

MOVING SPIRIT

October, 1998

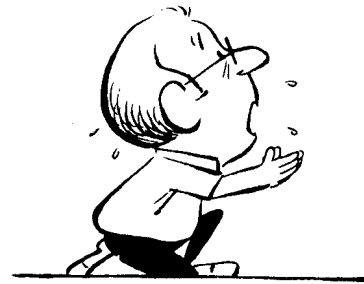
Eskaton Village Community Church

Pastor's Parcel

Prayer is our lifeline to Heaven, yet many find prayer a difficult discipline. When Jesus was on earth, He showed us how important prayer was, sometimes spending whole nights in prayer. He tells us, "*Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.*" Yes, we seem to know how essential prayer is for success in the Christian life, but we feel "weak" in our ability to follow Jesus' example.

"Pray Harder!" seems to be a useless exhortation. We know how important our prayers are -- for those in trouble, for our own faith to grow, for friends and loved ones who need spiritual help. But how can we learn to pray with regularity and persistence?

I believe we often need help bringing our minds into the presence of the Lord. In our church services I suggest people take home the worship folder, using it to read or sing the hymns and songs along with a daily Bible reading. Some find that using a daily devotional, such as *The Upper Room*, or *Our Daily Bread* is helpful. I use a book of Scripture-based prayers that covers many areas of need in a monthly cycle. Jesus went out to a quiet hillside at night, and some find they must seek solitude in a place, such as the



Pray Harder!

When it seems hardest to pray,
we should pray the hardest.

chapel, to do their praying.

It's rare that any of us do not need some form of help in the discipline of prayer. Just experiment, find what works for you and stick with it. A good habit of daily prayer with God will help you walk with Him all day long. --Pastor David

Parish Proclamations

Christmas Dessert Theater

Arcade Wesleyan Church's annual Christmas program will be different this year: a dessert theater, by ticket only, \$4.00 each. Set aside Friday night, December the 13th. Begin now to reserve tickets by calling the AWC office, 487-5123, 9AM to 5PM, so that we can get an idea of what will be

needed for transportation to and from the Village.

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People's Pulpit

"Yesterday Sister Tabitha broke all to pieces my best china teapot, but the Lord, whom I trust, kept my soul in perfect peace, and enabled me not to utter a single word of reproach. You see, God is enough." -- Anonymous

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Pithy Pieces

Thanksgiving Proclamation, 1863

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.

We know that by His divine law, nations like individuals, are subject to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for presumptuous sins, to the needful end of national reformation as a whole people?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other

nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do thence invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father Who dwelleth in the heavens. --Abraham Lincoln

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I Am the Christmas Spirit

I enter the home of poverty and cause pale-faced children to open wide their eyes in wonder.

I cause the aged to remember their youth ... and to laugh.

I cause eager feet to climb dark stairways with filled baskets, leaving behind hearts amazed at the goodness of the world.

I cause the prodigal to pause and send

to anxious family some little token of
love.

I enter dark prison cells, causing
scarred manhood to remember what
might have been and pointing to better
days ahead.

I enter the home of pain, and there lips
that are too weak to speak simply
tremble in silent, eloquent gratitude.
In a thousand ways, I cause this weary
old world to look up into the face of
God and, for a few moments, forget
everything that is small and wretched.

You see, I am the Christmas Spirit.

-- Author Unknown

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Praise's Portion

The Perfect Psalm

Perfect Salvation: The LORD is my
shepherd

Perfect Satisfaction: I shall not want

Perfect Rest: He maketh me to lie down
in green pastures

Perfect Refreshment: He leadeth me
beside the still waters

Perfect Restoration: He restoreth my
soul

Perfect Guidance: He leadeth me in the
paths of righteousness

Perfect Protection: I will fear no evil

Perfect Company: thou art with me

Perfect Provision: preparest a table
before me

Perfect Joy: my cup runneth over

Perfect Care: goodness and mercy shall
follow me

Perfect Destiny: I will dwell in the
house of the LORD for ever

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Prayer's Priorities

Live the Way You Pray

I knelt to pray when day was done,
And prayed: "Oh Lord, bless everyone;
Lift from each saddened heart the pain
And let the sick be well again."

