

'The Prayer 20/20 Impact' - Knowing Jesus More! September 6th, 2020

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

"Don't be weary in prayer; keep at it; watch for God's answers, and remember to be thankful when they come. Don't forget to pray for us too, that God will give us many chances to preach the Good News of Christ for which I am here in jail. Pray that I will be bold enough to tell it freely and fully and make it plain."

Colossians 4:1-4 (The Living Bible Paraphrase)

In these Covid-19 days, do we pray prayers that get God's attention? Maybe you never thought of praying prayers like that before. I hope you do after today. This week is Labor Day, and I hope we really "labor" and struggle and strive in prayer! Remember that as an "upper room" church, Palisades Community Bible Church is committed to restart our prayer time every Sunday morning at 9:30am in place of the Sunday School hour. If you haven't come, please join us! Are you ready to get back to the prayer basics? As I was reading through a reprint of E.M. Bounds book, *Power Through Prayer*, I was struck by the proverbial saying that "nothing really ever changes."



E.M. Bounds served the Lord through the Civil War until his death in 1913. Over a century ago Bounds said:

"We are constantly on a stretch, if not on a strain, to devise new methods, new plans, new organizations to advance the Church and secure enlargement and efficiency for the gospel. This trend of the day has a tendency to lose sight of the man or sink the man in the plan or organization. God's Plan is to make much of the man, far more of him than of anything else. Men are God's method. The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men. What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better [machinery], not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use – men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men – men of prayer." (Pg. 85-91)

You see, nothing has really changed. As this church seeks to reach this community for Christ we must be careful to lay a foundation of true prayer. Innovation in outreach methods is good and it is needed, but unless the foundation of prayer is well laid, we will not have a truly effective ministry.

Bounds said in his book, *The Weapons of Prayer*:

"Nothing is more important to God than prayer in dealing with mankind. But it is likewise all-important to man to pray. Failure to pray is failure along the whole

line of life. It is failure of duty, service, and spiritual progress. God must help man by prayer. He who does not pray, therefore, robs himself of God's help and places God where He cannot help man. Man must pray to God if love for God is to exist. Faith and hope, and patience and all the strong, beautiful, vital forces of piety are withered and dead in a prayerless life. The life of the individual believer, his personal salvation, and personal Christian graces have their being, bloom and fruitage in prayer." (pg. 58-59)

In summary: "Prayer is an absolute necessity to the proper carrying on of God's work. God has made it so." I hope you understand the absolute necessity of prayer. You cannot be a mature Christian without it, and whether Palisades Community Bible Church goes forward in reaching this community for Christ or is stagnant or falls flat on its face depends on how the people of this church pray. Everything else is secondary. So pray boldly and look for God's answers!

This morning we come to a beautiful example of proper prayer from a man that lived a proper life. Turn to Daniel 9. We will see four things in this chapter that mark a true heart of prayer. I want us to look at the example of prayer that I laid out for us in the acrostic last week: P.C.B.C. prayer- Praise, Confession, Big Picture, and Current Events. Open your Bible and follow in Daniel 9 as we pray together using this means of prayer.

1. PCBC prayer starts with praise: (Daniel 9:4-5)

First we find that Daniel's prayer was rooted in Scripture; it is evident from verses 1-3 that he was reading the Bible. And based on that reading of Jeremiah, he turned to prayer. Daniel began by proclaiming his agreement with truths concerning God's character. Verse 4, "*Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and loving kindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments.*" God is great, awesome, faithful, loving, kind, and discerning. That is a blessing to those that love God and keep His commandments.

As we pray through these times, always begin your prayer time with that wonderful praise. See God for who He is. He isn't a "genie" who is there just to serve us. We need to be humbled and brought to submissive alignment to who God really is. We need to remember God is great, and we are weak. God is mighty and we are needy. Start our prayer times on Sunday morning; even if you are not here, be in prayer with us as the church- before you watch an online message, take five minutes to pray for us as a church. Begin with Praise!

Remember, salvation is the work of God's grace as the Holy Spirit moves on a person's heart and brings conviction of sin and faith in the person and work of Jesus. We are to be about the business of proclaiming the gospel and Christ's kingdom, not selling Jesus. Jesus said that He would build His church. We are

but tools in His hands. We need boldness. We want God's Spirit to work!

