

# THE HERALD

Newsletter of the Orrville Grace Brethren Church

## If We are so Burdened, then Why aren't the Prayer Meetings Full?

Borrowed from the Gospel Coalition Blog  
by Erik Raymond

As Christians we are right to be outraged by things we see and hear in the news and our communities. Our hearts break when we consider people being killed by gunfire, abortion, terrorism, and drug overdoses (just to name a few). But being Scripture-formed people we know better than to limit our frustration over sin to those that make the headlines. We also loathe spiritual apathy, hypocrisy, and lukewarmness in the church. We recognize that all sin is, at its core, a rebellion against God and an assault on His honor (Rom. 1:18-25).

### So what do we do about it?

I know one thing that a lot of people do is talk about it. We as Christians talk an awful lot about what is wrong. Many people engage the issues on social media and there is a lot of chatter by Christians on the topics. But is this really a strategy for doing anything about it? Don't get me wrong, I'm all for talking. People are shaped and challenged by healthy public discourse. But this can't be all that we do. It isn't even the best thing we can do.

Let me put it another way, if we believe that God is good, sovereign, and holy, and that He has

told us to cast our burdens on Him in prayer then, where are the public prayer meetings by God's people? If we are so exercised by injustice and depravity, why don't Christians flood to church prayer meetings to gather with their brothers and sisters and plead with God in prayer? Why aren't prayer meetings overflowing with burdened and broken people who want God to intervene and act?

Many pastors who don't have a prayer meeting at their church will tell you that they don't have one because people won't come. Many others churches who have the meetings in the church have a much smaller attendance in these meetings than the regular Sunday gathering.

I often wonder why the church does not pray more. Why it is so hard for Christians to talk to God, but so easy for us to discuss our complaints with others? Or to vent on social media?

Are we really as upset as we let on? Do we really believe that God will answer us and act? If the answers to the first two questions are "yes" then why don't we pray more?

If we are not prayerful in our response to sin and destruction then we ourselves are demonstrating a lack of faith and hypocrisy. We want things to change but don't believe that God can or will do anything. And, we say that we hate sin, but by not praying, we ourselves are sinning.

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I wrestle with myself on this issue. Just this week I was thinking through the news reports of more violence and I'm asking these questions for myself and our church. Then I read this section from Jonathan Edwards. I think that Edwards really puts his finger on it here. His words jumped off the page at me and grabbed me by the collar. Though written nearly three centuries ago, they are relevant for us today.

I should think the people of God in this land, at such a time as this is, would be in the way of their duty while doing three times as much at fasting and prayer as they do; not only, nor principally, for the pouring out of the Spirit on those places to which they belong; but that God would appear for His church, and, in mercy to miserable men, carry on His work in the land, and in the world, and fulfill the things He has spoken of in His word, that His church has been so long wishing, and hoping, and waiting for. "They that make mention of the Lord," at this day, ought not to "keep silence," and should "give God no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth;" agreeable to Isa. 62:6, 7.

Before the first great out-pouring of the Spirit of God on the christian church, which began at Jerusalem, the disciples gave themselves to incessant prayer, Acts 1:13, 14.

There is a time spoken of, wherein God will remarkably and wonderfully appear for the deliverance of His church from all her enemies, and when He will avenge His own elect: and Christ reveals that this will be in answer to their incessant prayers, or "crying day and night," Luke 18:7.

In Israel, the day of atonement, which was their great day of fasting and prayer, preceded and made way for the glorious and joyful feast of tabernacles.

When Christ is mystically born into the world, to rule over all nations, it is represented in the 12th chapter of Revelation as being in consequence of the church's "crying, and travailing in birth, and being pained to be delivered." One thing here intended doubtless is, her crying and agonizing in prayer.

God seems at this very time to be waiting for this from us. When He is about to bestow some great blessing on His church, it is often His manner, in the first place, so to order things in His providence, as to show His church their great need of it, and to bring them into distress for want of it, and so put them upon crying earnestly to Him for it.

*Jonathan Edwards, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 1 (Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), 426.*

Is God showing you a great need for something? Are you troubled enough to cry to Him earnestly for it?

As a Christian it's not enough simply to observe that something is wrong. We are people who want to see things made right. We don't pursue this simply by venting and we certainly don't see it happen apart from praying.

"God seems at this very time to be waiting for this from us." Indeed He does.

*About the Author:*

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Borrowed from the Gospel Coalition Blog  
<https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/erikraymond/2016/09/23/if-we-are-so-burdened-then-why-arent-the-prayer-meetings-full/>

## Encounter Revival Ministries will be at OGBC, November 17th-21st

They will present a full concert on Friday evening, November 18th (7pm) and revival services on Sunday, November 20th (9:30am & 6pm).

Below are a few thoughts about  
LIVING on PURPOSE  
from ERM's founder Ardy Parlin.

