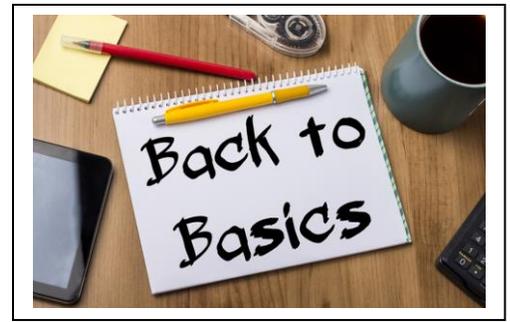


'The Prayer 20/20 Impact' - Knowing Jesus More! August 30th, 2020



Dear Praying Friends, and Partners In Prayer Team, and whole Church Family,

*“For this reason, since the day we heard about you,
we have not stopped praying for you.” Colossians 1:9 (NIV)*

Are you ready to get back to the prayer basics? If we are going to become a church without walls in these last days, and God is causing us to re-evaluate how we do ministry in light of this Covid-19, we need to be praying for fervent revival and protection surrounding our church. I am so thankful for the twenty individuals from our Prayer Team who gathered last Sunday evening at 6:30 for us to go before the Lord in prayer. I appreciated the many of you who attended, shared and read scriptures, and lifted up prayers for our church in confession, prayer for leaders, and for our country in these troubling times. I want to encourage us to keep the importance and momentum of prayer going. Starting this Sunday at 9:00am, we are calling all people, not just our prayer team members, to come and gather for concentrated prayer. When you come, someone will greet you and direct you to where we will first start to meet. I want to share the following idea taken as an acrostic from our church name that we want to start praying together: P.C.B.C. That stands for: Praise, Confession, Big picture, and Current events. So let me explain.

1. Praise is first! When we open in prayer together, we want to make sure we are approaching God our Father! We want to make sure we are coming with a full understanding of who He is, and we are honoring and glorifying Him.

2. Confession is second. Not just individual confession for ourselves, but “corporate” confession much like Daniel prayed for the sins of his people in Daniel 9. “I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: ‘Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land’” (Dan. 9:1-4). We too must pray and ask for confession for the sins of our people in this country. We must be praying for our nation and our area. Pray that we will keep praying in confession so that the Lord hears our prayers.

3. Big Picture is the third element we should use to pray. I want to share with you a funny cartoon that was sent to me this week. I think it describes how we all feel about the year “2020”. (It’s on next page...)



Just as we sometimes feel discouraged about the events that occur to us as individuals, I don't want all our prayer time focused on "healing physical needs" such as "auntie's toes". I want us to be looking outside ourselves and our world globally and seeing what is happening around the world to all believers in Christ. I want us to use our opportunities to see what God is doing in others. I want us to pray about our government and elections based on 1 Timothy 2: "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to

be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 4:1-4). Also remember, "Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing" (1 Tim. 2:8).

This week I spent some time talking with a couple of believers who are struggling with "everything is political" today. There is so much that believers are struggling with. And it is especially easy for us as believers to feel that our convictions on political things are right because some of the issues are crossing Biblical lines. But can I encourage you all not to "Christianize" your view of politics? What I mean is, we should be praying for all these issues, but not with a proud and superior "I'm-the-right-one" on these issues," and "people need to see it my way". This destroys the witness of Christ. We must be careful that what we do and pray represents Jesus and not our desire for "which president" we want. I think most Christians don't know how to draw the line of living for Christ and parking our preferences at the doors. We need to pray that no matter who comes into our church, saved or unsaved, that it is about Christ! I've had several talks with many of you who are arguing by Facebook over differences. Remember that name calling and being angry will never win people to Christ. So please take verse 8 to heart: "without anger or disputing." I believe that during this Covid-19 many Christians are fighting

over the mask issues, or services inside or outside, or singing or not singing; and that is just what Satan wants us to do.

4. The fourth way to pray is Current Events. We need to pray for the soil of our 611 corridor which is like “ringing” iron rocks. We need to pray that the Lord takes the bulldozers and breaks up the hardness surrounding our church. We are planning a mailing soon as an invitation outreach, and we need to pray for hearts to be ready to receive that invitation. We need to also keep in prayer things happening to all Bible-believing churches. One of the pastor friends that I pray with on Tuesday shared the following from Tom Rainer, President and CEO of Lifeway Christian Resources, who blogged these predictions for churches under the Covid-19:

- At least 20 percent of those who attended before the pandemic will not return to church. Of course, this number will vary from church to church, but early indicators point to this level of losses. Some of the former in-person attendees will become digital-only attendees. Most of this group, however, will not attend at all.
- More pastors will leave vocational ministry over the next twelve months than any time in recent history. Pastors suffer a death by a thousand cuts. It’s usually not just one or a few factors that push their limits, it’s the drip-by-drip effect of constant criticisms and conflicts they experience. That continuous pressure and discouragement has been exacerbated by the incredible pressures brought by the pandemic.
- Churches will move to a new emphasis on conversion growth. Churches have been quietly disobedient to the Great Commission for three decades. We are seeing signs of a new wake-up call. Church leaders are becoming increasingly convicted that they must lead their churches to reach those who are not believers in Christ. Church members are reflecting that same conviction and commitment. Most church growth for the past three decades has been transfer growth, Christians moving from one church to another. That dismal reality is about to change.

If such things are happening we need to be praying!

Here are some current events that we can pray about sent to me by Randall Wenger, Chief Counsel, Independence Law Center:

“Dear Friend,

Would you like some good news? You’re helping churches reach more people with the Good News of the Gospel. Now that’s really good news. Here are the details:

Thanks to your generous partnership, our team at the Independence Law Center just chalked up exciting victories on behalf of two local churches in opposite corners of Pennsylvania after providing each with much-needed legal counsel free of charge - all made possible because of your financial partnership with us. And wins like this benefit everyone, by protecting and expanding religious

freedom!

