

Washington church of Christ

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The Washington Messenger

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July 27, 2014

Order of Services Sunday July 27, 2014

Song Leader	David Osinski
Prayer	Derald Sanchez
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Tom Dolan
Prayer for the Cup	Ralph Ruggiero
Prayer for the Collection	Arnold Thompson
Assisting at the Table	Glenn Montgomery
Morning Closing Prayer	Bob Celentano
Evening Opening Prayer	Brian Jeffries
Announcements	Scott Thomas

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

A Lesson in Prayer...

Prayer is a very important part of the Christian's life. Through it we communicate with our Father God. As Christians we are commanded to pray and ask God for our needs ... and we are told that if they are asked in faith, God will respond...

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (Luke 11:9 NKJV)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6 NIV)

And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." (Matthew 21:22 NKJV)

What is our mindset in prayer? Do we really cast all our cares upon God? (1Peter 5:7) Do we pray believing that God will hear and answer our prayers? Or, are we somewhat like the early Christians of our text who were praying for God's intervention in something they were sure would occur ... and were surprised when God answered!

In our text, Luke documents the relationship of the early church with the government and non-Christian Jews...

Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize

When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!" "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel." But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. (Acts 12:12-16 NIV)

Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. (Acts 12:1-3 NKJV)

The Christians there were seemingly certain that Peter would befall the same fate as James, so they met in the night, at one of their homes and began praying for him. Though the text does not state what they prayed for, I think it's safe to surmise that they were fervent in prayer for Peter's release. In their minds the prospect of his execution was a clear and present danger ... so they prayed.

When dangers increase around us, our loved ones and our friends, we should become more fervent in prayer. While life remains we may pray ... and even when there is no human hope, and we have no power to heal or deliver, our faith makes us know that God may intervene, as he did here, in answer to prayer.

The Bible teaches us that *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights"* (James 1:17). We pray daily for food, shelter and safety, and God provides. In fact, if we seriously pondered it, we would conclude that an overwhelming majority of the things we ask in prayer, God provides. Recognition of this fact should strengthen our faith in prayer!

The Christians that were praying for Peter, I believe, were praying fervently, earnestly, and in a way pleasing to God. They knew that if Peter was going to be delivered it would be by God's hand. Yet, they were surprised when God answered their prayer.

The text tells us that after God freed Peter from Herod's prison he went to where his brethren were praying and knocked at the door. A young woman by the name of Rhoda was sent by the praying fellowship to see who was interrupting their prayers for Peter. The voice at the door urged her to open the gate. She recognized the voice as being Peter's voice, and *"she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening"* the gate (Acts 12:14 NIV). She then told the praying group that Peter was at the door, but they simply did not believe her.

"You're out of your mind," (Acts 12:15 NIV) was their response. This shows how resigned they were to Peter's death. When she persisted, interrupting their prayers for the one she knew was at the gate, they then said, *"It must be his angel."* They expected the worst and found it impossible to accept God's best.

When we pray, do we expect the worse, or do we expect God's best? Do we truly follow the admonition of this same apostle Peter when he said ... *"casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:7 NKJV)

There are things for which we ask that God may not seem to grant in the method or timing we request. But when we consider all that we take to God,

and His response to all of our petitions, can we not say that God does hear and answer the prayers of His children?

Our Prayer List...

- For Spiritual Responsiveness*** – All of our wayward members
- For Physical Healing*** – Bill Duryea's mother took a fall and is in rehab ... Georgia DeLorenzo is still at home convalescing.
- For Wisdom and Good Judgment*** – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation
- For God's Care and Good Providence*** – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation ... the Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support

EVENTS AND NOTES

- ▲ ***WE ARE AT THE FAIR!!*** OUR BOOTH IS #34 IN BUILDING C. THERE ARE STILL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE NOT ON THE SCHEDULE TO ASSIST THOSE MANNING THE BOOTH ... PLEASE SEE THE SIGN-UP SHEET POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD.
- ▲ WE HAVE A NEW ***ONLINE*** BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE THAT IS ***NOW*** AVAILABLE FROM OUR WEBSITE. ***CHECK IT OUT! ... INVITE THOSE YOU KNOW TO TAKE IT AND LEARN MORE ABOUT GOD AND HIS WORD!!!***
- ▲ WE ARE WANTING TO START A WEEKLY "MEET-UP" BIBLE STUDY IN A LOCAL PUBLIC LOCATION. THE DAY WOULD BE EITHER TUESDAY OR THURSDAY. PLEASE SEE BOB IF YOU WOULD PARTICIPATE AND HAVE A LOCATION SUGGESTION.