### Fear Not...Don't Worry (10.14.16)

It is easy to become worried about what is down the road of life since we do not know what is around the next corner that we are traveling.

Worry is the fear of what might happen in the future. If one does not commit and trust in the Lord, believing that He is in control, they will be overcome with worry over what might happen in the future. The possible challenges in the future become burdensome and distracting issues of worry.

Worry divides the mind and sets one's focus on things that might happen in the future. In worrying we give our time, energy, and thoughts to trying to "cross bridges before we get to them."

Jesus told the disciples that there would be difficult times (Matthew 24:6) but that they should trust Him. We too must trust God to do all He promised and believe that He will sustain us (II Corinthians 12:9) with His grace and strength. (Isaiah 40:31)

"Learn to live one day at a time and do not try to tackle any problem prematurely." Peter Lord

### What Do Others See? (10.19.16)

Each day we encounter and influence many people as we go about our daily tasks. It is in the way we talk, respond, and behave along with our

attitude that impacts others. Also, the way one is dressed speaks loudly to the passing world. The scriptures teach that believers are to be "salt and light in a dark world." (Matthew 5:13-16)

We do not need to wear a sign that states we are Christians, but the way we live, talk, dress, and act should be so that people would conclude that "we have been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13)

The impact and impressions we leave as we walk through our world today are of great importance. In obedience to the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit, it is our great joy to be representatives of the living Lord, drawing others to Him for freedom and forgiveness.

Yes, it does make a difference how we talk, walk, dress, behave, and conduct our life in every aspect. Check out Ephesians 2:8-10

### God is Working (10.27.16)

It is easy to get caught up and overcome by the events of everyday life. When that happens, one often forgets that God is moving and working on our behalf in all things.

The events of each day and the people that intersect our life are being used by our Lord to do that which is needed. Each believer has their unique needs, challenges, weaknesses, and strengths that God knows need to be strengthened, changed, stopped, or adjusted, so He designs a special situation or person to help us focus on that need.

Just as the potter shapes the vessel, the life of each believer is being shaped into a "vessel of honor" (I Tim. 2:21) in the events and encounters of each day. It is the alert, obedient, and surrendered believer that thankfully rests in the work and ways of God. As one responds and changes, they become a more attractive and usable vessel in God's Hand.

"The real point of Psalm 37:4 is that we are to trust in the Lord and delight ourselves in the Giver and not His gifts." Calvin Miller

# FUNNIES

## *An Amishman's Guide to Computer Lingo*

- Modem: What you did to the hayfields.  
 Keyboard: Where you hang your keys.  
 Windows: What to shut when it's 30 below.  
 Log on: Making the wood stove hotter.  
 Hard drive: Getting home during mud season.  
 Microchip: What are left in the bag when the big chips are gone.  
 Download: Getting the firewood off the wagon.  
 Megahertz: What you get when you're not careful downloading.

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After giving a woman a full medical examination, the doctor explained his prescription as he wrote it out. "Take the green pill with a glass of water when you get up. Take the blue pill with a glass of water after lunch. Then just before going to bed, take the red pill with another glass of water."

"Exactly what is my problem, Doctor," she asked. "You're not drinking enough water."

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Sign on the scales in a Mission Hills, California doctors office: "Pretend it's your I.Q."

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## *A Short History of Medicine*

"Doctor, I have an earache."

- 2000 BC "Here, eat this root."  
 1000 AD "That root is heathen, say this prayer."  
 1850 AD "That prayer is superstition, drink this potion."  
 1940 AD "That potion is snake oil, swallow this pill."  
 1985 AD "That pill is ineffective, take this antibiotic."  
 2015 AD "That antibiotic is artificial. Here eat this root!"

A college student in a philosophy class was taking his first exam. The test consisted of a single line, which simply read, "Is this a question? Discuss."

After a short time, he wrote, "If that is a question, then this is an answer."

The student received an A on the exam.

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High school student, Nathan Sohmer of Idaho, conducted an experiment in science class a few years ago that reveals a serious problem. He told his classmates and teachers that they should sign his petition to ban a dangerous substance.

This substance - dihydrogen monoxide - he revealed, is a component of acid rain. In its gaseous state, it can cause serious burns. Accidental inhalation can kill. To make matters worse, it contributes to soil erosion, decreases the effectiveness of automobile brakes, and its presence has been detected in some terminal cancer tumors.

Virtually all of the 50 students and teachers signed the petition with no questions asked. How about you? Would you sign?

Or would you have thought to inquire, "Just was is dihydrogen monoxide?" Or did you realize that the petition they signed called for a ban on H<sub>2</sub>O -Water.

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## **Words of Wisdom**

An error becomes a mistake only when you refuse to correct it.

Most of us measure our success by what others haven't done.

You cannot control the length of your life, but you can control its breadth, depth and height.

When you can't have what you want, it's time to start wanting what you have. - Kathleen A. Sutton

They say that courtesy is contagious. So why not start an epidemic?