

FaithPrayers

It is our privilege to pray for you

PRAYER

Does prayer 'work'? It's an interesting question, unfortunately often asked in a rather self-focused way. Work how? 'Work' in the way we want, to get the effect we want?

But we all understand, at least I do, where that phrase comes from, and why we ask it. For in a moment of desperation or just of simple want, we deeply want prayer to 'work'. In a day and age when magic abounds, and when energies and thoughts are transmitted here and there in efforts to gain effect or control, it is tempting to place prayer in that category too and wonder, 'does it work'?

But perhaps if we back way up, we will find our answers. We have to back out of our cultural notion and out of our desire to find a magic spell that will make happen what we want to occur. We must move into the original place of what prayer is: speaking to our Creator, to the one true God.

In prayer, we are speaking to the One whose voice came out of heaven at the baptism of Jesus, to the One who spoke on Mt. Sinai to Moses. It is our greatest privilege to actually speak to the Creator God. He is a Being of tremendous

power. He is in charge. He is above all else. Prayer is not about manipulating either earthly or supernatural forces to do our will.

If we continue to look at prayer as a personal exercise in meditation, we run the risk of using it as a vehicle about ourselves. Yes, meditation does indeed have an important place, and can be a good thing. It is good to meditate on the scriptures and on God. We can even spend time contemplating ourselves and our own feelings. Self-awareness meditation has its usefulness. It's also true that groups can focus their thoughts on something and wield some power; it happens all around us every day in politics, in games, etc. But again, this quite deeply misses the point of speaking to God, an actual and revealed Being. He is not a force to manipulate.

The 'power prayers' of all history and throughout the Bible occurred when individuals or groups got their focus directly on God and prayed the best they could for God's will to occur, and for His will in their lives. It's the place where the marvelous events began - the feeding of thousands, the raising of the dead.

How many of us, under threat, would pray as the early church did? Would I? Under threat of their lives they prayed: 'Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your servant Jesus'. After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. 'And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly'. (Acts 4:29-31)

God heard their prayer. And they went out to do miracles. They went out to speak with boldness in the face of great threat.

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PRAYER (continued)

Then, not so long later: “Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them... he had James put to death with the sword... Peter was kept in prison, *but the church was earnestly praying to God for him* (italics added)... the night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains... suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared. ‘Quick, get up!’ he said,

and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists.” (Acts 12:1-7)

I would think that it’s on the day that our prayers start with us getting on the same page as God that we will begin to experience the astounding power flow for which we so long. It’s not that our individual needs and wants don’t matter. They do! God loves us and cares about those things with us. But the fact is, God has purposes and He is taking history and

this world in the direction He desires. And the sooner we get on board with what He is doing, the sooner we will have dipped our foot into the ‘flow’ of His miracles, of His power, and of His guidance. As Paul said – ‘whether we live or die, we are unto the Lord’ (Romans 14:8b).

It’s at that place, in that moment, that I believe the miracles begin.

~ Mary Ann Offenstein

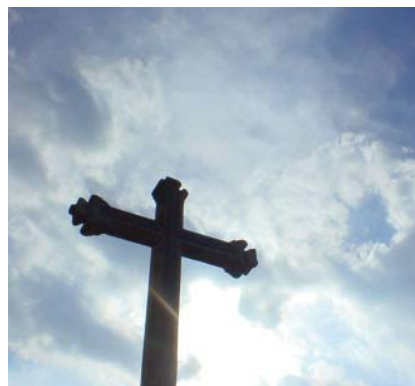
SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH



“That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come...”
 ~ **Ephesians 1:19-21**

EASTER BLESSINGS

FaithPrayers would like to wish you great blessings as you celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.



Have a prayer request? Want more information? We can always be contacted on our 24 hour a day, 7 day a week toll-free prayer line.

1-866-515-9406

We also can be reached via the internet at:

www.faithprayers.org

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