And as you pray for me, ask the Lord to make me a man of Holy Spirit-filled prayer! E. M. Bounds said this: *"True ministry is God-touched, God-enabled, and God-made. The Spirit of God is on the preacher in anointing power. The fruit of the Spirit is in his heart. The Spirit of God has vitalized the man and the Word; his preaching gives life, gives life as the spring gives life. His words give life as the resurrection gives life. His sermons give ardent life as the summer gives ardent life. His preaching gives fruitful life as the autumn gives fruitful life. The life-giving preacher is a man of God whose soul is continually following after God. His eyes look only to God; and in him, by the power of God's Spirit, the flesh and the world have been crucified. Only crucified preaching can give life. Crucified preaching can only come from a crucified man."* (Power Through Prayer, pg. 23-24).

We are to do the work of God "not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord of Hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). We must do the Lord's work His way, or in reality we will be doing our own work in the power of our flesh. The first part of doing the Lord's work in the Lord's way is proper prayer which praises Him!

2. PCBC prayer moves to confession: (Daniel 9:5-15)



As we begin to examine Daniel's prayer, we find that the overwhelming element in it was confession. Seventy-two percent of Daniel's prayer is spent in confession. A true heart of prayer is revealed in confession. Confession means to "agree with." This may involve admission of guilt or profession of faith. To confess means you agree with God about both Him and yourself. Confession believes and seeks God because of His character and actions while acknowledging the sorry truth

about your character and actions so that you plead for His mercy, grace and aide. Make sure you spend some time reading 1 John 1:9, *"But if we confess our sins to Him, He can be depended on to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. And it is perfectly proper for God to do this for us because Christ died to wash away our sins"* (The Living Bible). So pray confession for yourself remembering also Psalm 51, *"But I was born a sinner, yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. You deserve honesty from the heart; yes, utter sincerity and truthfulness. Oh, give me this wisdom. Sprinkle me with the cleansing blood and I shall be clean again. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. And after You have punished me, give me back my joy again. Don't keep looking at my sins—erase them from Your sight. Create in me a new, clean heart, O God, filled with clean thoughts and right desires. Don't toss me aside, banished forever from Your presence. Don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me again the joy of Your salvation, and make me willing to obey You. Then I will teach your*

ways to other sinners, and they—guilty like me—will repent and return to You” (vs. 5-13 The Living Bible).

Next, Daniel continued by agreeing with God concerning the sins of his people. We need to learn to confess our country’s sins! We need to confess our Bucks County sins along this 611 corridor. But you may think, why? Because Daniel did even if he wasn’t the actual person from his people who sinned. Watch as Daniel prayed in 9:4-5: *“We have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly, and rebelled, even turning aside from Thy commandments and ordinances. Moreover, we have not listened to Thy servants the prophets, who spoke in Thy name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land.”* He didn’t have to put himself in this. But he did.

Daniel knew well the history of his people and that they missed the goal of being God’s holy people and instead had broken God’s commandments. Jeremiah 25, the section Daniel had been reading, even details some of this with verse 7 stating, “yet you have not listened to Me,” declares the Lord, “in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.” They had practiced evil and rebelled against God in action and attitude. Rebellion in action in that they turned away from God’s commandments. Rebellion in attitude in that they would not listen to the prophets who spoke God’s word to them.

Please note here that Daniel was an upright man. Ezekiel 14:14 places him alongside Noah and Job as righteous men. Yet here we find that Daniel, a righteous man, included himself in this prayer of confession. He does not say “they,” but instead, “we.”

In verses 7 & 8 Daniel continues by confessing that God is just and scattering them throughout the nations. “Righteousness belongs to Thee, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day – to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which Thou hast driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against Thee.” Daniel agreed that God is righteous and Israel deserved shame because of her unfaithfulness to Him. What unfaithful deeds? The worst was their forsaking God to burn incense to other gods as recorded in 2 Chronicles 34:25 as the reason for God’s wrath against them.

In verses 9-15 Daniel confessed that the Lord God had actually been compassionate and forgiving towards them. The people had disobeyed the Lord and rejected following Him, so the Lord had only carried out the consequences He had forewarned them about. *“To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His*

servants the prophets. Indeed all Israel has transgressed Thy law and turned aside, not obeying Thy voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Thy truth. Therefore, the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice. And now, O Lord our God, who has brought Thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and has made a name for Thyself, as it is this day – we have sinned, we have been wicked.”

There are several places in the law of Moses in which God warned the nation about the curses that would come upon them if they rejected and disobeyed Him. The most detailed warning is given in Deuteronomy 28. The curses would start off relatively minor and then steadily increase if the nation continued in its rebellious disobedience to the Lord. The history of the nation shows that God did in sequence exactly what He said He would do concluding with the deportation of the people and the destruction of Jerusalem.

