

FAITH WORDS TALK SERIES

Pray

August 8, 2021

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer,
believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

Mark 11:24

The faith word “Pray” is the last of ten words listed in a journal as this TALK series was in the planning stages, now eleven weeks ago. You should know that it is last on the list of words noted and was penciled in for August 1, 2021. It is safe to assume there was some intent to end the string of articles with what may be considered the most important word in our faith.

The ability to communicate directly with God exceeds all the words on the list that included Light, Grace, Believe, Truth, Awakening, Peacemaker, Zeal, and Forgiveness. It is also obvious that many words could easily have fit in these TALK pieces. Some significant ones excluded are Healing, Joy, Inner Peace, Oneness, and Gratitude...and those will be central to other themes under consideration for future writings.

Following this article is a piece with words from the author of Acts, Paul, and a singer some of you will remember named Joe Cocker. Don’t skip to end just yet. Simply allow what is coming in the next few paragraphs as a prayerful lead in to the words and deeds we should all consider important to our faith. The primary objective for this TALK about prayer is to seek an intense desire for all people throughout the world to find a way to truly “Learn to live together.”

Prayer is an integral part of strong faith. Every theologian, spiritual author, and the saint concurs that it is essential for godliness. The last portion of the Catechism of the Catholic Church is devoted to prayer, and we Methodist dedicate a significant time teaching our sixth grade confirmands the importance of talking directly to God.

Before receiving the call from the conference to move me from Martin to Keller UMC in 2015, it was a privilege to dream about a monthly laity led prayer time with Gerald Robinson and others from the Genesis class. From the initial dream we (mostly they) began planning and creating a safe place for people to gather and pray. Some intense reading and questioning was done to educate ourselves then implement a special monthly corporate prayer time. It was most exciting to return to Martin as a worshiping member and find people faithfully praying for and with each other at the same time and with the same fervor in 2021.

Each week in this time together, prayers for and with each other is still active and remains open to anyone who feels a need to participate and help each other heal, gain confidence, find peace, and love and care for each other. The process to become active in the group is simple. Check the same newsletter where you found this TEDDY TALK and look for the “Laity Prayer Service”. It happens monthly on the last Monday of the month at 6:00 pm. Just click on the link to open the Zoom invitation. You will be welcome, and you will experience a unique way to share and pray.

Words scattered throughout the Bible focus on the need for direct dialogue with God. We are instructed to “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” The author of the book of James writes “But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.” These words have long been on my mind as a conscious way to remain focused while praying and expecting results.

For example, each night my prayers are offered in the form of personal intentions. I begin by saying in my mind (sometimes out loud) “These are my intentions for tonight.” I follow that with words like “I intend to sleep deeply and peacefully all through the night.” Sometime during the listing of my intentions, I focus on changes I want to make in my physical wellbeing... due to a personal fight with sleep apnea, I say: “I intend to breath a minimum of twelve breaths per minute, every minute, of every hour, of every day.” Each night after many intentions, I end it all by thinking/saying, “I intend to do all I can to love all human beings just as I love myself.”

Believing that God hears prayers and likes the fact that we can be intentional in our service to His creatures in His creation will lead to amazing changes to the way we live with each other. One of the pieces of scripture that helps me live what I believe comes from Doctor Luke’s words “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.” Luke 6:27-28

I believe Luke’s words could be extended to say...Love those who are different from me whether it is color of skin, beliefs, preferences, socio economic status, or who love differently...and the list goes on. God help us all to live up to Jesus’ words recorded by the Doctor.

There is a significant degree of confidence that saying these words and following through on Jesus’ command to “Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and spirit...and Love your neighbor as yourself” will change the world. And I believe when not one person is excluded, all will benefit.”

Peace always,
Ted

Words from August 1, 2021
Learning to live together

Today, I am refraining from writing my own words and sending this to you because we staff are on vacation from the Newsletter this week. So, for this TEDDY TALK, I will ask you to contemplate the words in Dr. Luke’s story from the “Acts of the Apostles,” and Matthew Moore’s abbreviated words in his lyrics for the song “Space Captain.”

Peace always...Ted

With many other words (Peter) testified to them and encouraged them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” Those who accepted Peter’s message were baptized. God brought about three thousand people into the community on that day. The believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers. A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders

and signs through the apostles. *All the believers were united and shared everything. They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them. Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes. They shared food with gladness and simplicity.*

Acts 2:40-46 (CEB)

Space Captain

Lyrics by Matthew Moore. Recorded by Joe Cocker (Mad Dogs and Englishmen – 1970) Edited from original version.

Once I was traveling across the sky
This lovely planet caught my eye
And being curious I flew close by
And now I'm caught here
Until I die ...
Until we die
Learning to live together...
Till we die

I lost my memory of where I've been
We all forgot that we could fly
Someday we'll all change into peaceful man
And we'll return into the sky
Learning to live together
Till we die

GOD LET IS BE SO