

Pray, "Our Father"

Volume IV, Number 1

January/February 1991

Letter

Enjoying prayer's results

Dear Friends,

In October of last year we began a series on the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. The idea was to deepen our prayer life and hope for a deeper spiritual dynamic in the church.

I don't know if we can make a direct correlation, but it seems as if we have entered this year with a new anointing and dynamic.

Most important, it seems as though some of the older members are "coming forward and finding their part in God." Ron Schwartz is giving direction to the Children's Church, Jimmy is covering the Sunday teaching program for the younger kids, Larry is taking on more pastoral responsibility, Gregg is continuing to keep the finances in order, Brenda is opening her house to college students on Wednesdays for supper and running a Bible study in the dorm, Catherine has installed a revolving door for all the people going through her house these days, Laura is coordinating our medical missions, we have a whole staff of teachers for the children, and people with the special gift of servanthood are bearing the load in all kinds of unassuming manners.

In addition to the maturing of the saints, we have been blessed by the addition of a whole new slew of people coming to the church. We have been blessed with some really neat families and singles who have a sincere heart after God. It is as though the Lord is drawing people who have a true hunger for Him.

In the midst of all this bustle, it would be easy for us to forget the root of all of this activity, our relationship to Him in prayer and the word.

I am dedicating space in the Pastor's Brief for the rest of the year to review the teaching we have just finished on prayer. Each issue we plan to cover a different teaching on the "Disciples' Prayer." This month we cover, "Our Father."

You will find many activities and things happening in each issue of the Brief. If the activities we are involved in ever become self-perpetuating and without the need of prayer, it is time to end those activities.

Pray that we would continue to pray.

Bless you,

Billy

In this issue:

Singles issues Pg. 2

Marrying strangers
What's the Christian
way?

Building Vision Pg. 3

Reaching internationals
Pray for missions

Teaching Pgs. 4-5

Pray, "Our Father"

Family Pg. 6

Women at work
Guarding our women
The home as
control central

Worship briefs Pg. 7

His praise shall be
in my mouth
Thankful for little things

Fellowship briefs Pg. 8

Pastor's Brief

This newsletter is produced by Billy Henderson, Claude Hammond and Sandy Wieck for members and friends of LCF. It is intended to clarify the vision of this church, as well as encourage and instruct.

SINGLE'S ISSUES

Marrying strangers

One of my great battles in premarital counseling is to convince the couple of their differences and the potential problems they will cause. Most young couples don't want to hear it.

From experience with many marriages, I know that one day they will "wake up" and realize that even the best of friends will have to work through some things.

I was encouraged when I read the following article in the "Focus on the Family Bulletin", February 1991.

"Among the destructive customs of marriage is for young men and women to marry virtual strangers! Sure, a typical couple will talk for countless hours during the courtship period. But their dating relationship is designed to conceal, not reveal. Each partner puts his or her best foot forward, hiding embarrassing facts, habits, flaws, and temperaments. Consequently, the bride and groom enter into marriage with an array of private and usually wrong assumptions about how life will be lived after the wedding.

That's why premarital counseling is strongly urged. Each engaged couple, even those who seem perfectly suited for one another, should participate in at least six to ten sessions with someone who is trained to help them prepare for marriage. The primary purpose of these encounters is to identify the assumptions each partner holds and to work through the areas of potential conflict.

So, if you're planning a June wedding, it's not too late to arrange premarital counseling."

Planning to get married

What's the Christian way?

If you were a Hindu, your parents would have your marriage arranged already according to cast and family friendships. These kind of marriages work.

If you were in certain island cultures, you would be able to buy a wife (or be sold).

In America, anything goes.

So what is the Christian way to get married?

Who knows?

As we grow in our understanding of what makes for a good relationship in marriage, we can continue to modify the way we approach courtship and marriage. Always, we must look to the Bible to find principles laid down by our heavenly Bridegroom.

Lexington Christian Fellowship has established some guidelines to help single people approach marriage with some sanity. These are not rules, they are not mandatory. However, we believe they reflect some Biblical principles which will help produce successful marriages.

1. New Christians probably have some worldly ideas about dating and marriage. They need a few months (6-12) to chill out and learn some Christian principles before even considering a serious relationship.

