



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 78 No. 36, September 3, 2024

ELDERS

David Anderson
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
Stacey Paulin

MINISTER

Steven Ford

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

OFFICE PHONE
(863) 682-4702

EMAIL
SFA.church@gmail.com

SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00 a.m.
Bible Study.....6:30 p.m.

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Don Iverson India
Marc Veary Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald Scotland
J. Paguaga Honduras
Ted Wheeler Ghana, W.A.

A Study of Prayer (Part 3)

Steven Ford

A study of prayer is not complete without discussion of seemingly unanswered prayers. In the previous articles, it was noted that God does hear and respond to the prayers of the faithful (1 John 5:13-15). However, not all prayer requests are granted. What is a person to think when he prays earnestly for a specific outcome and it does not come to pass? Has God ignored the one praying? Was God too busy to respond? In this article, we will look at various passages to see what God reveals concerning those prayer requests that seem to go unanswered

The Will of God

There are times that we may pray for a specific thing that benefits us. Yet, the question must be asked, "Is this according to the will of God?" A close look at the words of John reveals that our desires should be in alignment with the will of the Lord. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). There may be times that deliverance from a trial may not be within the will of God. Some trials help to develop our faith and perseverance (James 1:2-4). Some challenges may in fact be discipline from God that yields the "peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:11). This principle is not only taught but was perfectly demonstrated by our Lord Jesus. While enduring tremendous sorrow (Matthew 26:38) and agony (Luke 22:44), the Lord prayed to the Father. Jesus asked for escape from the unimaginable torture to which He was headed. Yet, even then, Jesus acknowledged that all requests must be congruent with the Father's will. Over and over, Jesus prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). Again, He prayed, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done" (Matthew 26:42). When a Christian prays to God, he must remember that requests should be according to the will of the Almighty (1 John 5:14; cf. Matthew 26:39-42).

Answered and Denied

Some prayers are answered in ways other than what is expected. "Yes" is not the ONLY answer to a request. Parents know that sometimes saying "no" may be more helpful in a given situation. If a child asks to eat candy instead of vegetables, the wise parent will say no. The denial does not mean the parent does not love the child. On the contrary, the denial of request demonstrates love, wisdom, and insight. While the child may only be considering the sweet taste, the parent is thinking about consequences of the candy and the benefit of the

vegetables. The great wisdom is seen in the parent doing what is best for the child's overall benefit and development.

The Apostle Paul once made a request to God that was not answered in the way that Paul desired. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me" (2 Corinthians 12:7-8). At first look, there are multiple things that would lead one to believe that this request should be answered in the affirmative. First, Paul did not just sit and suffer, he prayed. Jesus taught that men ought always to pray and not faint (Luke 18:1). Further James affirmed the same when he wrote, "Is there any afflicted among you, let him pray" (James 5:13). Second, Paul prayed multiple times for relief. There is no rule that says a Christian can only pray about a matter once. In his letter to the church at Thessalonica, the inspired Apostle would also teach that prayers should be offered without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Persistence in prayer can be relieving to the hearts of the weary.

When God responded to Paul, it was not with a simple "Yes." The Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Paul did not receive the thing he requested. However, he did not walk away empty handed! Paul was reminded that although he did not find the desired relief, he was still the recipient of God's amazing grace. That grace was more than enough to sustain Paul in any trial. Not only so, but that grace demonstrated God's strength in Paul's physical weakness. It is no wonder that Paul would be the same man that would write, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

Final Thoughts

Like Paul, every Christian will have trials that trouble and challenge us. We may even pray in earnest desire for relief. Yet, let us follow the example of the Apostle Paul. Let us seek and see the grace of God at work even in our trials. Let us find strength through the Lord Jesus. Finally, let us rejoice in that God will never leave the prayers of a faithful believer unanswered. Even if the answer is "no," let us rejoice in that our Father cares (1 Peter 5:7), hears us (1 John 5:14), and will never forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). In so doing, we will be able to proclaim as did Paul, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9b).

Can
You
Help
Us
Teach?

Fall Quarter >>> Miracles in the Bible		
	Sundays	Wednesdays
Cradle Roll Infant to 2 years	Rene'	We Need A Teacher
Toddlers Ages 2 and 3	Nasheka	Nasheka
Primary Ages 4 (pre-school)-1st grade	Michelle	Rachel
Intermediate 2nd - 4th grades	Marion	We Need A Teacher
Juniors 5th - 8th grades	Allen / Josh	Josh / Allen
Seniors 9th - 12th grades	Brian K.	Terrance

PRAYER LIST

Current: Pat Nanna's husband is having some medical problems and she is not able to leave him at this time to come to worship, **Annett Phillip** is in Good Shepherd Hospice now, **Jim Turner** fell and broke 2 ribs

Continual: **Jim Turner** (cancer) **Sharon Mathis Washington** (Health & family); **Stacey Wilson** (health); **Debbie Bush** (struggles); **Carlene Long** (health & strength); **Ron Ford** (health); **Annett Phillip** (health); **Janie Wise** (health); **Margaret Coone** (health); **Melissa Craft** (health); **Kathy Nester** (health).

