

Announcements & Prayer Requests

- Perez family in Nashville
- Let's keep the following in our prayers:
 - Bernida Wolfe's father, Bobby Husband, passed away yesterday. Please pray for her and her family.
 - John Wolfe: Early lung cancer diagnosis
 - Kim Self: Stomach ulcers and weekly Chemo treatments
 - Angie Self: Arthritis and Parkinson's
 - Joann Larkin: Advanced dementia
 - Barb Agee's son (James)
 - Rick Parks' parents: Roy has prostate cancer; Helen has dementia
 - Jimmy Woodall's sister: Cancer
 - Dorothy Macon, Sandra Perez's grandmother: Dementia
 - Frank Wineinger, Sandra Perez's uncle: Stage 4 cancer

THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION

- Hear Gospel – Rom. 10:17; Acts 8:30-31
- Believe – Heb. 11:6; Mk. 16:16
- Repent of & Turn from Sins – Acts 2:38; 17:30
- Confess our Faith – Rom. 10:10; Mt. 10:32
- Baptism – Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Live Faithfully – Rev. 2:10

Let us draw near with a **true heart in full assurance of faith [Believe]**, having our **hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience [Repent]** and our **bodies washed with pure water [Baptism]**. Let us **hold fast the confession [Confess]** of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to **stir up love and good works**, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but **exhorting one another**, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. – *Heb. 10:22-25*



CHURCH OF CHRIST

Invitation

'Therefore, go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' – Mt. 22:9

Address

5080 Highway 70 East
Rockwood, TN 37854

Assembly Times

Sunday Bible Study – 10:00 AM
Sunday Worship – 11:00 AM

Please text/email any announcements, questions, or concerns to Bill Fix, (865) 934-9239 or fix.bill@gmail.com

www.hwy70church.com

December 20, 2020

We extend a warm welcome to all our visitors and members. If you have any questions or need any assistance, please let one of us know.

Adult Bible Class – Eph. 5:26ff
Sermon Topic – The Model Church?

Memory verse:

And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." – *Lk. 19:5*

Lord, Teach Us to Pray

By J. W. McGarvey (CHAPEL TALKS, 1956)

There is a considerable amount of time devoted to teaching young ministers how to preach, but comparatively little in teaching them how to pray. There is a common impression that prayer is not a subject for instruction—that all one needs is to be filled with warm emotions, and then let the tongue loose and let it run at random. The result of this is, that there is a great deal of praying done which reaches higher than the ceiling, and a great deal that does not reach that high. It is a waste of breath.

Such was not the conception of Jesus and the apostles. We find the apostles coming to Jesus once, after he had concluded a season of prayer and saying to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples" (Lk. 11:1). This shows that John the Baptist had made prayer a subject of instruction to his disciples. The twelve remembered, doubtless, what John had taught; and not only so, but they remembered what Jesus himself also had taught in the sermon on the mount, that instructive passage in Matthew 6. They knew what John had taught them and they knew the main lesson on the subject which their own master had given; why were they not content with these? Why did they still come to the Master and request him, "Lord, teach us to pray"?

I do not know why, unless it was from the fact that they observed him devoting more time to prayer than they did, or even than did the hypocrites who stood on the corners of the streets with uplifted hands to pray, and stood in the synagogue to pray while others were seated. They had known him to retire into a mountain alone and pray there all night; and there was not one of them that could do that. On one occasion, you remember, three of them went up into a high mountain with him to pray, and while he continued praying, they fell asleep. And later, while he was praying in the terrible agonies of Gethsemane, the same three were there and fell asleep, and he woke them up three times. It was impossible for them, and I presume to say it has been impossible since, for any man to pray all night. Evidently the disciples thought that there was a secret in prayer which he had not revealed to them and that he could teach them what it was, so that they could pray as long as he did. What an earnest desire on their part is manifested in this request!

They were doubtless very much surprised at his answer. He simply repeated to them that little prayer which he had taught them at the Sermon on the Mount, commonly called the Lord's prayer, adding to it, however, a parable teaching that they should be persistent in prayer and never cease asking until they had obtained. They must be like the man who came to a neighbor at midnight, aroused him, and begged him to give him three loaves of bread, as company had come in and he had no bread to set before them. The neighbor answered, I am in bed with my children and cannot get up to give it to you. But the other continued importuning him, until at last he arose and gave him all he wished. He did not

give them any new secret of prayer by which they could pray a long time, but only that they should be persistent in prayer.

If you examine all the instruction that you will find directly and indirectly given, you will find that Jesus never taught the disciples prayers, although he prayed a long time himself. He never taught his own example in this. There was a secret in his mind and heart which they did not possess and which we do not possess, that made it peculiar to him to remain long in prayer. When we remember who he was and whom he addressed, we sometimes wonder that he ever prayed at all. We have two prayers on record which he taught. One I have already referred to, called the Lord's prayer. Have you ever observed how brief that prayer is in point of time of delivery? Less than one-half minute. Now think of that. If you test what is called the intercessory prayer in the fifteenth chapter of John, which is his longest prayer on record, you will find that you can read it deliberately in three minutes. The apostle Paul quotes in various epistles quite a number of prayers that he made for churches and individuals. The longest of them is the one in Ephesians 3, and that can be read very deliberately in less than one and one-half minutes.

What a rebuke, now, this is to the long prayers that we have sometimes heard in the pulpit, and the stories that we have read about the number of hours every day noble men of whom we read felt compelled to spend in prayer. There is a story told about James, the Lord's brother, that he spent so much time on his knees praying that the skin and flesh became thick and hardened like the knees of a camel. James had too much respect for the teaching of his master to do a thing of that sort. This is a tale gotten up by the monks of the dark ages—a result of their own superstitious practice. I have sometimes gotten so weary in listening to a long prayer in church that I have been tempted to take my seat before it was finished; and I think it would be a good lesson to some long-winded preacher to open his eyes and see the whole congregation sitting reading their hymnals because they got so worn out listening to his long prayer.

What is the reason for public prayer in an assembly? Is it not for edification and for the worship of God? It is not for the preacher to express his individual desires, but it is for the edification of the church, and it should be something in which all the audience can unite with him. And if he continues until their knees begin to tremble and their minds begin to wander, there is no edification. On the contrary, they are liable to forget before the end of the long thing, anything edifying that had been said at the beginning. Whenever the audience begins to wish that the man leading in prayer would stop, he has already gone farther than he ought. I think this habit grew out of the idea, that when we get up in church to pray, we ought to pray for everybody and everything. It is true that some preachers try to cut that short by asking the Lord to "bless all for whom it is our duty or privilege to pray," but it is better to remember that if the Lord permits you to live you will have a chance to pray again next Sunday. And if you can pray for some of the people and the good things today, then if you live until the next week, you may go the rounds; and if you don't live, somebody else may take it up in your place.