



Prayergram

Challenging Christians to Pray

January 2013



Matthew Skariah

The Integrity of Biblical Faith

First, I thank God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world (Romans 1:8). Down through the recorded history of Christian experience there have been many examples of vibrant faith which have been spoken of throughout the world. The 11th chapter of the Book of Hebrews provides an array of men and women who were remarkable in their faith: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Rahab, and many others. Apart from the Biblical names, there are others, the martyrs and consecrated people of faith such as John Huss, George Wishart, Polycarp, William Tyndale, John Wycliff, James Guthrie, Bonhoeffer, George Muller, Hudson Taylor, Jonathan Edwards, David Brainerd, Goforth, Studd, Livingston, Madam Guyon, Amy Carmichael, to name just a few.

Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica, "...ye were ensamples to all that believe...not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing" (1 Thessalonians 1:7-8). What is the impact of this faith that was spoken of throughout the whole world? This remarkable word *faith* is one of those intangible and powerful biblical truths that are often lost in vague or insincere theological discussions. Faith is taking God at His Word and acting upon it. Faith is no inertia; it brings us

into a right relationship with God Almighty. Faith is more than simple belief—it is belief rightly placed. Biblical faith is divine activity in the lives of His believing people. It is trusting that God will take our efforts, no matter how small they seem, and multiply them as Christ did the loaves and the fishes.

Biblical faith is not presumption. It is not naming and claiming things for ourselves. It is placing our trust in none other than Jesus Christ, the very foundation of our faith. Faith is an individual matter, but when we get a group of people who are like minded in faith, and in their surrender to it, we have a situation that becomes the envy of the world. Biblical faith stands firm against everything that contradicts Him; it remains true to God's nature and character without the smallest admixture of doubt.

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If it seems that the world is not talking much about the church today, it may be because so many churches have become famous for things other than their faith. We have churches that are known for their fabulous architecture, for how many people their sanctuary will hold, or for their stained-glass windows. Some churches are known for who attends there: "That's so and so's church." Then, there are churches that are known for the scholarship and eloquence of their pastor. His diction, his art of persuasion, his personal charisma, all tend to make him a revered person who commands their respect and admiration. When Christians depend on God, not on men, there will be blessings untold.

In our modern society, we've become sophisticated and experts in a number of things that do not count for much. We do not seem to go in much for the authentic, the original, and the real. I wish we could all use the same old worn-out excuse that it takes too much time to be authentic and original. How often do we find someone who is strenuously trying to be a craftsman at anything—whether it is building something, teaching something, or preaching something? For example, the godly preachers of the past, men who were constantly on their knees, extracting messages from the very heart of God. But nowadays, who wants to be on his knees for a message when all he has to do is buy a “sermon disk” or subscribe to the “Internet service” for preaching helps! When this behavior reaches the center of our lives and ministry, it is most perilous.

Biblical faith is the barque that carries us to safety, over the turbulent waters of a raging sea. True faith is not based on gullible optimism or wishful thinking. It's strictly based on God's inherent, infallible Word. God is not looking for men who theorize and fundamentalize His Word; but men who live His Word without contradiction. We have to be steadfast in our faith; unmovable in our hope in the risen Lord no matter what pressure we may encounter. The presence of God does not overlook our most pressing circumstances; it simply overrides them. The best way to preserve biblical faith is to practice it. A victorious Christian rarely accepts defeat and never majors on the word impossible. He simply learns to trust in God always and does whatever it takes to please his Lord and master. As Job said, “*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him*”—this is the most sublime and heart-warming statement of faith in the whole of the Bible.

Biblical faith is the “Magna Carta” of our existence, and without it we're a withered branch ready to be cast in the fire. The older I get, the more I realize that temporal things such as money, property, position, honor, etc.—are not the things that

really last. And when called upon to make a choice in which I must choose between the temporal and such things as faith, peace of mind, godliness, and most importantly, my love and devotion for my Master, my choice should not require a moment's hesitation.