2. Approaching a dating relationship should not be done in isolation. Having a home group leader or his wife in on the beginnings will make for better endings.

3. If you are seriously considering marriage:

*talk to your parents before engagement

*talk to your pastor first

*spend some time in prayer and fasting

4. We will not marry anyone without six months premarital counseling (This is about the only hard and fast rule).

5. We ask that you do not make your engagement public until after 2 months of counseling (This avoids embarrassment, hurt, and confusion if the engagement is ended).

6. The first couple of counseling appointments are geared to help you determine if you are ready for engagement and marriage.

A Touch of Grace

Flowers and gifts for any occasion.

NEW NUMBER (800) 264-1832

Any time you need to send flowers, remember Kyra at A Touch of Grace. She is always able to help in making decisions and always delivers with a blessing -- Billy

MISSIONS

World outreach

Reaching internationals at UK

"And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." (Numbers 19:33-34)

Last year, Joe Howard stopped by the church on a Sunday night to share with us about reaching international students at the University of Kentucky. As a result, several families from the church applied to be host families.

The Greers ended up with a family from Malaysia who, in Judy's words, "became a part of our extended family. Shirley, the wife, and I went shopping together every week and they ate a lot of meals with us. It was a great opportunity for the kids to be exposed to another culture."

After a short while Shirley and Alex moved to Calgary, and the Greers got a new student to host, Mr. Liu, from China. This week, they are adding on two other men from Malaysia. Judy says, "The kids especially enjoy our guest students."

On another front, Jimmy Leitsch has a man from China, Jing, who lives with him and works as his attendant. Jimmy counts Jing as one of his best friends.

Several other families are developing friendships with internationals, including the Hendersons and Starns.

Joe Howard continues to be overwhelmed with the opportunities to reach out to internationals. Each Friday about 20 internationals gather for a Bible study at Joe's house. Most of these are from mainland China and have never read the Bible.

I asked Joe to highlight some of the other ways he has been reaching out to these internationals...

"I opened my home for Thanksgiving this year and had over 40 internationals show up for dinner. After dinner, I took the opportunity to share the origins of the Holiday with them.

Also, when new students showed up this year, I offered a shopping tour through the International Hospitality Program. We rented a van and had students from Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, China and India.

Over Christmas break, we took three of our Chinese friends to Orlando for a week and visited Disney World and Kennedy Space Center. This was a special time together.

Most of all, I am amazed that every week a room full of PhD's gather and I share with them about God and the creation of the world. It is a whole new experience to share with people who have never heard anything about Jesus and the Bible."

According to Joe, there are about 1,000 internationals at UK and the number grows by about 150 each year.

If you have any questions about ministry to internationals, call Joe at 266-5267 or 277-9188.

Pray for:

The University of Kentucky

Our outreach to University students has always been one of our primary missions. God has sovereignly placed and trained us to reach students.

Especially pray for the 25 or so students and singles who make up University Christian Fellowship. We believe God is preparing them to extend the Kingdom in a significant way on the campus.

Pray for Jimmy as he gives leadership to the group.

Also pray for wisdom in training up students to serve the outreach in years to come.

Pray for wisdom in reaching new students.

Pray for international students.

Mexican missions

Our primary mission outside of the United States is in serving Pedro Basilio. We are continuing to establish our support to and relationship with Pedro.

Pray for the medical mission in March. It is our first and we need it to go smoothly. We will need about \$2,000.00 to pay for medicines which were not donated. We also need the Spirit of God to move as we minister in the mountains.

Pray for finances for Pedro's house, and the new builder we have hired to finish it.

Pray for the churches in Tepango and San Martin.

Pray for the Bible Study in Ayutla.

Pray for the Evangelistic outreach in May. Several other churches are interested in getting to know the work.

Also, pray for Sebastian Vasquez.

The Ukranian Families

Remember the Ukranian families who have relocated to Lexington.

Pray that they find jobs

Pray that they find true friends.

For more info. call Curt, 276-1196.

When you pray

Pray, "Our Father"

When Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, He began by teaching them their relationship to God.

Much of our praying today could be improved if we would only learn the first lesson of prayer -- it is a relationship between a child and a Father.

For many years I wondered how a child should relate to a father. It was a constant question in my mind. I vacillated between 'crawling up in daddy's lap,' and being scared to death of a father's wrath.

