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Calvary Jail Ministries Newsletter



Calvary Jail Ministry Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 5

Greetings from the Calvary Jail Ministry team! We are continuing in our quest to publish a newsletter that will increase the awareness of the ministry that God has laid on our hearts and ultimately give Him praise for what He has done for us through Jesus Christ.

This is our newsletter for June. All previous newsletters are archived on our website at www.calvaryjail.com.

In this edition Gary Byrum, Associate Pastor/Pastoral Care & Senior Adults, Calvary Baptist, discusses that prayer should become a lifestyle.

Stephen Bennett is the newest board member for Calvary Jail Ministries. Stephen discusses the prodigal son and the forgiving power of Christ.

Finally, Dan Rodriguez, chaplain from Calvary Jail Ministries, will challenge us to share the Gospel with the lost!



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28 Then they cried
to the LORD in
their trouble,
and he
delivered them
from their
distress.

29 He made the
storm be still,
and the waves
of the sea were
hushed.

30 Then they were
glad that the
waters^[a] were
quiet,
and he brought
them to their
desired haven.

Psalm 107: 28—
30

Gary Byrum

The Greater Work

Just last week, a praying friend reminded me of this quote from Oswald Chambers, “Prayer does not fit us for the greater works; prayer is the greater work.” (<http://utmost.org/classic/greater-works-classic/>)

What does this statement mean for me, for you, for our loved ones, when seeking to serve, to make disciples, to bear each other’s burdens, to do more than simply hang on during the seasons of deep struggle, failure, and disappointment in our earth-life? Does it mean we shouldn’t make a plan, we shouldn’t seek counsel, we shouldn’t develop strategies and process, or does Chambers mean that we should only pray? Of course not, as Jesus said so succinctly, “For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?” (Luke 14:28)

And, “counting the cost” includes making a plan, engaging others, setting a course, creating strategy and process...

But, for Christ-followers who are seeking for their work and life to be fruitful in God’s Gospel Kingdom, prayer is more than an element or strategy; prayer is the intimate conversation, the approach, the initiation, the discovery, the vehicle, the discerner of direction, and the access to the Power, the Presence, and the Purposes of God in our lives.

Colossians 4:2 has become a life verse for me, and a quick breakdown of the verse gives us a practical roadmap of how and why “prayer is the greater work.”

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” (Col. 4:2)

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Gary Byrum

Continue – prayer should be our normal lifestyle, normal communication, normal like breathing, and we should *continue* what we have started in our walk with Jesus, *continue* to pray...listening to and speaking with God.

Steadfastly – in our normal lifestyle of prayer, we should be consistent, committed, dedicated, unwavering in our attitude and relationship with God *in prayer*.

In prayer – we may talk a lot about prayer and its importance, but talking *about* prayer is not the same at all as being *in* prayer...continually and steadfastly *in prayer*.

Watchful – being on the lookout for what God is doing, ready to see God work, *anticipating* and being aware.

Thanksgiving – honoring God for His marvelous work, in humility giving Him worship and praise, being aware of Him and with a grateful heart of *thanksgiving*.

And, all of us will agree to the power, encouragement, and fruitfulness of multiplied prayer, one on one or in groups of believers. Praying together and for each other is a powerful and Spirit-filled way “to stir up one another to love and good works.” (Heb. 10:24)

Ask someone today, “How can I pray for you?” And then, just do it! You may encourage a Brother or Sister, you may uncover a hidden burden, or you may enter into a Gospel conversation that leads to confession, repentance, redemption, and eternal life in Christ.

Continue...because “Prayer is the greater work.”

Gary Byrum



Calvary Jail Ministries Newsletter

Stephen Bennett

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

My name is Stephen Bennett and I joined Calvary Jail Ministries a little over two years ago as a volunteer at the Davidson County Jail. What a privilege it is to be part of CJM and what God is doing in the lives of the inmates.

Today, I'd like to share some thoughts with you from the parable of the prodigal son.

Jesus told this parable, using it as a teaching tool to get across a great truth. In the parable, we see the benefit to man clearly – and yet we also see the benefit to God. You see, the parable of the prodigal son is not only about forgiveness of a lost man, even more so, it is about the delight of the father who runs after him.

We have all heard the story. A young man took his portion of his father's inheritance and squandered it on riotous living. He ended up broke, ruined in health and spirit, and at his lowest point he decided to return to his father. Scripture tells us. ***“He arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him” (Luke 15:20).***

Note, that nothing hindered this father's forgiveness of the young man. There was nothing this boy had to do- not even confess his sins-because the father had already made provision for reconciliation. Indeed, it happened all by the father's initiative: he ran to his son and embraced him as soon as he saw the boy coming up the road. The truth is, forgiveness is never a problem for any loving father. Likewise, it's never a problem with our heavenly Father when he sees a repentant child.