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God's people will not cave in when faced with trials and oppositions. No matter what trials or tribulations come to a child of God, the world can never “touch the secret place of the most high.” Our source is God, not the government or the secular institutions. A Christian who practices biblical faith will not elicit the help of some influential politician or a wealthy benefactor; look for any human cavalry behind him because he is propelled by the Spirit of the living God, going forth storming the gates of hell. Believe it or not, there will always be trials to overcome in the Christian life. That's what makes the Christian life exciting

and rewarding. Christians grow in trials; it's in trials we attain the finest and purest spiritual communion with the Father. Beloved, many will try to intimidate us Christians, but we need to be steadfast in our faith and always trusting, loving, praying and waiting for God's own time. “*The path of the just is as shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*” (Proverbs 4:18).

Happy is the Christian who is willing to live a “life of faith” with Jesus as the sole procurator and proprietor of his earthly existence! Let's not trouble ourselves about the future, but leave all things to God who has every situation under control. Let's be circumspect, and trust in God's mercy and humble ourselves in all things without fear and tremble. Biblical faith defies human logic.

“The power of faith sets in motion the power of God.”

Faith instructs us to rely on God even when it is unpopular. Faith and obedience will remove mountains of unbelief and mountains of difficulty. But they must go hand in hand. Oh, the emptiness of a man who refuses to put his faith in Christ, the King of Glory! “*Is there anything too hard for Jehovah?*” (Gen. 18:14).

PUNCHLINE

by Matthew Skariah

Personal Holiness, a Christian Lifestyle

In regard to personal holiness, the individual believer generally does much talking. But when it comes to practical application of its basic truth the Christian lacks commitment—that, almost as a rule, the believer performs very poorly. Thomas Carlyle, the 18th century poet and essayist was profound when he said, “Holy living is the best argument that tells for God in an age of fact.” Was it not the same man who said, “Words have weight when they have a man behind them?” Men substitute “godly living” with mere words. Rely less on words and more on deeds.

Surprisingly there is an alarming number of Christians who are not interested in personal holiness. That’s regrettable. They should be. If they are desperate for wholesome Christian living, there’s an undeniable solution: purity, purity in behavior and speech. In the past, God’s people had an insatiable hunger for godly living. Not anymore! Now we’ve the right theology, but wrong living. It is no exaggeration to say that we cuddle unrighteousness and carnal living too much. It is not enough to preach against sin and debauchery. We must also preach about righteousness and biblical holiness and let people see the beauty and the power of a life devoted to God. Too many evangelical Christians cringe when they hear a message on holiness.

Beloved, the world cannot set the standard for Christians. Our standard should be higher than the world’s standard. We do not follow trends and fashions of the world; Christians take their instructions from the Word of God no matter how unpopular they may seem. Scriptures are not stories that tickle our ears, but they are man’s encounter with a holy God. We need to respond to the spiritual realism. As believers, we rest upon an absolute, unshakable, and unchangeable certainty. Those who have lesser view of sin will never have higher view of God. As John Calvin once said, “I give everything to God, and keep nothing back.” Have you given everything to God? As long as we refuse to lay all on the altar, we will never see revival God’s way.

Every misconception, every fallacious thinking, every hateful act, every false idea, every unholy behavior, error in doctrine derive from not having a proper understanding of the holiness of God. Our inability to live a holy life is rationalized because nobody takes the ‘holiness walk’ seriously. The moral

and social lapses are excused because today’s Christians blindly accept lifestyles once deemed immoral and sinful. As Soren Kierkegaard said, “When everybody is a Christian, nobody is a Christian.” Our spiritual success depends, to a great degree, upon our passion for the holiness of God. Always remember, holiness without the spirit of Christ oppresses the people. Holiness without obedience stifles the Christian walk. “Holiness is not the way to Christ. but Christ is the way to holiness.”

A prayer for holiness is a prayer for cleansing. Every Christian needs this heart cleansing. As Charles Wesley wrote, “Every moment I need the merit of thy cleansing blood.” Make sure your hunger for biblical holiness will remain intact. The holiness life is a joyous life that which the modern Christian snubs because it brings death to the man of self. As followers of Christ, let’s champion the principles of biblical holiness, their critical importance to our own walk, the future of our country,

and the world. Oh, Lord, deliver us from careless living, unholy alliance, foolish speaking and showmanship. Master, baptize us with a ‘holy compunction!’ God is not looking for great men, but He is looking for humble and consecrated men who will dare to prove the majesty and the greatness of a holy God Who spoke from Mount Sinai.