However, this question of how I should approach God became almost insignificant when I found the answer to another question, "How does a father approach a son."

He gave me a son

It was seven o'clock in the morning. I had been up all night with Brenda at the hospital. As I walked up the walk to 104 A, my neighbor (who had also been up all night for another reason) hollered over, "Hey Bill, what ya doin'." I responded that Brenda had given birth to our first child that morning. He asked the typical first question and I answered, "A boy."

I went into our two bedroom duplex which we had moved to so we could have a bedroom for the baby. I walked into our bedroom and knelt down by the bed. I began to pray, "Thank you Lord that you gave me a son..."

At that point a dam broke inside of me and a flood of emotions and understanding gushed through that changed my life forever.

The first thing I experienced was a love I had never known before. It was my love for my son. I had never had a son before. But locked up inside of me had been this father who was ready to do anything for his boy. At that point all I wanted was to give myself, with Brenda, to make his life the best.

The next thing that hit my heart was even greater. In a flash of revelation God's love became so clear to me. It is almost as if when I said, "Thank you Lord that you gave me a son," that He responded, "And now you know the price I was willing to pay to redeem you back to myself...my Boy."

The death of Jesus took on a whole new meaning.

For sure the pain of the cross was great, but what the Father went through in heaven was greater. Dying could never be as bad as watching your only begotten ripped from your life, tortured, and put to shame and death.

And all of this took place in behalf of God's love for me, so that He could be my Father.

I knew that what I was feeling in my heart for

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

"...For your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him." Matthew 6:8

"...but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness." Hebrews 12:10

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." James 1:17

Matthew (and would feel again with each child that was born) was the way God felt toward me.

After this, it didn't matter as much how I was supposed to act toward God. Knowing how He felt toward me seemed to guide my relationship toward Him. It didn't matter if I was coming to Him because I had sinned or if I was just happy with Him. I knew that whatever He said or did, it was backed by the same father's love which I had for my kids.

(Continued on next page)

My children, my teachers

The longer I live with my children, the more I understand God's view of me in different situations.

Once, I walked into the bathroom and saw Matthew standing, at the age of three, with my razor in his hand. I asked him if he had tried to shave. He shook his head, "No." A trickle of blood began to run down his lip.

As I corrected him, my only intent was that he would never try it again. It was because I loved him.

We went through a period with Keren when she just didn't seem happy. I wanted her to be obedient. I wanted her to be diligent. But I also wanted her to be happy. I really wanted her to be happy. I took the time just to take her out on a couple of dates to let her know I loved her. It seemed to help.

Stephen has his own little revelation of the Father's heart for me. During the day, he comes over to my office and says, "Can I help you." He badgers me until I find something for him to do. No matter how small the job, he enjoys just helping daddy. But daddy enjoys it more.

With four kids, you'd think I would get enough. But just the other day I was sitting in my office and took the urge to go get Sussana and set her on my lap. It was therapy for me and a joy to her.

These only touch the surface of what I feel and enjoy with my children. And to think these are the feelings of an imperfect father who has much to learn about the cross and love.

The perfect Father

Imagine what it is for the perfect "Father of love," to give audience with His kids, with you.

Jesus said that our Father, "Loved us so much that He gave His very best."

Paul records that, "Even when He corrects us, it is out of deep compassion and not selfish, but for our good."

James records that, "He is always the same and is never given to rage, but always gives us good gifts."

Jesus also voiced that He and the Father, "Really wanted us to just be with them."

And now, back to the subject of prayer.

"Pray ye, our Father." That is, when you pray, understand that you are talking with One Who already knows, who truly cares, and has already paid the greatest price to bring you into His presence. He wants you there. He wants to hear. He wants to help.

Praying for the Gulf War

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: For kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

I Timothy 2:1-2

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body."

Hebrews 13:3

One of the major reasons we pray for rulers of the world is that Christians may live a peaceable life in all godliness.

This prayer could never be more applicable than right now in regards to the Gulf War. Christianity has always been oppressed in this area, with outright persecution in many cases. At one point, Saddam Hussein said that he was against America because it was the center of one of the greatest evils in the world, Christianity.

