the early Christians (1 Cor. 12-14). Paul lists these miraculous spiritual gifts, and includes “faith” in the list alongside of miraculous spiritual gifts such as prophecy, speaking in tongues, and knowledge (1 Cor. 12:4-11). He later clarifies that faith as the same type of miraculous faith Jesus is talking about in the context of today’s passage: the type of faith one would need to have in order to perform a miracle like removing a mountain (1 Cor. 13:2).

However, a few verses later he tells us that these miraculous spiritual gifts would “pass away” and “cease.” This would happen “when that which is perfect has come” (1 Cor. 13:8-10). “Perfect” in the Greek is referring to that which is mature or complete, and is used elsewhere to refer to the complete Word of God (Rom. 12:2; James 1:25), which of course wasn’t complete at the time Paul wrote to the Corinthians. In fact, one of the reasons miracles occurred back then was to confirm the Word of God which was being preached by the apostles and prophets of the early church (Mark 16:17-18, 20; Heb. 2:1-4). Once the Word of God was complete with the writing of Revelation, miracles would no longer need to happen in order to confirm it, and thus they would cease as Paul foretold.

Therefore, the miraculous faith one would need to receive anything one asked for in prayer does not occur today. God does answer prayer today, but providentially rather than through miracles done by men as read about in the Bible. He wants us to bring our cares to him through prayer (Phil. 4:6-7), and pray that he provides our spiritual and physical needs (Matt. 6:9ff) as well as for the needs of others (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

And as it was true then, it is also true today that we must pray with faith (James 1:5-7)...and we must also pray according to his will (1 John 5:14-15). This latter caveat is something I believe old Huck Finn...and many of us today...don’t think about like we should. What does God care about most? Huck getting hooks for his fishing lines and us getting that brand new car...or the spiritual well-being of us all? What are we asking God for the most in our prayers? Are our requests truly in line with his will? Daily study of his Word will show us what God really cares the most about. As we grow spiritually, we will see our prayer life changing to fit more in line with his will also.

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Mission Works

Westhill Works

Benevolence Program

Local Works

Cherokee Children's Home - www.chc4kids.org
House to House, Heart to Heart
In Search of the Lord's Way
Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies
The Truth in Love - www.ttil.tv
WVBS Online School - school.wvbs.org

Prison Works

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works

Four Seas Bible College, Singapore - Peter & Pooi Fun Chin
New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

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Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)
Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

Prayer List

Amy Parrish's father, Donnie Montley, passed away last Sunday afternoon from a heart attack. His funeral was held Thursday at Bailey and Foster Funeral Home in Palestine, Tx.

Nick Tooley broke his ankle and is scheduled for surgery at Navarro Hospital on Tuesday. If you can offer any helping hand please contact Veran Barrett.

Continue to Remember: Malinda Zalace, Julie Dilbeck, Meagan Gould, Jim Welch, Billy Mixon, Vera White, Ruth Moore, Bill Abercrombie, Cecil Ellis, Paul Loosier, Terry Lowe, and Gayle Garner

Service Men: Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart

Announcements

We rejoice with **Caleb Ivie**, long time prison correspondent, at his recent **baptism!**

Kids for Christ will meet Saturday, Oct 29 @ 5:30pm in the Outreach Center. Please bring a pumpkin to paint.

Trunk of Treat will be Monday, Oct 31 from 6:30-8:30pm. Please see Cory if you are interested.

Please join family and friends in celebrating the life of a very special lady. **Helen Simpson** will be turning 90 and a **birthday celebration** is planned for her on Sat. Nov. 5 from 2-4pm in the Outreach Center.

Lads 2 Leaders practice for Speech and Oral Bible Reading will be Nov, 6 @ 4.30pm.

Baby Shower for April Myers on Nov. 13 following evening worship service. Please mark that date and join us to help prepare for the arrival of Titus Ray!

To Westill: Vanessa and I can't thank you enough for the wonderfully kind way you treated us. We love you and appreciate you and may God bless you.
From: **Eric & Vanessa Owens**

Dear Family, Thank you for inviting us to be a part of your special lectureship and for taking such great care of us! Thank you, too, for the generous remuneration. You all did a wonderful job! May God continue to bless each of you as you live for Him!
Much love and appreciaton, **Neal & Kathy Pollard**

Plan to spend **Thanksgiving Day** with your Westhill family (Nov 24 @ noon in the Outreach Center). Turkey, ham, dressing and gravy will be provided, but sides and desserts are welcomed. Come alone, or bring your entire family! **Don't forget to sign up!**

Young at Heart Seniors Group meets every Tuesday morning at 10:30am for Bible Study. Everyone is welcome!

Birthdays This Week

- October 24 - Caleb Jackson
- October 26 - Buster Hayes, Michael Jones, and Mildred Wooten
- October 27 - Martha Dowdle
- October 28 - Steely Armstrong and Dawn Haden

Next Week's Adult Class
"The Life of the Apostle Paul"

Records for October 16, 2016

Bible Class	179
AM Worship.....	275
PM Worship	151
Wednesday	158
Contribution	\$7,718.20

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader	David Baumgartner
Opening Prayer	Micah Haden
Communion Leader	Bryan Bearden
Communion Servers	
Caleb Jackson	David Mahoney
Darrell Olsen	Joshua Haden
Joe Glass	Phil Pillans
Jimmy Horn	Wayne Prater
Ken Green	Paul Stewart
Tyler Baumgartner	Seth Haden
Luke Baumgartner	
Closing Prayer	James Horn
Nursery	Paige Jennings and Martha Olsen
PM Song Leader	David Dilbeck
PM Opening Prayer	Gene Steinkraus
PM Closing Prayer	Austin Roughton
Wed. Song Leader	Tyler Baumgartner
Wed. Devotional	Billy Roughton
October Contact Elder	Percell Milton