The moral and social lapses are excused because today’s Christians blindly accept lifestyles once deemed immoral and sinful. As Soren Kierkegaard said, “When everybody is a Christian, nobody is a Christian.” Our spiritual success depends, to a great degree, upon our passion for the holiness of God. Always remember, holiness without the spirit of Christ oppresses the people. Holiness without obedience stifles the Christian walk. “Holiness is not the way to Christ. but Christ is the way to holiness.”

When we walk on the highway of holiness, we will not meander through the potholes of human carnality. Without holy living, preaching is reduced to religious commercials with a bit of Christian flavor.





Bull's-eye

A prayerless Christian is a powerless Christian; he may be a pastor, or evangelist, or conference speaker or a lay Christian who leads a busy life, a Hurley-burley life, and talks a great deal about spiritual things in general; but such a life without a devoted and ongoing prayer life is far removed from the Lord Jesus Christ who sought the will of His Father in Gethsemane and wept over the city of Jerusalem.

Beloved, do not become weary, casual and flippant in prayer; we must “pray without ceasing”, until we hear from heaven. It’s the spirit of prayer that takes the flint out of our carnal nature. We cannot create the wind or set it in motion, but we can put the wheels of prayer in motion; we cannot harness electricity, but we can become a semi-conductor as we allow the Holy Spirit to generate passion and power in our prayer life.

“When God intends great mercy for His people,” says Matthew Henry, “the first thing He does is to set the church on praying ground.” And, yet, look at our places of worship, prayer meeting has become the Cinderella in many of our churches.

“Jehovah-Jireh”

God has a way of sustaining his people regardless of natural or unnatural occurrences. The story of Elijah being sustained by God’s power is found in 1 Kings 17. Elijah lived near the brook Cherith. At his domicile, he did not have a refrigerator, a pantry or even a microwave. There was no cafe and no potluck dinners. It was Elijah and his God—period. What a powerful combination! However, there was a divine supply that was dispatched to him every day by special delivery. Verse 6 says, and the ravens (a scavenger, carnivorous bird) brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. Imagine, ravens were summoned by God to look after one of His chosen prophets, Elijah. When God’s true prophet carries out His Word faithfully, without seeking man’s approval, believe me, God will summon the entire creation to be by his side.

God has done great things for us in the past, and yet today, we stand facing similar obstacles. We look here and there and trouble our brain for a solution. All the time the Lord is standing right by us, waiting for us to get ready so that He can perform the impossible. It seems so hard to see beyond the paycheck and the human resources. What about the true and living God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Can we not see him there, too? Let’s never forget that Jehovah cares and provides for His people, and His provisions are always on time! Trust and fear not. Be sure of His provision!

Taken from the book, *The Forbidden Zone* by Matthew Skariah Copyright©2004 by Matthew Skariah

Men’s Prayer Encounter

January 10-12, 2013 • Camp Victory Samson, AL

Conference Speaker • Matthew Skariah • Roswell, NM

Conference Host • Evangelist Tom Palmer • Spring Mills, PA

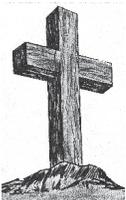
More Information • Palmer Revival Ministries • 731 Penns Creek Road • Spring Mills, PA 16875
(814) 349-4424 • www.palmerrevival.org

Men’s Prayer Advance – East Coast

January 31-February 2, 2013 • Rockbridge Alum Springs, Goshen, Virginia

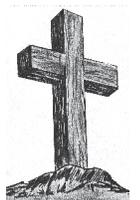
Speakers • Jim Binney • Matthew Skariah • Kevin Broyhill • Charles Maddaus

Sponsored by Christ Life Ministries of Vinton Virginia • Harold Vaughan, President



The WPB Ministries

PRAYER IS THE MIGHTIEST FORCE — 2 Chronicles 7:14



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World Prayer Band • P. O. Box 686 • Roswell New Mexico 88202-0686 • U.S.A.
(575) 623-6925 • E-mail: mwpbs@yahoo.com • Website: www.worldprayerband.com