At the same time the war is going on, hundreds of people are coming to the Lord in that area of the world, daily, according to reports from OM missions. From the outset of this war, Christians have been praying that it would open this area to the Gospel in a greater way. Praise God, He is hearing our prayers.

Certainly, the prayer priority should be to see many people come into the Kingdom, and at the same time for those who are already brethren to find a new freedom.

With the right priority, we can also pray for the actual war effort itself as it would relate to the establishment of the Kingdom.

Let's continue to pray:

For a speedy and just end to the war.

For the protection of innocent civilians.

For the protection of our troops.

For George Bush, General Schwarzkopf, and General Powell.

For all POW's and MIA's as well as their families.

We join especially with other churches who have members in the war. Jimmy Jett's church has several men who are serving in Desert Storm.

Women
~~MEN~~
 AT
 WORK

Sometimes women find themselves called to work outside the home. The workplace can often produce a pressure to act like "one of the boys."

If it is time for a coffee break, they are afraid to serve because it makes them seem like a woman. When they come to a door they never let man get it for them. If it comes to lifting something heavy, they wouldn't dare ask a man to help.

That's not to say a woman always has to serve the tea or can never open a door. It is hard to wade through customs and decide what is manly and what is feminine. People have different ideas.

However, wherever God places women, He places them as women. At work, Christian women are still called to let their adornment be "a meek and gentle spirit."

The Proverbs 31 woman found herself planting, buying and selling. She even strengthened her loins and arms. But it never says she lost her gentleness.

Sometimes a woman wants to act as manly as possible to keep men from making passes. This is a good caution to have and there are ways to build walls of protection and still act like a lady (see: *Guarding our women* on this page).

A real key for women both at home and at work is, "You have been called to be a woman. It is fine to do some things that society doesn't see as feminine. But never feel like you have to be a man."

Women's ministry

The home as control central

In the last several years a lot of furor has been raised over a woman's place in ministry. One of the reasons for this is an improper understanding of church structure.

Certainly the uproar in many circles over women's ministries is a reflection of the times we live in. Women's lip (I mean lib) has certainly affected the church. However, we are most susceptible to viruses when the body is weak.

In the early church a women's ministry was well defined and appreciated. Her duties had to do with the central building block of the church, the home.

Although her husband was supposed to be given to hospitality, it was she who was called to "guide" the daily running of "command central."

It was the woman who set the spirit in the home while the husband was off to work. She gave herself to maintaining this oasis for family and visitors. All this while her husband was off making a living to support her ministry.

There was no wonder of worth with the elect ladies of the New Testament. They were skilled in their craft of homemaking and helped to win the world by establishing these outposts from which "troops" were sent into the field.

They were also entrusted with the greatest riches, the children. They knew that what a child learned at the youngest years would guide them through life. It was the mother who shared most of the child's waking hours.

These early "Mothers of Israel" ruled the world through the ministry of hospitality.

We acknowledge the primacy of the home and the value of our women. The unseen service and sacrifice of these ladies are bringing health and restoration back to a torn church and nation.

We declare our mothers and wives the heroines of the cause and lift their hands as they do their part in bringing the "Household of God" into the earth.

In the work place

Guarding our women

Women in the work place are often under pressures that men would never feel. These pressures have to do with maintaining their femininity without opening themselves to "advances" by male employees.

One way a husband can help is to find reasons to show up at the wife's work. It could be to take her out to lunch or drop flowers by. On these visits, it is good for him to make sure the male employees who work with his wife see him and that he speaks to them. This sends the message, "This is my wife, and I am looking out for her."

For women without a husband, a father or friend from church can serve the same purpose. For men who work with a woman to see that she is loved and protected by other men helps create a barrier and respect. If you are single and would like a man to "show up" and your father is not available, talk to your home fellowship leader. We would love to let the world know, "We take care of our women."



Worship briefs

His praise shall be in my mouth

"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."
 Psalm 34:1-3

The hebrew word rendered praise in these verses connotes being sincerely and deeply thankful for and/or satisfied in lauding a superior quality(ies) or great, great act(s) of the object. One of the cognates of this word means to shout, brag, or boast.

Although many synonyms of this word, and some of the definitions can mean to sing, I am personally that the basic meaning does not require singing.