We could summarize this section of Daniel’s prayer saying that he confessed that the Lord God is holy, just and righteous. He had been compassionate and forgiving toward Israel. However, they had sinned greatly against Him in every area, so that the shame that had fallen on them was well deserved, and the Lord was just in keeping His promises concerning the curses that had come upon them.

Daniel’s true heart of prayer is to be recognized by its confession to God. His example shows that the confession of sin will be about both personal sins, and, by identification, also with those within groups to which you belong – your own families, church and nation.

Following Daniel’s example we can cry out concerning our own nation, “*Lord God our Father, You are great and awesome. You are faithful to Your word and never fail Your promises. Father, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly, and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. Father, You are merciful and compassionate. You have extended your mercy and grace to us though we have become wretched. O God in heaven, our hearts have grown cold and we have turned against You. We have abandoned the teachings of your Word and instead teach our children the futile thoughts of men as truth. We pursue pleasure rather than holiness and inequity rather than justice. We have condoned evil calling it good while persecuting those who walk in righteousness. O Lord, You are righteous and just in that we find*

our nation in its current calamity and merciful in that it is not already much worse. Father, even the church which you have called to Yourself to proclaim Your name has grown cold and has left its first love. We have not been effective in reaching our community for Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, for things such as entertainment programs, sports, hobbies, bank accounts, positions of power and creature comforts have become more important to us than serving You with the gifts You have given to us. Father, we have sought to do things by following the wisdom of the world instead of coming to You in humility asking for Your wisdom and doing Your work in Your way. We have not come to You in lowliness of mind being fervent and diligent in prayer. Father, You are just in the current curses on this nation and whatever judgment is still to come.”

That is how the example of Daniel’s prayer could be applied to our nation in confession. However, Daniel did not stop with confession and neither should we in following his example of a true heart of prayer.

3. PCBC prayer brings in the Big Picture: (Daniel 9:16-17)

Daniel began his requests to the Lord in verse 16. *“O Lord, in accordance with all Thy righteous acts, let now Thine anger and Thy wrath turn away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people have become a reproach to all those around us.”*

Notice, that while there is still confession, Daniel started to humbly and earnestly ask a request of God. The next verse reveals the specific request. *“So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Thy servant and to his supplications, and for Thy sake O Lord, let Thy face shine on Thy desolate sanctuary” (vs. 17).* This is a good reminder to pray for the church around the world and in our area during these highly charged political days.

Do you remember that a few months ago, I shared that I felt it was wrong for the governor of California to shut down churches and stop them from worship? Many thought I was being political, but I really was focused on an incident that I felt was specifically different from what we experienced here in Pennsylvania. I don’t care what political tag or party that governor wears, I would have made commentary against any political leader who was going beyond the bounds of Scripture to stop God. I do not believe that our governor here in PA had crossed that line throughout the Covid-19 restrictions and mask mandates. Our governor never flat out attacked and tried to shut churches down like the governor in California did. I have to say, I called it right when I reported that situation. From primary contacts of believers and pastors in the state, I heard stories of churches being targeted. If you read the news, John MacArthur’s church brought forth a statement to the governor that defended the church’s right in Romans 13:1-3 situations to submit to the governing leaders, but

where it tells us to cease and desist, we can't comply.

I am going to include John MacArthur's letter which came from his church stating that they would obey God. (See separate article attached: "Christ, not Caesar, Is Head of the Church.") The church went to the California Supreme Court to fight for all the churches of California to be open and last week they won! Here is the headline from the *California Globe Online*:

California Judge Rules in Favor of Grace Community Church

Pastor John MacArthur and Grace Community Church Win Right to Hold Indoor Worship Services

By Katy Grimes, August 15, 2020 7:46 am

A California superior court ruled in favor of the First Amendment and Pastor John MacArthur and Grace Community Church this week, while smacking down Los Angeles County officials.

The Los Angeles megachurch closed its doors in March because of the coronavirus pandemic. It announced plans to re-open in May, but a federal court upheld the state's ban on indoor services, KTLA reported.

Pastor MacArthur slowly opened back up in July, and offered an outdoor tent for services, until thousands of his parishioners were attending. But LA County tried to enforce a limit of 100 on church service attendees – a tiny fraction of the megachurch congregation. Hours after Grace Community Church filed suit to invalidate Los Angeles County's unconstitutional restrictions on churches, the county filed for a temporary restraining order to force the church to stop holding indoor services and comply with unreasonable and over-broad demands.

