



Missionary Messenger

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Rethinking Matthew 6:5-6

Rejoice at all times. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in every circumstance, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.... ~1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (BSB)

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. Truly I tell you, they already have their full reward. But when you pray, go into your inner room, shut your door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ~Matthew 6:5-6 (BSB)

We are in the beginning of this year's Lenten season. My family has been doing Lent challenges designed to help us to break free from patterns that have gotten us bogged down and to replace the former activity with positive activity designed to help us to grow closer to God. It has been hard, but so far it has been a blessing. I have also been trying to strengthen my prayers and to encourage others to learn how to pray out loud. It is amazing the push back that I have received from other Christians. One of the common push back comments that I get is based upon the verses listed above. Many believers have been taught that praying in public is a sign of being a hypocrite and that Jesus taught against this practice. I would like those of you who have been taught this to reconsider this interpretation.

The main reason for reconsideration of this view point is based upon the times that Jesus issued corporate prayers. The miraculous feedings that Jesus performed were preceded by Jesus offering "thanks". This was a Jewish practice of offering a public blessing before eating. You can see these references in Matthew 14 and 15. Matthew 14:15 says this about Jesus, "And He directed the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, He spoke a blessing. Then He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people." (BSB) This was for the feeding of the five thousand. Chapter 15 records a similar verse regarding the feeding the four thousand. These were both public gatherings in which Jesus spoke a verbal prayer out loud.

The bulk of John chapter 17 is an actual prayer that Jesus prayed out loud. Granted it was only with twelve others present, but it was in a corporate setting, and he prayed out loud. Verse 1 says this, "When Jesus had spoken these things, He lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You.'" (BSB) A final example of Jesus praying was on the cross. Luke 23:46 says this, "Then Jesus called out in a loud voice, 'Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit.' And when He had said this, He breathed His last." (BSB) If praying out loud in front of others is a sin then Jesus committed it! This is why I am encouraging those reading this article to rethink the teaching that it is a sin to pray out loud. There is power in prayer and it is time for an army of prayer warriors to arise. We should be careful not to pray as a show to impress others. However, we need to be set free to pray to our heavenly Father no matter who is listening.

In Christ, Pastor Ken

**PRAYER
FOCUS**



Prayer Focus: Wednesday, March 8 & 22 @ 6:30p. Please come and pray with us.

**Prayer Breakfast Pics
2/25/23**



Prayer Topics

Adoration
Confession
Thanksgiving
Supplication



**WATCH OUR WORSHIP
SERVICE LIVE ON SUNDAY !**

To watch our livestream service, click on the link on our Facebook page or one of the three links on our web page (NMMC1.com home page and sermon page).

Recorded sermons can be viewed on our web page NMMC1.com, YouTube, or Facebook.

**Life Support
(Santee Series, book 1)
By Robert Whitlow**



**New
in the
Church
Library**

Life Support is a "twisting tale of rough decisions, mixed motives, and mysterious, healing grace...."

Baxter Richardson survived a fall from a cliff while hiking in the mountains. Whether he'll make it through the next few weeks is unclear. His survival depends on the machines that help him breathe. On the haunted, unstable wife who wants to pull the plug and hide her secrets. On the doting father who wants him alive for reasons of love and money. On the conflict-

ing legal documents that sent the fight to court. And, on the music and prayers of an extraordinarily gifted pianist."
(from the back cover)

After finishing this book, you'll want to continue the saga with book 2, *Life Everlasting*.

Robert Whitlow is a lawyer turned novelist so most of his books are legal thrillers. His writing is filled with twists and turns and most of all faith in Jesus.



Who Are We?

Pastor: Ken Sistrunk 260-229-5949 (cell)

PastorKenNMMC@gmail.com

Elders: Dave Jackson (vice-chairman),

Tim Baker, Jon Gnagy

Directors:

Outreach: Sue Howard

Prayer: Debby Gatchel

Stewardship: Tim Baker

Worship: Jon Gnagy

Secretary: Joanne Sistrunk

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CONNECTION NOTES:

Build That Bridge!

I was thinking of building bridges as the topic of this article and I came up with a lead in. I thought I would research some information on the bridge just west of our church. I thought I had a great connection concept since my Dad had helped build this bridge "back in the day". You know what? My on-line search did not find anything!

I found article after article about the covered bridge. Did you know that it was built in 1872 for \$3515 excluding the stone work!? And, that it is the widest covered bridge in Indiana? I also found articles about the bridge that no longer exists from 2nd Street to 2nd Street Extended. Yet nothing about the current State Road 114 bridge!

I wanted to illustrate the need for us to consider how we should build bridges in order to bring others to Christ. Just like we need a bridge to get to our church building from the west! (That is unless you are into triathlon training!) There are those we know and love, who don't know or worship Christ, who need a way to get from where they are to God. God has told us to be that tool; to be used so that we can connect them to Him. He has even given us what we need to do it. "God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them to serve one another." I Peter 4:10

If we stop to think of ways to become bridge builders there should be some easy ways to go about it. (Probably a whole lot easier than building an actual bridge, although I am no expert!) It can be as simple as thinking of where our feet, steps, paths, car, etc. take us each day. Who do we already interact with? Who could use a touch from God that can be given them by your hands? Who has

a need? I read the following quote: "If you smile and say hello to the school crossing guard on your way to work everyday, you have formed a relationship." ctb.ku.edu

Simple isn't it? Maybe it is a good thing I couldn't find out a bunch of information about the bridge. Maybe the fact that it is a routine bridge, used routinely, is important. Maybe this fact will cause us to intentionally review our routine, ordinary, daily interactions, our relationships, and maybe consider how they might become bridges leading others to Christ.

What will your bridge be? Lets go build that bridge!

Hopeful , *Sue*

CONNECTION ACTIVITIES:

March 16th, Thursday: Prep day for our teacher outreach. Please let Sue know if you can help her prepare treats for our teachers.

March 17th, Friday: MES teacher Outreach. We will be spreading some love and appreciation with teachers and staff.

March 26th, Sunday: Hoop Shoot Out. Join us for a time of fun and snacks. Do you have game? Can you take the crown in a free throw contest? Join us as we are either playing games or watching basketball games. Polish up on your free throws and join us! (Time will be announced later)



Memory Verse of the Month!

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

(We did verse 3 last June; now we are adding verse 4 to it.)

"³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. ~ 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (BSB)