I can't sing all that well. I find better expression to God in speaking praises or shouting and testifying. Too often, we feel that praise is a well orchestrated song. Not so. The best form of praise is that which is by the Spirit and truly from the heart. It can be a song, but it does not have to be a song.

Bragging on God is not only for church meetings. The Psalmist said, "My mouth is always full of brags on God." Sure, we should be willing to shout, sing, or give a testimony in a meeting. More than that, we should continually seek to glorify God with the words of our lips.

I honestly don't know if LCF as a family keeps a good praise report going or not. For the bulk of this article I was going to share one line testimonies that I had heard over the past few weeks. Unfortunately, I can't remember too many. I'm not sure I haven't heard that many or if my memory is just short.

Here's an assignment for the whole church. I'm going to pay more attention when I hear people sincerely praising God in our daily conversations. The next issue of the Brief will have a composite of testimonies that I have heard over the month. Let's see if your name shows up.



Kelly Henderson

Thankful for the little things

I am working on my master's degree in education. Before I take tests or do projects I always ask God to help me. He is always faithful and answers my prayers. when I get the test back I thank him for his help.

Other people rely on their abilities or intelligence. I have found that I get a lot more peace from trusting in the Lord. That peace comes from knowing that God has put me where I am, and I know He is not going to fail me.

Pray for:

Sarah Olliges- the doctors are anticipating another open heart surgery.

Babies due-

Kelly Henderson

Mary Jo Schwartz

Elizabeth Williams

Lee Olliges

Nancy Hammond

Guille Basilio (Pedro's wife)

New Members

Billy, Brenda and the kids

Your home fellowship leader

The marriages in the body

Phone list- A new phone list is

being printed. Use it as a re-

minder of people to pray for

Mike Treen's mother- she is ill

Brad and Lisa (Bennett) Beck's

newborn- Born prematurely

with some complications.

The family staying with

Angela- See article below.

Missions- page 3

The War- page 5

As most of you know, Angela Banchieri has been looking for someone to help fill her home.

A few weeks ago Michelle Pascucci got a call from an old friend in Olean. It seems she had a friend, Viola "Vi" Rundy, who would be needing a place to stay in Lexington.

Connections were made and Vi, along with other family, is staying at Angela's.

The occasion of the visit is Vi's granddaughter, Robin's admittance to UK for a bone marrow transplant as treatment for Leukemia.

Robin's mother, Laura, and husband, Rick, are also staying in town.

Her brother, who will be the doner, will arrive soon.

Let's make sure we open our homes while this family is here.

Fellowship briefs...

Church sleepover

This title sounds like what Mike Treen, Ron Schwartz, and Rob Scales do every Sunday from about 5:45-6:45 p.m. (sermon time).

Actually, the body will be spending an evening and night at the YMCA.

We begin at 6:00 p.m. Saturday, March 16, with Pizza. We will have the whole facility the rest of the evening and Sunday a.m.. More details are coming.

Chris Treen is regional speaker

Thursday, February 7, Chris Treen won the 13 year old division of the twelve county region speech contest, Talk Meet, sponsored by the 4H.

Chris won the county competition last year and took this region meet with a presentation on fishing.

He goes on to the state meet in June.

His mother, Janet, says that the whole experience has been a real

miracle for Chris. When he first began last year, he wasn't the most eager, to say the least.

But as he persevered, the Lord has strengthened him and given him courage.

Monthly men's meeting

The men are getting together the mornings of the first Saturday of every month this year. The time is set aside for them to encourage each other in the Lord and share personal needs.

The times should always be 8:00-10:00 with breakfast being served.

The February meeting had a lot of the men out and they are looking forward to a good time of ministry March 2.

Parent/Teacher's Meeting

The children's Bible classes are offered on Sundays to supplement, not supplant, the parents role in

teaching the Bible to their children.

The classes also give some structure for the parent to use in presenting the truths of the Bible at home.

In order for the teachers and parents to work together efficiently, we need to get together a couple of times a year. The next meeting will be Saturday, February 16, at 6:00 p.m.. The meeting will be held at Woodland Church.

Child care is provided, and everyone with children in the classes needs to attend.

If you have announcements or articles you would like in the Pastor's Brief, please type them and get them to Billy or Claude.

LCF LEXINGTON CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

104A Dantzler Ct.
Lexington, KY 40503