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4: 6-7



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Stephen Bennett

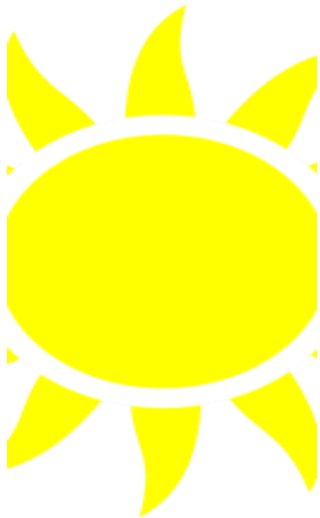
So forgiveness simply is not an issue in this parable. In fact, Jesus makes it clear that it wasn't enough for this prodigal merely to be forgiven. The father didn't embrace his son just to forgive him and let him go his way. No, that father longed for more than just his son's restoration. He wanted his child's company, his presence, and communion.

Even though the prodigal was forgiven and in favor once more, he still wasn't settled in the father's house. Only then would the father be satisfied, his joy fulfilled when his son was brought into his company. That is the issue in this parable.

In the father's eyes, this *old* boy was dead. That son was out of his thoughts completely. Now, in the father's eyes, this son who had returned home was a new man. And his past would never be brought up again. The father was saying in essence; "As far as I'm concerned, the *old* you is dead. Now, walk with me as a *new* man. That is my estimation of you. There is no need for you to live under guilt. Don't keep talking about your sin, your unworthiness. The sin problem is settled. Now, come boldly into my presence and partake of my mercy and grace. I delight in you!"

God bless you!

Stephen Bennett



¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

Ephesians 6:18

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Chaplain's Corrnar—Dan Rodriguez, Calvary Jail Ministry Chaplain

Greetings once again to all!

³ Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.

May the peace, grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

I have a question... When was the last time you experienced the joy of leading someone to Christ? When was the last time you saw someone tear up as you observed them humbling themselves before God and confessing their sin unto God, and then receive God's only Son as Lord and Savior?

I would not doubt that for some of you, perhaps it has been a very long time. Well let me tell you what a wonderful thing it is! Many of our volunteers can testify to this deep, touching, and most spiritual moment that even brings tears of joy into our own eyes!

There is nothing more spiritually satisfying than this! To lead a sinner to our Lord Jesus Christ and be a witness of a soul being forgiven and saved! Amen!

Hebrews 13:3

This is exactly what Jesus has called us to do.

Jesus sent his disciples to all the world (**Matthew 28:18-20**).

Jesus sent Peter to Cornelius (**Acts Chapter 10**) and lead him and all his family to Christ! Jesus sent Paul unto the Gentiles a (**Acts28: 28-31**)

And Jesus is still calling men and women today to go and preach the Gospel! To lead them to Jesus Christ!

Are YOU being called? Can you feel it in your heart? It is undeniable. Do not try to run and hide like Jonah. How are we going to respond to Jesus on that day when we see him face to face?

I pray the Holy Spirit touches your heart through this article.

The Harvest is ripe! (**John 4: 34-36**). The workers are few! (**Luke 10: 1, 2**).

Come, and let's reach them all for Christ's kingdom! In Jesus name, Amen!

May God bless you richly.
In Christ's service,

Pastor Dan

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Conclusion

¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me ^[a] anything in my name, I will do it.

John 14: 13-14

In this edition of the newsletter, we have been encouraged to pray, share the gospel and to appreciate the forgiveness of Christ. I see the power of the God in these topics. A power that we may not be able to comprehend.

These three articles reminded me of a recent devotion I read by Debbie Taylor Williams. She is one of my favorite writers and one of her devotions was dedicated to the word Inscrutable from Isaiah. Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. Isaiah 40:28 NASB

She compares that with the NIV, “No one can fathom God.” And in the NKJV, “His understanding is unsearchable.”

She states that “Trust and faith are essential elements not only in our initial profession of faith, but also in our daily walk. We can trust our God, whose understanding is INSCRUTABLE.”

In conclusion, if we continually pray as we have been instructed in this edition, share the Gospel with the lost and trust Christ’s reconciling power with God, then we will see the INSCRUTABLE power of God.

I hope you have a great summer!!!

In His Service,
Keven Carroll
Calvary Jail Board Member

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