Judge James Chalfant denied almost all of the county's requests at the August 14 Los Angeles Superior Court hearing, agreeing with MacArthur and the church that it is the county's burden to show why they should be permitted to infringe on the constitutionally protected rights of churches to freely exercise religion.

Attorneys for Grace Community Church explained that Los Angeles County was being unreasonable in its demands, and offered to have the congregation comply with face mask wearing and social distancing indoors until the matter could be fully heard. This was stipulated as a more reasonable action than that of the county's rush to shut down church services. The judge agreed and set the full hearing for September 4, 2020, ordering the church to have congregants wear masks and social distance between family groups indoors.

"I am very grateful the court has allowed us to meet inside and we are happy for a few weeks to comply and respect what the judge has asked of us because he is allowing us to meet," MacArthur said. "This vindicates our desire to stay open and serve our people. This also gives us an opportunity to show that we are not trying to be rebellious or unreasonable, but that we will stand firm to protect our church against unreasonable, unconstitutional restrictions."

“This is a huge vindication for Pastor John and the Board of elders at Grace Community Church, who have simply asked for their right to worship the Lord together in church to be acknowledged and protected,” Attorney Jenna Ellis said.

“This result is indeed a great victory for all citizens’ constitutional right to freedom of religion,” LiMandri said. “This result makes it possible for the thousands of congregants of Grace to continue to gather together in their church to worship, while at the same time honoring the court’s requirement that reasonable and temporary safety measures be observed.”

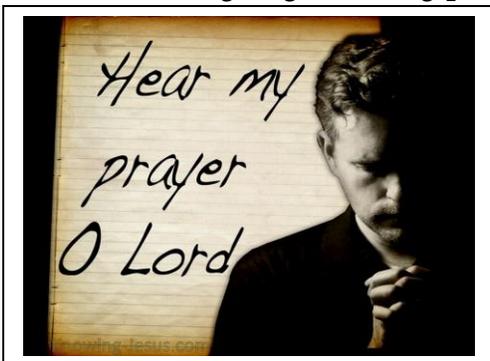
This is why we should pray for the workings of the Big Picture of what God is doing during these times. How many of us would have known that this was the case for churches in California?

Now, one last acrostic letter, “C.”

4. PCBC prayer brings in the Current Events: (Daniel 9:18-19)

Daniel wanted God to restore the temple in Jerusalem which had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and left desolate. Daniel’s request was not for himself. Daniel was now very old and would not see a rebuilt Temple even if it was started that day. His request was for “Thy sake O Lord.” This became even clearer in verse 18, *“O my God, incline Thine ear and hear! Open Thine eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Thy name; for we are not presenting our supplications before Thee on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Thy great compassion.”*

Daniel plainly recognized that there was nothing that he or anyone else could do that would give merit or make worthy this request. The request then was not for the glory of the nation of Israel. The request must rest totally on God’s compassion. But then, God’s compassion is a great place to put your confidence. The section of this prayer in verse 19 reveals Daniel’s great passion and his intensity. Look at this prayer in verse 19, *“O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Thine own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.”*



I want to give an example of current events answer to prayer because of people calling out for God to hear. When the churches were told to shut, the military also did the same thing. Gregory was leading all the Marine Boot camp

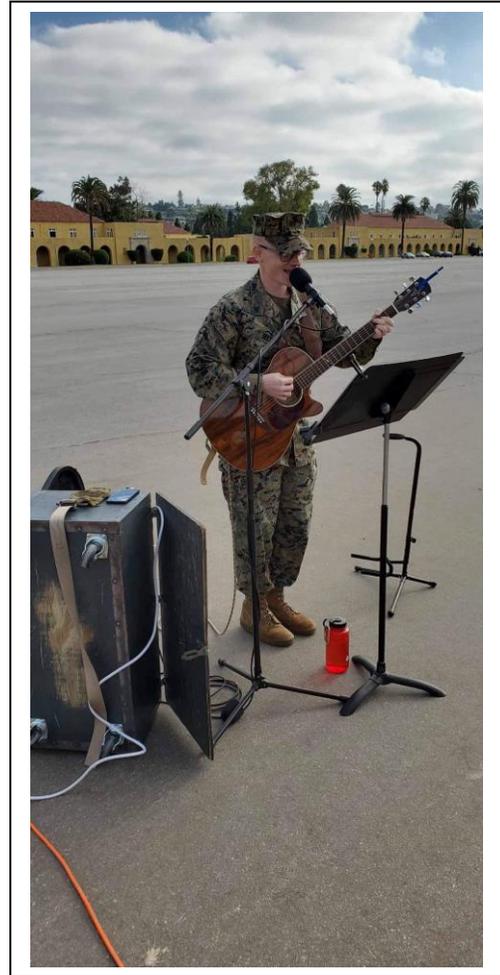
worship for all the Protestant and Catholic services. He was told that all the services were shut down. Guess what? Here is a picture of Gregory leading the services this last Sunday outside on the parade grounds because they are allowed to reopen services in California. (Photo included below).

