

## **PRAYER: OUR VIEW OF THINGS**

I received an e-mail today from a friend who I have been agreeing with in prayer over several people, that our Heavenly Father would meet their various needs. Being a child of God, a minister for over fifty years and seeing The Lord Jesus perform many miracles and answers to Believer's prayer I am very definitely a man of Faith and believer as Jesus said, "that with God all things are possible."

I also, believe as He said, "that men ought always to pray and not to faint", that we should hang in there with our praying and not give up until the situation is changed or that the Lord answers our prayers in another way. I believe that as a loving, caring, Heavenly Father, He is concerned about all matters that concern us. I also know that He does not always answer our prayers in the way or manner we want or expect Him to and that we **ABSOLUTELY MUST ALWAYS TRUST HIM IN ALL MATTERS**. Especially is this true when the answer never comes, is slow in coming, is no, or is answered in some other manner than what we expected.

The e-mail that I refer to above is from the mother of a little baby girl, named Faith. Her future does not look good because she has a physical condition known as SMA. You can Google that if you like to find out the meaning. Time and space will not allow it at this time. Let me just say that most infants with this condition do not live very long. Three - five years and most die within just a short time after birth.

We are joining in prayer with this mother that her precious little girl will be healed, completely restored and be able to function as a normal person for the rest of her life. While I know that God can do this, I found myself wondering what was His perfect will in this little one's life.

He could heal her completely, allow her to live out her life in her condition, take her home to be with him or allow some scientific medical breakthrough that would allow her to live a partially handicapped life.....???? What is best for her and what is acceptable to her parents?

Really do we even have a choice in this matter? Isn't it after all in God's hands? And will all be satisfied with what HE does?

The following is this wonderful mother's response to this situation. I want us all to get the full realization of what she is going through because

most of us have never been in this situation before and will find it impossible to feel and think as she does under such stress. Here are her written words; ..... today I was faced with a situation that I was certain I wouldn't be until Faith is 3 or 4 maybe. After completing our morning routine of getting her curls perfect, outfit picked to perfection, and yummy pancakes made, I was holding Faith when she said, "Walk, Momma, walk!" I then responded, "You want to take dogs on walk?" To her reply, "No Mama, I walk! NOW!" Now I've experienced MANY emotions since I gave birth to this little girl, but nothing like I felt when she said those words I've dreaded for so long. I felt like my heart was being ripped out of my chest and trampled on. It absolutely took my breath away! I just tried to ignore her and get her attention with "Yo Gabba Gabba," but she kept saying, "Momma I walk!" I then placed her feet on the floor and we "pretended" to walk, but she kept saying "NO" and pushing my hands away! I then put her to the floor where she was trying to get up, but of course, she doesn't have the leg strength to do so. I absolutely for the first time in my life was speechless. No, I didn't cry because I don't ever want her think I'm disappointed with how God chose to make her, but I sure wanted to. Such a helpless feeling. For a mommy that's a "fixer," it's absolutely the worst feeling ever knowing this is something I can't fix. What do the rest of you tell your children that are facing adversity and there's nothing you can do to fix - even things like not making cheerleader or making the football team or getting your heart broken for the first time?? Please share..... I then watched her look at me and say, "Momma help! WALK, WALK!" I just picked her up and hugged her forever and told her how very perfect she was, and that I pray every day that God will allow her to walk. It's times like these when I am reminded of a scripture or a quote from a song and believe me, these things never just "came to me" before Faith's diagnosis. I was reminded to "consider it pure joy when facing trials as it builds character." (not sure of where this comes from) Then driving around this afternoon I heard the perfect verse from a Christian song as I drove alone and thought about the morning's events:

I will praise YOU in this storm - and I will lift my hands  
For You are who You are - no matter where I am  
And every tear I cry - You hold in your hands  
You never left my side - And though my heart is torn  
I will praise You in this storm. (Casting Crowns)

I immediately began to praise HIM! Thank you God that she can sit up. Thank you God that she can roll over. Thank you God that she can laugh. Thank you God that she can talk. Thank you God that she acted like a crazy girl with her steroids. Thank you God that she makes my heart feel things it's never felt before. Thank you God that she calls my name when she's sad. Thank you God that you created her the way you did - fearfully & wonderfully made. Thank you God that she throws her food to the floor after a zillion times of being told NO. She may be different in society's eyes, but she is PERFECT - FLAWLESS and I will give HIM thanks for everyday I have with her - no matter what. I've seen many children of SMA that have lost their battle over the last few weeks, so I am counting my blessings and praying for those who would give anything to

have their babies back - walking or not. Thank you, Lord, for daily reminders of how blessed we are to be the parents of Faith! Until there is a cure, I will PRAISE YOU IN THIS STORM!"