Shut-ins: **Carol Eason, Kenny & Reba French, Barbara Jones, Charles Paulin, Helen Perrin, Bettye Bolding, Nellie Anderson, Cheryl Barker**

Also continue to pray for those on the extended family and friends list!

Steven Ford had invited us to submit Bible questions to be answered during a Sunday evening Q&A sermon. Please send questions to him or place them in the box in front of the auditorium.

FREE CLOTHES/ETC

- Please share with you friends and neighbors that we are having a free giveaway day! Anyone is invited!!
- If you can join us that day to help in any way let the office know!
- Saturday, September 7
- 9:00 am- 1:00 pm
- Pray that we will be able to reach some lost souls through this event!

Brooke Priest repented of sin and requested prayers that she may be a better example.
Jimmy Sweeney also repented of sin and asked for prayers.

Youth Scrapbook Day
Sunday Sept. 8, 2024
4:30 PM
All youth are invited to help with the scrapbook for this year!

Dear S. Florida Ave church of Christ,
 Thank you for the backpacks and school supplies for our students. There is always a need and new supplies always brighten the faces of our students. We are blessed to have you!

Thanks again,
 Dixieland Staff and Students

If anyone would be interested in hosting a YAG (Young Adult Gathering) please let the office know. You can host in your home or you can use the fellowship hall to host in.



Y.A.G. September 8, 2024
 7:15pm
 in fellowship room after evening worship
 DINNER & FELLOWSHIP FUN!

Scheduled to Serve in Sept.

Designated Elder	Brian Kenyon
Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024	
Announcements	David Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Frank Hamby
Devotional / Invitation	Steven Ford
Closing Prayer	Jarred Spivey
Sunday, September 8, 2024	
10:30 am Sermon	Steven Ford
"The Realities of the Afterlife" (Luke 16:19-22)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Steven Ford
"Choosing Something Better" (Matthew 5:38-48)	
Those to Serve 10:30 am	
Greeters	D. and N. Williams
Song/Pray before class	Tucker Sweeney
Announcements (both)	Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader (both)	Andre Medley
Prayer / Bible reading	Josh Potvin
Lord's Table (both)	Brian Williams
Closing Prayer	Phil Fife
Open/Close Building	David Anderson
Attendance Cards	
Sound Booth (both)	Jason
Those to Serve 6:00 pm	
Greeters	Janis and Nona
Announcements	Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader	Andre Medley
Prayer / Bible reading	Terrance Dindy
Closing Prayer	David Anderson
Wednesday, September 4, 2024	
Announcements	Stacey Paulin
Song Leader / Prayer	David Williams
Devotional / Invitation	Steven Ford
Closing Prayer	George Beals
How We Are Giving	
August 18	\$4,752.26
August 25	\$5,318.16
Sept. 1	\$12,255.21
Contribution Average	\$6,934.00
Weekly Budget	\$7,410.00

If you cannot serve as scheduled, please notify Stacey or the office. Even if you arrange your replacement, please notify Stacey or the office. Thanks!

Be a Blessing Like Ruth

God knows when we need the help of other humans and when we have a humble spirit, He puts people in our path to fulfill His will for us as well as others.

In the book of Ruth, we learn that Naomi was at an age where physically she could not work and provide for herself financially. Providentially He made that possible in Ruth. Ruth made the decision to cling to her mother-in-law—"But Ruth said: Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." (Ruth 1:16). Ruth had a caring and humble spirit and recognized that her mother-in-law would have a hard time by herself. She loved Naomi and made the choice to stick by her through thick and thin. She was young and physically able to work and provide for herself and Naomi. In making this choice to be a blessing to Naomi, God in turn blessed Ruth. (She would be in the lineage of the Savior of mankind.)

How can we be a blessing like Ruth? By actively looking for opportunities to be a blessing to others.

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."

Galatians 6:10

2024 Orange St Church of Christ Ladies' Day



STEPPING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Improving your faith and courage to become a living sacrifice for Christ.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2024
9:00AM-12:00PM

Speaker: *Erin Alban*


310 Orange Street Auburndale, FL
 863-967-1757

Registration begins at 8:30am
 Lunch to follow



LADIES' BIBLE STUDY

Taught by Susan Stearsman



*Love in Deed
 & in Truth*

Study of First John 3:13-23

September 10, 2024
7:00 PM

FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING
 1807 S. FLORIDA AVE., LAKELAND, FL
 (863) 683-4043 WWW.FSOP.NET



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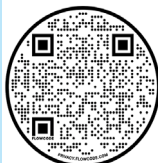
South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

"Be still and know that I am God."

Psalm 46:10



If you prefer to receive the bulletin via email, contact us.