

The Old Paths

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“Pray For Us”

Jarrod Jacobs

When the apostle Paul wrote to the brethren, he asked that they pray for him and for those traveling with him. This request is made in several epistles. For example, read: Ephesians 6:18-19; Colossians 4:2-3; I Thessalonians 5:25; and II Thessalonians 3:1.

The phrase “pray for us” says a lot about Paul. It states his implicit faith in God; for he is asking folks to pray to God on his behalf. Furthermore, “pray for us” shows us the humility of Paul. He understood he could not make it on his own. He did not flaunt his position as an apostle, nor act as if he was infallible or above anyone else. He needed the prayers of the saints, and made that clear.

What also strikes me as more than coincidental is that in three of the four references cited above, he asks that brethren pray not only for him and his companions, but also that the gospel could be spread, having “free course” and an “open door.” He requested prayers on his behalf that he might speak “boldly” among those who would hear him and his companions preach. It seems there was no time when Paul was not concerned with spreading the gospel, for he even asked that brethren pray for him that he would have more opportunities to tell folks about Christ!

In thinking about Paul’s re-

quest for prayers, I could not help but make an application to us today. Namely, do we ask brethren to pray for us? Yes, sometimes we ask for prayers when we are sick, but do we ever ask for prayers on any other occasion? If not, why not? Is physical illness the only time we need prayers offered on our behalf?

Again, when we request prayers, what is the nature of our prayers? Paul, on three occasions, asked folks to pray for him to be successful in his work for the Lord. Could we ask brethren to pray for us in this way? Some can’t do it. Why? Because they are not working to bring folks to Christ! Paul would not have asked folks to pray for an “open door” if he had no intention of going through it, himself! I am afraid that on many occasions, when we ask for prayers for that “open door” for spreading the gospel, we actually are hoping someone else will take advantage of the opportunity so we don’t have to do anything.

Brethren, let us be resolved to be like Paul (I Cor. 11:1), and spread the seed of the gospel (Lk. 8:5, 11) wherever we can. In so doing, let us be humble enough to realize we can’t do this on our own; but ask for the prayers of the saints that we might continue and find that “good and honest heart.” It is high time we awoke from our slumber and got busy! Humble prayers offered to God and diligent work in the Lord produce great results (I Cor. 15:58)!

“Let The Bible Speak...”

Jarrod Jacobs

Editor’s Note: Below is one of the questions found on our website. Perhaps this will help you in your Bible study. Other than the man’s name and some introductory comments being deleted, both the man’s question and my response are printed “as is” below.]

Comments: If I understand correctly, you believe that it is impossible to be saved without being baptized. The thief on the cross was not baptized before his death, and Zaccheus was not baptized at the moment he repented, yet Jesus told the first that he would be in Paradise with Him and He told the second that Salvation had come to his house. Are you incorrect, or did Jesus lie, or am I just missing something?

Answer:
Hello ...,

In considering your question, I could not help but think of Matthew 9:2-7 when Jesus forgave a man’s sin based upon, not his faith, but someone else’s (v. 2). (Parallel account: Mark 2:1-12). Now, what if someone wrote you and said, “If I understand correctly, you believe that it is impossible to be saved without faith in Christ. The man in Matthew 9 and Mark 2 didn’t have faith in Christ and Christ said he was forgiven of his sins. Are you incorrect, or did Jesus lie, or am I just missing something?” How would you respond to this?

Furthermore, don't forget that when the rich young ruler asked Jesus what to do to have eternal life, Christ said, "Keep the commandments," specifically naming several, and then told him to sell all he possessed and follow the Lord (Matt. 19:16-22). What if someone wrote you and said, "If I understand correctly, you believe that it is impossible to be saved without faith in Christ. The man in Matthew 19 was told to keep the commandments, and sell all he had and he would have eternal life. Are you incorrect, or did Jesus lie, or am I just missing something?"

What if someone said they wanted to be saved like the woman who washed Christ's feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair? Christ said, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Lk. 7:47). Now, "Are you incorrect, or did Jesus lie, or am I just missing something?"

Friend, I use these examples to emphasize the point that while Christ was on earth, He forgave sins in various ways. Christ could see the hearts of men and women, and "knew what was in man" (Jn. 2:25). While He lived, if He so chose, He could forgive people of their sins in any way, and under any conditions that He pleased.

Now, it is different. Since Christ has died on the cross, His will has come into effect. Once His will came into effect, then we are subject to that. The Hebrew writer spoke of this when he said, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no

strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:16-17). We understand this concept, I know. If you have a will, and you specify certain ones get "x" amount of money/goods upon your death, when does this take effect? At your death, of course! In the meantime, the money/goods are yours to use as you see fit while you live. In like manner, while Christ was upon this earth, He forgave the people (including the thief on the cross) how it pleased Him, but now, once His will came into effect, and we are now under the will/testament of Christ, we must be subject to the conditions of that will. If we wish to be saved, we'll meet the stipulations/conditions laid out in His will, and not go back to something He said or did BEFORE the will came into effect.

This is consistent with Biblical teaching. Notice that we have examples of people being forgiven of sins in various ways while Christ lived. Yet, once Christ died, and His will came into effect, the people are consistently taught to Believe in Christ as the Son of God, Repent of their sins, Confess their faith in Christ, and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38; 8:35-39; 16:14-15, 30-34; 22:16; Heb. 11:6; Lk. 13:3; Matt.

10:32-33; I Pet. 3:21; etc.).

So, to answer your question, Christ was NOT lying at any time while He was on this earth. What we read concerning the thief of the cross, Zacchaeus, the paralytic, the rich young ruler, etc., must be studied in light of the context, and "handled accurately/aright" (II Tim. 2:15) in order to come to the truth.

I hope this helps you. For further study on what to do to be saved, feel free to click on: What Must I Do To Be Saved? I hope it will help you in your study.

Have a good day.

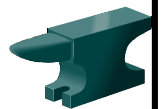
Sincerely,

Jarrold Jacobs

www.southside-churchofchrist.com

"Anvil Sparks"

R.L. Whiteside



- ◆ A hint to speakers and writers: There are only two adjectives in the twenty-third Psalm.
- ◆ Knowledge is power, and so is dynamite, Both are dangerous unless handled wisely.
- ◆ There is no intelligence where there is no real thinking.

Our Website For Bible Studies:

www.southside-churchofchrist.com



I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!

Come and meet with the church at Southside.

Our address is: 2920 New Hartford Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303.

MEETING TIMES:

Sunday Morning Bible Study _____ **9:30 am**

Sunday Morning Worship _____ **10:20 am**

Sunday Evening Worship _____ **6:00 pm**

Wednesday Evening Bible Study _____ **7:00 pm**

Don't forget the call-in radio program on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-9246 (WBIO)** with your Bible question.

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