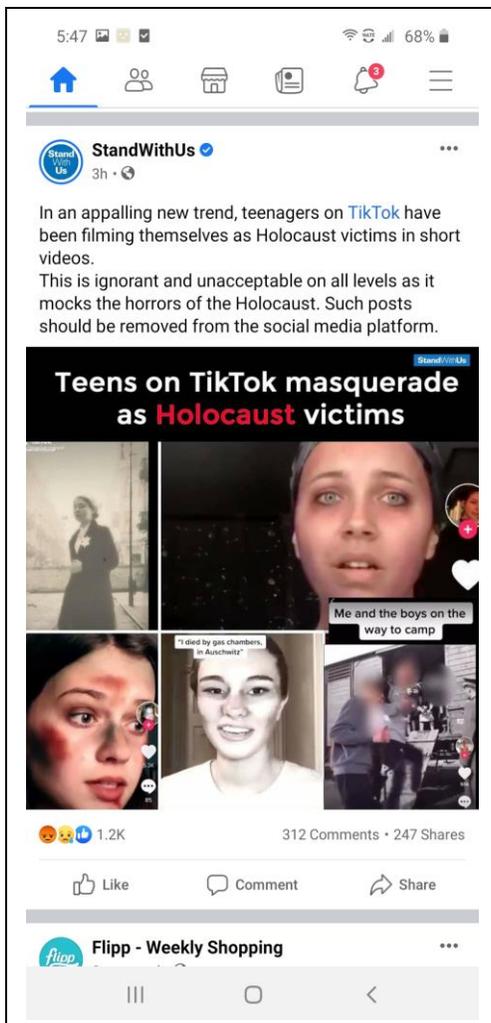
#1 We were in trial this summer representing a Monroe County church (NE PA), and the judge just handed down his decision...Victory! We filed the case against county officials who had been forcing the church to pay taxes on their property as if they were a for-profit corporation - something no church should have to do. The result: a big win, which means that rather than paying an unjust tax, those funds can go directly to advancing the church's mission. To put this victory in perspective, the funds are enough to cover the salary of one employee to help them serve their local community. You can read more about this case and see our post-trial interview with the pastor.

#2 The second victory belonged to a Pittsburgh area church that rents and meets in a public school building. Recently, there was pressure from some in the community and a few members on the school board to stop the church from using school facilities. Our legal team worked with both the church and the school, which resulted in the school board voting, by a 5-4 decision, to allow the church to continue to meet in the building.

In a thank you note, this church family shared with our team:

We see the merits of your organization and the fruit of the work that you do! We will be able to reach more people with the GOOD NEWS of the GOSPEL!!!”

Another request that is current: Teens are using “TickTock” applications on their phones to pretend to be Holocaust victims. It is disturbing. These such events are needs to keep praying for. (See picture below on the left.)



So let's remember during these next months of September and October to start praying for Praise, Confession, Big Picture, and Current Events at PCBC!

I want to end with this wonderful testimony of

blessing. On Monday morning I was filling my car up with fuel at Turkey Hill, and Paul Crawn's mother came and filled up her vehicle right next to me. I was thanking her for the visit she made with us this last Sunday, and asked if she was traveling home. She shared some wonderful things about our sermons in Colossians. Knowing that Mrs. Crawn was a personal friend of my boyhood Pastor, Rev. Leslie Kelnore, I said that I was really blessed that as I'm studying Colossians, I'm following and reading a very old book on Colossians by Theodore Epp, who once was a teacher with Radio Bible Class in the 60's. This book belonged to Pastor Kelnore, it is falling to pieces and I'm holding it together with rubber bands. But what I really love is that I can see all the illustrations and little notes that Pastor Kelnore wrote about preaching in the book of Colossians. It's like enjoying a sermon from him after he passed on to heaven and he is helping me preach. This book was such an encouragement and resource to me. Mrs. Crawn, having known Pastor Kelnore said this to me: "Corvin, I know that according to Hebrews 12:1 that those in heaven who are the cloud of witnesses, may be able to see the good things happening to us down here before we get home. I know Uncle Leslie is up there just cheering you on, knowing you were his disciple and preacher whom he passed on the teachings of Colossians. I know he would be proud of you!"

So there I was, standing with tears in my eyes thankful for that wonderful encouragement. Even pastors get discouraged, and wonder if anything they are teaching is making any kind of difference, and to have that kind of reminder and encouragement, I can't express how much it lifted my heart. So, I give the glory to Christ and God who is our all in all! Please pray that Christ will be seen!

So pray with me,

"Living and Good Father above,

Help us live the resurrection life. Help us put off our sinful struggles and tendencies and put on Jesus' clothes of newness. Thank You Jesus that You presented Your own blood as the atoning offering that enables us to draw near to God with boldness. Holy Spirit, give us confidence as we draw near to the throne of grace- not confidence found in ourselves and our own good works, but a confidence founded upon Jesus Christ as our 'all-in-all'. Give us the joy and gladness that come from casting off our old ways, and putting on new ways to be more like our Savior. Keep making us like Him. We love You Lord with all our hearts, minds, wills, souls, and choices! Strengthen us to grow in holiness, as You continue in us the good work that You have already begun, so that on the last day we might be presented to Christ as part of His spotless bride, the church. In Jesus' Name we pray, and all the people said, amen."

Praying, and trusting for His revival Blessings,

Pastor Corvin <><

Hymn Chorus: "More of You, more of You
I've had all but what I need just more of You.
Of things I've had my fill and yet I hunger still
Empty and bare, Lord hear my prayer for more of You!" ... Bill and
Gloria Gather