And then I awoke another day
And carelessly went on my way.

The whole day long I did not try
To wipe a tear from any eye;

I did not try to share the load
Of any sister on the road,

I did not even go to see
The sick woman next door to me.

Yet once again when day was done,
I prayed: "Oh Lord, bless everyone."

But as I prayed, into my ear
There came a voice that whispered clear,

"Pause, hypocrite, before you pray;
Whom have you tried to bless today?"

"God's sweetest blessings always go
By hands that serve Him here below."

And then I hid my face and cried,
"Forgive me, God, for I have lied;

Let me but live another day,
And I will live the way I pray."

--Author Unknown

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Famous Quiet Times

Martin Luther, when most pressed
with his gigantic toils, said, "I have so
much to do, that I cannot get on without
three hours a day of praying."

General Havelock rose at four, if the
hour for marching was six, rather than
lose the precious privilege of communion
with God before setting out.

Sir Matthew Hale said, "If I omit
praying and reading God's word in the

morning, nothing goes well all day."

John Quincy Adams was a president of the United States who was noted in connection with his custom of studying the Bible each morning. "It seems to me the most suitable manner of beginning the day."

Sir Isaac Newton said, "I can take my telescope and look millions and millions of miles into space, but I can lay it aside and go into my room, shut the door, get down on my knees in earnest prayer, and see more of heaven and get closer to God than I can assisted by all the telescopes and material agencies on earth."

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Dear Lord, Your mind is filled with peace. I know that I may have within me Your peacefulness. Your quietness is now entering my mind. I accept Your healing peace now given me, and for this blessing of creative quietness I give You thanks.-- daily staff prayer at the *Foundation for Christian Living*

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God, each one of us has a saturation point and we need a safety valve when we feel we may lose control. A good safety valve is prayer. Teach me to rely on prayer for my safety valve. Amen.

--E. Midge Childs

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Poetry's Place

I Made a Star For Christmas

by Betty Meagher

I made a star for Christmas
of straws and strings and glitter.
It's called an icosahedron--
A twenty-sided figure

With star-points on every plane.
And now it's there in the church--
A reminder of the Christmas star.
But I couldn't have done it alone:
First I saw a star
That someone else had made,
I heard the definition,
And saw the figure drawn
And cut and glued in paper
(I'm no geometrician!)
Only then I started
with strings and straws and glitter
To make a thing of beauty.
And I've thought to myself--my life's like
that:
Every morning God gives to me
The wonderful gift of a brand-new day
Packaged in sunrise and tied with love--
A beautiful model to put together,
Using His help and following His plans.
And some days I get it somewhat right--
What joy to see His dreams take shape.
But other days, I make a mess--
Won't hear His voice, won't use His plans;
And all I have at the end of the day
Is a jumble of straws and strings and
glitter,
Bent and broken with meanness and anger,
Smeared and sticky with butter and jelly
And greasy crumbs of self-indulgence;
The glitter all tarnished with ugly
self-pride--
I've wrecked His gift! Through my own
fault,
In thought and word and deed, and in all
I've left undone, I've sinned...
Lord have mercy! Christ have mercy!
Another thought then comes to mind--
I've just put away the things from the tree;
Among them--every family has them--
baubles and treasures made at school:
The paper angel with the face of my child,
the egg-carton cups so garishly painted,

And stuck all over with beads and buttons;
Baked dough cherubs and Santas and
wreaths--
Now an embarrassment to those who made
them:
"Why are you saving those old things?"
"Because you made them and gave them to
me;
I love them because I love you so.
And they sparkle and shine and reflect the
lights.
They really look lovely on the tree."

