

Blue Ridge Brandmarks

“...I bear on my body the brandmarks of Jesus” - Gal. 6:17

Volume 5

June 12, 2011

Number 6

Bible Q&A

QUESTION

“Can you tell me how not to be afraid and how to know what to say when I pray to God?”

ANSWER

Fear is an appropriate emotion for us to feel when we approach God. He is high and holy and we are low and sinful. Humility before him is essential for acceptable worship and for us to think about ourselves and Him properly. In addition, Christians are instructed to maintain this fear of God as the basis of gracious service (Heb. 12:28), personal holiness (2 Cor. 7:1) and church growth (Acts 9:31).

This fear is often described as awe or reverence, but should also contain a healthy mixture of fear, fear of displeasing our Lord and Savior. However, balancing this fear of God is the boldness that the Christian has through Christ that they are accepted by God in

Him (Heb 10:19; Rom 8:15).

In speaking with their Heavenly Father sometimes Christians don't know what to say or how to express themselves to Him. In such cases they have at least three helps which are extremely valuable: 1) Knowledge of what God has revealed of Himself, 2) The help of Christ and the Holy Spirit, and 3) The example of the prayers of faithful saints in scripture.

What He has revealed of Himself

God has revealed Himself as our Heavenly Father, and as a Father, He hears His children (Matt. 7:7-11). He instructs us to bring our requests and anxieties to Him (Phil. 4:6-7). In addition, He knows what we need before we ask (Matt. 6:8), so there is no chance of misunderstanding.

The help of Jesus and the Holy Spirit

Our requests to God would have no merit on their own, but Jesus tells us that

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we should ask in His name (John 14:13) and Jesus is identified as making intercession for us (Heb. 7:25). This means He as the Son of God is making personal requests on our behalf to the Father. What a comfort that is! In addition, the Holy Spirit helps our prayers as well (Rom. 8:27). With this knowledge the Christian can truly come before God with confidence.

The examples of faithful saints

Sometimes in attempting to express ourselves to God it is helpful to have an example to go by. Jesus provided a model

prayer for us to follow (Matt. 6:9-13), and there are many prayers of faithful saints recorded in Scripture. The book of Psalms is full of models for prayer, regardless of what circumstance or state of mind the Christian finds themselves in. Also don't miss the outstanding prayers of Daniel 9:9-19, Nehemiah 1:5-11, Jehoshaphat (2 Chr. 20:6-12) and Solomon (1 Kings 3:5-9). In this last group of Scriptures we see confidence to come before God perfectly balanced with humility and fear of God beautifully expressed.

QUESTION

“Can you watch TV religion and still think that is all it takes?”

ANSWER

Like many things offered on television, TV religion is all-too-often flashy, shallow and cheap. Sadly, for many religious spectators, it is all the religious teaching they receive or worship they engage in week in and week out. It sounds like I don't have to convince you that getting your spiritual sustenance from the glow of the TV screen is not any better than getting your physical nutrition only from the foods advertised during the

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commercial breaks. But here are some key thoughts prompted by your question.

In the New Testament, those who heard a religious message were expected to verify what they heard from Scripture (Acts 17:11). Also, there are a multitude of “one another” commands (Rom. 12:10; 1 Cor. 11:33; 2 Cor. 13:11; Gal. 5:15; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 4:32; 5:19, 21; 1 Th. 5:11; Heb. 3:13; Heb. 10:24-25; and many others) given to Christians that cannot be fulfilled over the airwaves. Not only that, worship services were not about entertainment, they were about praising God and learning His will (Acts 2:42). Finally,

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Jesus worked very hard (Luke 14:25-33) to make sure His followers understood that being His disciple requires an extremely high level of commitment that

told all the “why’s” in Scripture, but we are assured that a day is coming when EVERY evil deed will be brought to account. That is the Judgment Day (Rev. 20:11-15). If we are weak in faith, we may become discouraged or accuse God

THE FAITHFUL CAN AFFORD TO WAIT FOR GOD, EVEN IF IT SEEMS LIKE JUSTICE WILL NEVER ARRIVE

incompatible with sitting on the couch soaking in religious feelings from the television.

Hebrews 10:24-25 - *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

QUESTION

“Why are the good taken and the wicked remain?”

ANSWER

My wife just lost her grandmother, so my family has recently been reminded of the shortness of life, and also the blessing of having a hope for the life to come. If we are expecting justice to be done in this life, we will expect the righteous to live long and the wicked to receive swift destruction. However, many have observed that sometimes the opposite is true (Eccl. 7:15; Job 21:7). We are not

of injustice when not everyone gets what we feel they deserve in this life. But the faithful can afford to wait for God, even if it seems like justice will never arrive (Rev. 6:10-11).

Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped.

For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek.

They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind. ...

But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task,

until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.

Psalms 73:1-17

◀Brent Paschall▶

JUNE 2011 DUTY ROSTER

| Weekday | WED | SUN | WED | SUN | WED | SUN | WED | SUN | WED |
|--|----------|-------------|------------|------------|----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Date | 6/1 | 6/5 | 6/8 | 6/12 | 6/15 | 6/19 | 6/22 | 6/26 | 6/29 |
| Opening Prayer | | Jonathan L. | | Eric B. | | Ed M. | | James M. | |
| Morning Message | | Leo R. | | Randy F. | | Alan M. | | Don H. | |
| Announcements | John M. | Matt M. | John M. | Charlie K. | David T. | Bill A. | John M. | Jonathan L. | Jonathan L. |
| Leading Songs | Bill A. | David T. | Charlie K. | John M. | Bill A. | Brad F. | Alan M. | Alan M. | John M. |
| First Prayer | Jimmy F. | Kevin H. | Randy F. | James M. | Eric B. | Jonathan L. | Jeremy L. | John M. | Charlie K. |
| Lead at Lord's Table & Contribution | | Eric B. | | Don H. | | Randy F. | | Charlie K. | |
| Assist | | Jerry D. | | Kevin H. | | James M. | | Kevin H. | |
| Assist | | Bill A. | | Ed M. | | Jeremy P. | | David T. | |
| Assist | | Ed M. | | Matt M. | | Jerry D. | | Brad F. | |
| Read Scripture | | Randy F. | | Jeremy P. | | Don H. | | Ed M. | |
| Preaching | | Brent P. | | Brent P. | | Brent P. | | Brent P. | |
| Wed. Exhortation | Eric B. | | Alan M. | | Matt M. | | Bill A. | | Leo R. |
| Closing Prayer | David T. | Don H. | Tim P. | Jerry D. | James M. | Jimmy F. | James M. | Leo R. | Eric B. |

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Sunday

9:15 - Morning Message

10:00 - Bible classes for all ages

11:00 - Worship

Wednesday

7:30 - Bible Classes for all ages

Elders:

Jim Fields, Alan Moeller & Leo Rodrigue

Deacons:

Eric Bridge & John Malloy

Evangelist:

Brent Paschall

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