That is why we need to stop getting angry and frustrated with the current events and start battling with the enemy on our knees. Stop sending our “petty grievances and quarreling” across our personal Facebook pages, and start getting on our knees for prayer! Will you do that?

Daniel’s passion was that the Lord God be glorified. The temple and the nation of Israel were called the people of God. Daniel was requesting that God glorify Himself by restoring the temple and His people again. Daniel could be confident in the prayer because it was based on what God had already revealed in Scripture.

We can pray in a similar way. America is neither God’s chosen people nor do we have any promise by Him that this land belongs to us and our descendants in perpetuity. However, we can call upon God in humility and beg for His mercy for our nation, and more specifically, His hand on His people that are in this nation.

Such a prayer for this nation would be something like this: *“O Lord God, our heavenly Father, in accordance with Your righteousness, though we have sinned against You, we, in humility come to You with our request. We recognize our poverty of spirit – that we can do nothing on our own, but only as You see fit to use us for Your glory can we accomplish anything. Father, we ask You to listen to our supplication and that You glorify yourself in this nation and in these people. We do not request this for glory or prominence that might be given to this nation or to any person, but rather we desire that Your name would be glorified in and by this nation once again has it has in the past. Stir up Your people that belong to Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Prod them to holiness. Spur them to righteous living. Embolden them to openly proclaim You and Your gospel to all. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! Father send a revival that will shake this nation from coast to coast. For Thine own sake, O my God, do not delay, that Your name may be glorified.”*



Daniel's prayer is an example of a true heart of prayer because it was rooted in Scripture, was revealed in confession and responded in supplication. In God's mercy and grace, it also received answers. God's answers to prayer come in His timing. In Daniel's case, God granted the answer quickly as recorded in verses 20-23: *"Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. And he gave me instruction and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision."*

God dispatched the angel Gabriel to go to Daniel and gave him an answer to his supplication. While we cannot nor should we expect such angelic answers to our supplications, for even Daniel, a man of extraordinary righteousness, only had a few such open and obvious encounters with angels. However, we can expect that God will answer our prayers that are in accordance with His will. 1 John 5:14-15 tell us, "And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him."

There are three reasons for unanswered prayer. James 4:2-3 explains two of them. ". . . *You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.*" Do not expect an answer to a prayer you have not prayed, and don't expect to receive what you want when that request is generated out of your own selfish desire and not according to His will. The third reason is simply that we do not want to acknowledge an answer from God that is "no" or "wait."

Daniel's example is that prayer that is rooted in Scripture, revealed in confession and responded with supplication will receive an answer. How does your prayer life compare with Daniel's? Are you mindful to be reading and studying the Scriptures for yourself? Are you stimulated to pray by the Bible with a Biblical mindset? Are your prayers marked by confession which includes both adoration of and declaring the attributes and actions of God along with your humble admission of your sins? Do you at times confess the sins of the groups to which you belong and then intercede for them? David's confession in Psalm 51 is another good example of this. Do you come to God with your requests in humility or are your supplications closer to a wish list for Santa Claus or even demands of what you want God to do? True prayer, proper prayer, receives an answer because it is humble and according to God's will. My prayer is that all of us will receive answers from God as He moves mightily

among us to accomplish His will through us who are His humble servants as was Daniel. Please start the basics of prayer using the P.C.B.C. model: praise, confession, big picture, and current events. Let's see God work in prayer!

Pray with me,

“Father, hear our prayers! Jesus, hear our prayers, Holy Spirit, make us and fill us as a people of prayer here at PCBC! Make us more like Christ! We beg in prayer, Amen”

**Daring to be a Daniel in prayer,
Pastor Corvin <><**

Quote: When the wife of missionary Adoniram Judson told him that a newspaper article likened him to some of the apostles, Judson replied, "I do not want to be like a Paul...or any mere man. I want to be like Christ...I want to follow Him only, copy His teachings, drink in His Spirit, and place my feet in His footprints...Oh, to be more like Christ!"