And so it is with our Father's love:
At the end of each day He takes back His
gift--
The unfinished model He gave in the
morning--
Whether I've made a mess or a star
Whether I can say, "I did my best
Please forgive my imperfections"
Or "I acknowledge and confess my
manifold sins;
Knowing better, still I chose
To Live my day in my own way--
Have mercy on me and forgive me, Oh
Lord."
As a loving Father, He takes my gift,
No matter how shoddy; if I've offered it
back
In childlike love, and with honest
repentance,
His Grace somehow transforms that gift--
And now as its hung on His Tree of Life
It reflects His light, and His love shines
through. --*January, 1986*

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Pearls of Prudence

"May you be all and only for Jesus
Without Him having to consult you
first." --a blessing by Mother Teresa

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I have always said, and always will say,
that the studious perusal of the Sacred
Volume will make better citizens, better
fathers, and better husbands.... The
Bible makes the best people in the
world. --Thomas Jefferson

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If there is a hereafter,
There is a before now. --Robert Frost

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God gave us faculties for our use; each
of them will receive its proper reward.
Then do not let us try to charm them to
sleep, but permit them to do their work
until divinely called to something
higher. --Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)

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Pleasurable Pastime

Volunteers - God Bless Them

Many will be shocked to find
When the day of judgment nears
That there's a special place in heaven
Set aside for Volunteers.
Furnished with big recliners,
Satin couches and footstools,
Where there's no committee chairmen,
No group leaders or car pools.
No eager team that needs a coach.
No bazaar and no bake sale,
There will be nothing to staple,
Not one thing to fold or mail.
Telephone lists will be outlawed,
But a finger snap will bring
Cool drinks and gourmet dinners
And treats fit for a king.
You ask, "Who'll serve these privileged
few
And work for all they're worth?"

Why, all those who reaped the benefits
And not once volunteered on Earth.

--Author Unknown

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The Witness of the Candymaker

How can a candy treat be a birth announcement? Many years ago a candymaker had an idea. He wanted to show, through the candy he made, that Jesus Christ was born among us, lived and died to save us all. So, through the use of color and shape, he created a piece of candy that told the story of Jesus from Christmas to Easter. He created the candy cane!

The white stripes on the candy cane stand for the fact that Jesus was sinless and pure. The small red stripes stand for the scourging Jesus endured before he died. The large red stripe stands for Jesus' blood, shed on the cross.

The candy cane is shaped like a shepherd's staff, reminding us that Jesus is the Good Shepherd. Turn it upside down, and it is a letter "J," the first letter of Jesus' name.

We can learn a lot from the candy cane--both to look at it and see Jesus, and, like the candymaker, to share the story of Jesus in whatever we do.

Precious Principles

Impress upon us, God, that...

What we sow, we reap;

What we give away, we keep.

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A Case for Utopia

The world would be better off if people tried to become better, and people would become better if they

stopped trying to become better off ...

And everybody would be what they ought to be if everybody tried to be what they wanted the other fellow to be.

-- Peter Maurin

Past Pathways

What Happened to the 12 Apostles?

Few know the manner in which the Twelve Apostles came to their death.

(1) JUDAS, after betraying the Lord, hanged himself.

(2) JOHN died of extreme old age in Ephesus.

(3) PETER, was crucified, head downward (this was at his request), during the persecutions of Nero.

(4) ANDREW, died on a cross at Patras in Acchai, a Greek colony.

(5) JAMES, was thrown from a pinnacle of the Temple and then beaten to death with a club.

(6) BARTHOLOMEW, was flayed (stripped of his skin) alive in Armenia.

(7) JAMES, the elder son of Zebudee, was beheaded in Jerusalem.

(8) THOMAS, the doubter, was run through with a lance in India.

(9) PHILIP, was hanged against a pillar at Hierapolis, a city of Phrygia in Asia Minor.

(10) MATTHEW, was slain by the sword in Ethiopia.

(11) THADDEAUS, was shot to death with arrows in Persia.

(12) SIMON, died on a cross in Persia.

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