We lost one of our Grandsons a couple of years ago. Jacob. He was twenty-nine years old. He was more like a son to us. He lived with us a couple of years and visited us often. We were involved with him in many of his affairs of life just as if he were our very own son. Due to his many health problems with Addison's disease, we walked with him through his brief and mostly miserable life. We experienced all his concerns, frustrations and disappointments, with doctors, medicines, drugs, treatments, marriage, becoming husband and a father, getting jobs, attending college and just life in general. We provided a lot of counseling, many prayers, heartaches and tears and then we finally lost him.

He was a Christian. He experienced God's call into the ministry and was involved in the ministry for a couple of years. But he was in a storm most of his life. He called us one day when he was really going through a down time and had us listen to a song that had really brought him to his knees. He told us that through this song God had blessed him with an awesome experience of His presence and filled him with His peace. His younger brother sang this song after his funeral and while he was singing it there were loud claps of thunder that shook our building. The song ..... "I Will Praise You in the Storm" by Casting Crowns. Some of the lyrics written above by little Faith's precious mother. Jacob is with the Lord Jesus now and we will see him again, Praise God! Even as much as we loved him I am not sure that if we had known what his life on this planet would be like that we would have wanted him to live when he was a child.

Yet even that is not our call, it is God's. Everything is in His hands and we must trust Him in all our circumstances of life that He knows best and loves us more than we can imagine. You see, God's view or perspective of things is vastly different from ours. He is all wise, loving and knowing and does things according to each precious one's best interest. He can see into the future and knows what is best for each one of us. Generally speaking most of our view of circumstances and things in life are from our perspective and are expressed in prayer from our slanted, personal and often desperate points of view.

His Word teaches us that, "we have not because we ask not." It also says that, "we ask and receive not because we ask amiss." In my humble

opinion, the most powerful prayer in the Bible was prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed in great agony for the cup that He was about to receive from His Father's hands to pass from Him and He would not have to drink it. But then He said, "never the less not my will but your will be done." We need to remember that all our request should be "with supplication and thanksgiving", knowing that our loving Father will always answer and in a way that is best for us and for those for whom we pray.

We also learn from His Word that many of His saints did not receive from Him what they asked for. Moses for one and the great Apostle Paul for another. God told Moses to "speak no more to me of this matter" and He told Paul in essence that He would not remove the thorn from him because His grace was sufficient for him.

I have made the above statements not to discourage us from prayer, for Our Father wants us to pray, Jesus taught His disciples to pray and the Holy Spirit within believers cries out in prayer for us. But we need to know at least two things when we pray. One, what does the Word of God say about what His will is in this matter. Two, does His Spirit within us confirm or disaffirm what we want to pray for. Does the Holy Spirit within bear witness about how we are to pray about a particular situation or matter. In short, we need to know how to pray and what to pray for in every prayer situation.

If we do not know specifically what to pray and how to pray about someone or something, then we need to ask the Lord Jesus to reveal to us how to pray about this particular need or situation. We also need to allow the Holy Spirit to pray within and through us as He makes intercessions for us when we do not know how to pray as we ought. It would be well if the Spirit of God would reveal to us what we are praying about so that we can also pray with the Spirit and with our understanding.

God's word to Abraham was that he would have a son and his seed would be as the stars in the universe, without number. He waited for a number of years and then tried to help God out by having a child with Hagar. This of course was not God's answer to Abraham's prayer. Only after Abraham and Sarah were too old to have a child, did God provide Isaac in a miraculous manner. During those years of waiting for an answer Abraham's faith was seriously tried. Would he believe God or not?

In the New Testament Abraham is called the 'father of our faith' and the example of faith by how he continued in faith even when there was no longer any hope. In fact, it was impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have a child naturally. They both were beyond the biological capabilities of producing a child. In the book of Romans, chapter four, we are told that Abraham absolutely refused to consider their circumstances of the deadness of Sarah's womb and that of his own body now dead, but was strong in the faith giving glory to God that what He had promised, He was also able to perform or accomplish.

What is the point to this article? Our God is a good God, a Great God , a mighty, awesome God. He answers many of our prayers. Perhaps even most of them, but He doesn't have to. When he doesn't answer our prayers or He does answer our prayers but not in accordance to our will but His, we still need to praise Him, trust Him and worship Him because of Who He is. He is God. He knows Best about all things and everything. Who are we to attempt to try to tell Him what to do and when and how to do anything.

Do we trust Him like this? Can we pray with an open heart: not my will but your will be done in all matters that concern us and our loved ones? Can we Praise Him IN the Storm?