

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements
Clay Morris

Song Leader
Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper
Jack Calvert, Bill Rinehart,
Joseph Barry

Prayers
Mark Davis, Alan Blaylock

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Announcements
Rodney Ellis

Song Leader
Clay Morris

Prayers
Bryan Garlock, Willie Standokes

Invitation
Daniel Allgor

ABOUT US

Elders
Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons
Jon Barry Mike Davis
Clay Morris

Evangelist
Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday
Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.

Monday (Zoom)
Bible Study7:00 P.M

Wednesday
Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 4:14-21).



Volume XXVIII March 5, 2023 Issue 10

That Loving Pest of Mine!
Wayne Goff

Emily and I have a cat named Sissy. This past year she lost her companion cat, Sammy, and it has had a very sad effect on her and us. Sissy and Sammy were “rescue cats” and they came home with us the same day. After losing Sammy, Sissy often follows me around, and on occasion, incessantly meows at me to try to get me to do what she wants! The key here is: incessantly! As I write this article, she is about to drive me crazy!! By the way, “incessantly” is defined as “without interruption, constantly.” Synonyms include “constantly, continually, all the time, nonstop, without a break, unremittingly, ceaselessly, endlessly.” So as many of you might guess, she reminded me of Jesus’ Parable of the Persistent Widow, Luke 18:1-8.

but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me’” (vv. 2-5).

Have you ever done something because someone kept pestering you about it? I can name a person or two in my life who have done that to me, but it’s in my own interest not to name them! I’m sure all of you can relate to this. Jesus, two thousand years ago, knew all about this and made a spiritual application for us! “Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart” (v. 1).

Always Pray & Not Lose Heart?!
It takes a lot of faith to do this and not give up. Yet God wants us on occasion to pray, and pray, and pray. It’s not because He is busy and needs to get back to us later. It has something to do with ourselves. We need to pray, and pray, and pray. Have you ever

“There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ And he would not for a while;

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember the health concerns of *Gerald Eaton, Joey Avance, Jerry Schnelle, Bonnie Allgor, Pat Buls, Sonny & Cathy Monaghan, Beth Ellen, and Pete Rowland.*

Wayne Goff is visiting with us today.

wondered what that reason was? I can think of one or two ideas, but I cannot be certain.

Constant repetition of the same request might make us contemplate our dependence upon God by doing so. God is in control. We are dependent upon Him. We need to remember that all prayer should be asked “according to His will” (1 John 5:14-15) and should be concluded with the statement: “Yet not my will, but Thy will be done!” Our hearts need to feel this dependence. Our minds need to remember that God’s will is superior to ours. Our lives need to reElect these truths. This will result in having an inner peace that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). Part of that peace is the realization that we will not be around on this earth very long. Part of that peace is knowing and trusting that our heavenly Father knows best. Part of that peace is understanding that life on earth is not fair, but it’s not because of anything God has done. Satan is the troublemaker!

Another reason why God may want us to pray incessantly is the timing. We sing a wonderful song, “In His Time,” that explains that God

does the right thing at the right time. Jesus Himself explained in the parable: “And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?” (18:7). So why is He bearing long with us?! There is a lesson to be learned here. God’s nature is to be longsuffering, which means “to suffer long” — not just with us, but even with our enemies. God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (2 Peter 3:9). Maybe He is trying to help those who harm us by giving them opportunity to repent! Life is not fair, but man and Satan are to blame — not God.

Elijah Prayed Seven Times!

Of course this subject also leads us to the example of Elijah in 1 Kings 18:41-46. God has Einally decided to end the drought He brought upon Israel in an attempt to get King Ahab and the people to repent. Elijah goes up to Mount Carmel to pray God to bring rain.

“... And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, ‘Go up now, look toward the sea.’ So he went up and looked, and said, ‘There is nothing.’ And seven *mes he said, ‘Go again.’ Then it came to pass the seventh ;me, that he said, ‘There is a cloud, as small as a man’s hand, rising out of the sea!’ So he said, ‘Go up, say to Ahab, “Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you!”’” (vv. 42-44).

So why did God wait for seven times to bring the rain He knew was going to come upon Israel? Whose patience was He trying: Elijah’s, Elijah’s servant’s, or Ahab’s? God could have brought the rain after the Eirst request, but He waited to see what Elijah’s faith would do. James refers to this event in James 5:17-18. The lesson in James is

“the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (v. 16). So the real “contest” was not between Ahab and Elijah. It was between Elijah and God. “How much faith do you have, Elijah?” Apparently Elijah had a great deal of faith, and we can have the same amount of faith if we will develop it like Elijah did! James points out that Elijah had the same human nature as we do (v. 17)!

Some practical applications to our developing stronger faith are found in James 5:

- If you’re suffering, pray, v. 13.
- If you’re sick, call for the elders to pray for you, v. 14.
- If you’re sin-sick, confess and pray, v. 16.
- If someone else is sin-sick, turn them back to God, vv. 19-20.

In all of these things, there are the elements of faith and patient endurance. The Christian life is not a “fast food order” that comes as quickly as you order it! Some things improve with age and time. God knows this best of all, and as we also sometimes sing: “Let Him have His way with thee!”

God Avenges Speedily!

Jesus went on to say in Luke 18 “And shall not God avenge His own elect...? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily...” (vv. 7-8). “Speedily?” Yes, according to God’s time table. Speedily to God may seem like a long time to us.

Like it or not, there is great value in life’s suffering. Paul said “...we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.” (Romans 5:3-4). We can only learn “perseverance” through trials, sufferings,

and tribulations. But it develops in us a greater spiritual “character,” and that “character” gives us “hope.” The apostle Peter talks about being “grieved” by various trials, but explains that the same trials test our faith to see if it is genuine, 1 Peter 1:6-7. Those who endure until the end will be saved. Those who give up will be lost. So, as Jesus said in His parable: “Always pray and do not lose heart!”

Conclusion

Perhaps some of you have some additional thoughts you would like to share with me and our readers. If that is the case, feel free to e-mail me.

So why does Sissy sometimes meow incessantly? Emily and I have said it over and over: “She is needy.” This is true more now than ever because she misses her life-long buddy. But aren’t we the same way? Don’t we pray to God when we are needy? And aren’t we all very, very needy? Of course we are, and we ever will be! And the solution to our “needs” is to pray... without ceasing....

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be @illed with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all