

The Brighton Light

BRIGHTON ARP CHURCH

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A Healthy and Happy New Year, Part II

How are those New Year's Resolutions coming along? Have you still kept your resolution(s)? If you committed to reading the Bible in a more meaningful way in 2018, how is that going? Hopefully things are going well and you are being encouraged in your efforts.

Last month I gave some advice on starting the new year in a healthy (spiritually speaking) manner. Bible reading tips and devotional guides were the emphasis, with a deeper and more consistent reading of God's word as the goal. This month I want to move to the topic of prayer. What follows are a few suggestions on ways the average Christian can improve his or her prayer life in 2018.

The first two ways should come as no surprise, as they both depend upon God's word. The first is to make use of the psalms in prayer. The psalms may be thought of as the hymnbook or songbook of God's people, but the psalms are also the prayer book of God's people. We find them being used as part of prayer meetings in the early church (Acts 1:14-26; 4:24-31). They may be used in our own personal prayers. Read the psalms as you prepare to pray, and you may find yourself praying that you would not walk in the manner of the ungodly, but instead that the Lord would make you like a fruitful tree who delights in the Lord, in His ways, and in His word (Psalm 1:1-3). You may find yourself praying that the Lord would create a clean heart in you (Psalm 51:10), or that He would search and examine your own heart and lead you away from sinfulness (Psalm 139:23-24). John Calvin once referred to the psalms as "an anatomy of all parts of the soul," and they are helpful in our own prayers before God.

The second recommendation is to make use of the Lord's Prayer. Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, and He gave them a model for prayer. However, the Lord's Prayer is meant to be more than just memorized and repeated. There are two (or three) resources that are extremely useful here. One is to make use of the Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms' questions on prayer (both catechisms cover the same topics; the Larger Catechism just explains things in greater detail). For example, Question 101 of the Shorter Catechism says this about the first petition of the Lord's Prayer: "In the first petition, which is, Hallowed be thy name, we pray that God would enable us and others to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himself known; and that he would dispose all things to his own glory." That is a great guide for prayer! Pray that God's name would be set apart, treated as holy, that He would be glorified in all things, that we would glorify Him, etc. Along these lines, the Puritan Matthew Henry wrote a very helpful guide for prayer, entitled *A Method of Prayer*. This book is available online (www.matthewhenry.org), and it gives many examples of how the Lord's Prayer may be used alongside other Scripture to help us in our prayer life. You can even sign up to have various Scriptural prayers emailed to you every day as an aid.

Finally, let me recommend a short book to you. Martin Luther was once asked by his barber for help in his own personal prayer life; Luther responded by going home and writing a short book for his friend, entitled *A Simple Way to Prayer* (available here: <https://goo.gl/WaZyUC>, or the pastor will be glad to get anyone a copy). Luther basically

recommends praying through the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed. Each of these serves as a model for our prayers, to guide us in the things to pray.

I have only begun to scratch the proverbial surface about prayer. I could recommend the ACTS method (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication), or I could point to examples of prayer in Paul's epistles (Colossians 1:9-12 or Ephesians 3:14-21, for example), or I could recommend an exhaustive resource on the Lord's Prayer (Thomas Watson's book on the topic comes to mind). But these few resources I have suggested are easy to follow and to remember, and hopefully they will give you a good place to start in becoming more diligent in your prayers in the new year.

Prayer List:

Bennett, Mary F – Shut in
 Billings, Richard – (Denise's Dad) Cancer
 Boswell, Charles - Cancer
 Boswell, Mike – Health issues
 Bryant, Ty –Heart
 Rochell, Bobby – Cancer
 Goulder, Martha Jean – Shut In
 Hopper, Claude – Shut in
 McCain, Pat – Health Issues

McCain, Ken – Health Issues
 McCain, Kenny – Health Issues
 Bridges, Lucille – Health Issues
 Pugh, Kaleb – (Laura Kiphart's grandson)
 Williams, Sandy – (Huffman family)Cancer
 Wilson, Glenda – Bone Cancer
 Winford, Sherry – Health issues
 Yarbrow, Ina – Health issues

Rivercity Reformed Presbyterian Church – Church plant in Little Rock Arkansas

Military

Donahoo, Tim	Starnes, Austin	Hill, Debra	Billings, Tyler
Dooley, Rod	Heathman, Matthew	Young III, Robert "Trip"	

Missionaries

Coad, Jim & Gala	Rebekah Carson	Brunson, Andrew
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FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1	Christie Bridges	19	Billy Pugh
	Emil-Grace Tia White	23	Anna Hugues
9	Samantha Wells	24	Shirley Kennedy
11	Cassie Cranford		Verlie Wells, IV
12	Charlotte Williams	26	Christi Huffman
13	Sarah Huffman		Jean Chisolm
15	Gwen Goulder	28	Robin Gravley
	Joe Anne Alsbrook		Mallory Glass
16	Norma Columbus		

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

February 23 Mr. and Mrs. John Yarbrow

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

February 4	Lydia Maxwell
February 11	Alton Woods
February 18	Ashley Goulder
February 25	Amy/Abby

February Menu

Feb. 7 Bar B Q Plate
Feb. 14 Mac N Cheese and Chicken Nuggets
Feb. 21 Potato Bar
Feb. 28 Family Night "Pot Luck"

Cost: \$3.00 person
\$10.00 Family

Upcoming Events

PLEASE NOTE: If you have any ideas or suggestions for the church website, please contact Chris Gravley, webmaster, at 901-674-3851 or e-mail at chris_gravley@bellsouth.net.

THE DEACON OF THE MONTH is Verlie Wells. If you have any requests for the deacons, please contact Verlie at 901-326-7545.

PLEASE NOTE If anyone is sick, in need of prayer or a visit, please contact Milton Murphy 901-476-2808.

PLEASE REMEMBER: The Sunday Night Bible Study at 6 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE There will be a Worker's Council Meeting on Tuesday February 6th at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.