



February 2006

The Word of God **NEWSLETTER**

an
ecumenical
charismatic
missionary
Christian
Community

Jesus, how should we pray?

Importance of Importunity

By Phil Tiews

¹Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

²He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. ³And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

⁴"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"

⁶And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.

However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:1-8

I'm not sure this is most folk's favorite saying of Jesus. Personally I prefer, 'You may ask me for anything in my name, and — BAM — I will do it.' (Jn 14:14 - sound effects supplied by me!) By fallen nature we long for instant gratification and our culture reinforces this at every turn. Even in the passage from Luke, Jesus says that God 'will see that they get justice, and quickly.' And

yet that is the punch line for a parable which he tells 'to show them that they should always pray and not give up'!

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Persevering prayer for Unity, Racial Reconciliation, Life, and Transformation



There were not many, but how many does it take for God to hear? 100 Christians from across the County gathered on January 17th for the annual Concert of Prayer that commemorates Christian Unity week, Martin Luther King's birthday, the Roe v Wade anniversary, and the need for God to bring transformation to answer these areas! For many years now St. Luke Lutheran (this year's host), the Bible Church, St. Thomas Catholic and PACT have co-sponsored this call to prayer. Folks from The Word of God have been instrumental in making the opportunity possible — and in coming out to pray.

Does God hear? This year we learned that just a few days earlier the abortion clinic on Packard closed down. An answer to the prayer of this gathering and many other Christians in the County. 'Pray and do not give up'

INSIDE

Pray & Don't
Give up

Concert of Prayer

Walk in the Spirit

And More ...

...God wants results, too. And He will have them ...

The widow in the story is sometimes described as 'importune'. That is an old fashioned word which means to ask insistently and repeatedly, or as the judge says, 'to wear me out with her coming'.

What is the mathematics of prayer?

In Matthew 18 Jesus tells his disciples that 'if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.' (Mt 18:19) In 2 Chron 7:14 God tells us, 'if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.' So which is it? Just 2 of us or do we have to get the whole people to pray? So how long is it? Ask and it is done or pray and never give up?

I want to know the formula because I want results, and I want them with the least investment possible! (Feel free to join in on True Confessions whenever you like!) I like to find a bargain at the store or on the internet or at a garage sale — the thing I really wanted for less than I thought I would have to pay for it. The same is true when it comes to prayer. I want to see results, but I don't want to have to pay more than absolutely necessary. How about just finding one other person and we take a moment and ask in Jesus' name? Done!

Wanting what God wants

God wants results, too. And He will have them, even 'quickly'. My problem is that God looks for different results than I do. I want health, provision, someone's problems solved, a successful event, lots of people to respond, and on and on. God wants people — people who are conformed to His Son, prepared as His Bride, united with Him forever. This beautiful world, which He made and considers good, and everything about it, which so dominate our thoughts, is a tool and a workshop for achieving His goals. He is going to toss it away eventually and provide a new one. People are the only part of it made to last forever, and we are the object of His heart and His works.

I am tempted to look at prayer as a way to get a little supernatural help to deal with the things which press on me or which I desire. For God, prayer is a way to work out His purpose of conforming me to, preparing me for, uniting me with His Son. In the process of praying He changes my heart to be like His, He aligns my life with His purposes, He brings me to look at His face and not just the works of His hands, He reveals His power, and so much more.

More love, more power

I am convinced that God wants us to walk in a lot more power and to see a lot more 'signs and wonders' than we do now. This is simply because He intends the Body

of Christ on the earth to more faithfully manifest the life and ministry of Christ! He is the King and brings His reign, and when He does things happen! I am also convinced that He is committed to His purposes IN us, as well as THROUGH us. So, sometimes we will see immediate answers to prayer, sometimes we will have to persevere, sometimes He will heed the cry of 2 or 3, sometimes He will wait until many hearts are united.

What, then, should we do? Pray, and then pray some more! Pray with our faces turned toward Him and our ears open to His voice. Pray for the things on His heart and which He has placed on ours. Pray with warring and as well as waiting. And this advice coming from someone who struggles to pray!

It is becoming increasingly obvious to me that 'apart from Jesus we can do nothing', but also that He wants us to do lots! The key to community health and fruitfulness—prayer. The key to ongoing effective NextGeneration outreach—prayer. The key to Christian unity and transformation in the County—prayer. The key to our conformation to Christ and entering into Bridal partnership with Him—you guessed it — prayer. Not prayer as a technique but as living connection to the living God. Jesus wants to us 'pray and never give up' so that we see His kingdom come quickly.

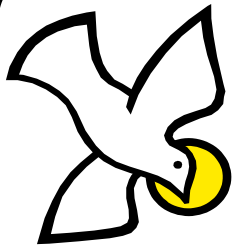
Importunity is important! ■

Partnership with MissionChrist and Mission Christ Outreach



On January 22nd we took a step to deepen the partnership in the Gospel between The Word of God and our outreaches to High School and College aged folks when young folks from MissionChrist and MCO joined us to share how God is working with them. Afterward we prayed together with each one of them. They are on the frontlines of clash of kingdoms and are serious about reaching their generation with the good news of Jesus. Brothers and sisters from the community, most of whom experienced God breaking in on them at about the same time in life experienced a strong call to partnership in prayer.

What was it like? One young sister summed it up—pretty cool!



Walk in the Spirit Workshop

February 2006

Not just talks but interactive sessions, growth assignments, and prayer

Topics (Subject to the leading of the Spirit!)

- **2/2:** *Knowing that I know that I know the love of God!* — Steve Thomashefski
- **2/9:** *Not the same old, same old everyday life* — Dave Mangan
- **2/16:** *Holy Spirit, guide to personal prayer* — Martha Balmer
- **2/23:** *Doing what the Spirit is doing* — Carol Kean

**Held at The Word of God Meeting Room—230 Collingwood, Ste. 160B, Ann Arbor
7:30—9:00 pm**

Refreshments after the sessions

Our goal is not just to HEAR about walking in the Spirit but to actually GROW in walking in the Spirit! Each session will involve interaction with other participants, prayer, and an assignment to carry out in the week between times. We're not talking about just looking up some Bible passages but things like—ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to 3 people to minister to this week and direct you in how to do it, then come back and tell us how it went! Now this is going to be fun!



Life in the Spirit Seminar

Who do you know who is opening up to the Lord or who is hungry for more of the Spirit in their life? This is their opportunity to 'draw near to God and He will draw near to you'!

- **Week 1, March 9** 6:30—9:00 pm
- **Week 2, March 16** 6:30—9:00 pm
- **Week 3, March 23** 6:30—9:00 pm
- **Week 4, March 30** 6:30—9:00 pm

Light supper & Seminar each night

Held at: The Word of God Office

230 Collingwood, Suite 160B, Ann Arbor

Call 994-3243 for Information & to let us know you are coming

Join us and bring a friend who is seeking the Lord!

Women's Breakfast

Saturday, February 11th
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
at Community Meeting Room

Begin your Saturday morning with other sisters.

Speaker: Marsha Williamson

Join us in February

- 2/5** Prayer Meeting, 4:30–6:00 pm
Washtenaw Community Coll
Morris Lawrence Bldg.
- 2/11** Women's Breakfast 9:00–10:30
Community Meeting Room
230 Collingwood
- 2/19** Prayer Meeting, 4:30–6:00 pm
Covenant Presbyterian Church
5171 Jackson Road

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