

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE IN PRAYER 8/26/99

We have made our answer “yes” to the title question here at Brownsburg. We have requested guidance, praised our God, interceded for the sick, asked for protection and given thanks for answered prayer times without number. As a congregation we have regularly devoted worship hours strictly to prayer. One result of this emphasis that we have seen, I believe, is that “the family that prays together, stays together!” It’s difficult to spend an hour in a concerted prayer effort that leaves a good portion of the congregation in tears and then muster up a hateful spirit of division or malice. May I praise you in this? Most definitely.

A new challenge stands before us now. We have been faced with answered prayer. We wanted room to grow and opportunities to reach our individual communities with the gospel of our Lord. With nary a ripple, God has given us an attractive building, more seats, larger classrooms, and an abundance of talent and warm hearts. Now, what will we do? Should we sit down and be comfortable? Or does God expect us now to use the blessings we requested? I hope that was a rhetorical question for you.

I’ll risk repeating myself as I say again, a new challenge stands before us. In just a few weeks we will be experimenting in reaching out to our communities. We’re planning a fall “conference” in lieu of the fall gospel meeting that we have traditionally used here at Brownsburg. We are planning a format and biblical studies aimed primarily at our neighbors and friends rather than Christians from other area congregations. Presently there are three things that you can do to help this effort.

1) You can make a list of friends, neighbors, and associates that you would like to see attend. Don’t decide for them if they will attend or not. Just make a list of those you *would like* to attend. When your list is filled, give each one on the list one of our “ADVANCE NOTICE” flyers. Tell them more detailed information will come later with another flyer (don’t worry about that one yet), but get the date and subjects into their hands right now with the ADVANCE NOTICE. (Oh yeah – don’t lose that list – you’ll need it later.)

2) Be listening in the next couple of weeks for a call for workers that weekend. We’ll be needing housing, parkers, check-in people, moderators, teachers for a video Bible class, and more. Listen for the call and then figure out what you can do to help make the weekend a smooth, orderly outreach of evangelism into the area.

3) Pray. (That’s how this article started, remember?) Pray for the speakers, the church here, the effort, the planners, the tender hearts of your neighbors, everyone on that list you made, and the glory of our God and Savior.

Here’s a suggestion and the challenge. There are calendars on the board by the auditorium doors counting down 68 days up until and including the conference. Will you sign your household up to commit to one solid hour of prayer during one day. You can divide up the prayers between family members (if you have a family) or you can do the

whole hour yourself. You can do a prayerful hour, 2 half hour prayers, 3 twenty minute prayers, 4 fifteen minute prayers, 5 twelve minute prayers, 6 ten minute prayers, or 60 one minute prayers spread out all day long – it doesn't matter. Will you pick one day and dedicate your house to one solid hour of prayer?

You might be asking, “Why?” about this time, so let me give you a few reasons.

1) We believe in prayer here. We believe God hears and answers the prayers of His children. I also believe that God does not answer prayers that are not prayed! If we want God to bless this effort, we should ask for His blessing.

2) Sixty-eight days of prayer will help us all to focus ourselves on the ongoing acts of preparation for this effort. No one here should come up to Nov. 5th and say, “I can't believe it's here already... Where has the time gone...We're not ready,” etc. Prayer will make us alert and ready.

3) Devoting a solid hour of prayer to this effort in our home will focus all our family members on this important outreach effort. The scriptures record wonderful examples of “household service” for us in Abraham, Cornelius, and Stephanus. How does your household pull together in service to our Lord. This is a great chance to do that.

4) As a speaker, if I knew that a congregation was devoting every day for over two months to praying for me...well, beyond gratitude, I would “strive mightily” to give a great lesson. (By the way – I'm going to tell the speakers for just that reason! Ha.)

5) I believe that the focus of one solid hour of prayer in my home and the knowledge of sixty-seven other homes doing the same will prepare me for the conference to be a more attentive listener, a more cheerful greeter, a quicker volunteer to help get any job done, and an expectant Christian who once more looks forward to seeing prayers answered.

Do you believe in prayer? Really? Let's put this blessing and tool that our Father has given to us to work. Sign up a.s.a.p. Let's not let a day of the 68 fall to the ground as we seek God's favor in doing His will.

Carl McMurray