

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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It's Not Too Early To Register To Vote

It is not too early to find out if you are properly registered to vote for the City Councilmen. One may be a newcomer or the polling station may have been moved to a new place, thus making one unaware of the precinct where he should vote. The Primary Election will be held on April 18, 1967 if there are more than fourteen candidates running for office. The General Election will be held on May 7, 1967.

Quite a bit of dissatisfaction is being discussed about officials of the government, especially the \$10.00 city license tag, the uptown re-development, the refusal of a grant of \$75,000 for the L. Richardson Hospital, requested by the hospital officials to the City Council. It is now time for good citizens to do something about electing the Seven men to the City Council. They will have the last say toward improvement of the city at large.

It is not our policy to tell our readers who to vote for, but we do stress that all of our readers exercise their franchise at the polls, especially for our city officials. It is also stressed that our readers investigate the candidates so that they will be aware of his platform and the type of qualities he possesses. I think every candidate has at least one plank that he would like to inject into our city government. Be aware of the candidate who has a long drawn-out platform — one especially for the Negro, and conceals that which he has in mind for the white. I am more impressed with a candidate who seeks office with one good plank which will benefit all the citizens at large and with a good sober mind to adhere to any other problem that comes into existence while serving as a council which will benefit the majority of the citizens.

We are informing you early. Some of the candidates have served before. You know what happened. Be aware in this election. We urge our readers to talk with the candidate before casting your vote so that you may know something about his platform, or at least his qualifications.

Remember this: When the seven candidates have been elected to control our city government they are seated for two years. Now is the time to find out who you are putting in office to control your city government before you vote.

Remember the many things which exist that you liked and disliked with the last city officials. Now is the time to put into office the person that will readjust all the ill will that we criticize.

We often state the danger of paid team workers around the polls for a certain candidate. That is good for the person who does not know how to vote, but it is bad to be persuaded to vote for the wrong candidate. That is why we urge our readers to know your candidate. Call him up, ask questions. Talk with your neighbors, especially those who know the purpose of the election.

I heard a lady say, "Yes, I voted against that certain candidate. I put 'x' beside his name." She wasn't aware she was voting for the unwanted candidate. I further heard that many of the ballots have to be destroyed during the tabulation due to the fact the registrant didn't know how to vote. I believe in the mass meeting where a large body of people come together to hear the candidate make his speech. Someone should have a diagram to show the people how to vote, especially in our schools and classes where students are studying civics, political science, and some classes in history. Diagrams should be drawn on the writing boards so that the children can go home and tell their parents how to vote.

Children are one of the best advertising medium that can exist. I remember that all of the schools did just that for every class in the public school system when it came that they must vote for a bond referendum to supplement the teachers' salaries and improve the schools' facilities. All of the school officials followed through with this plan on voting day. I still don't believe it will hurt each teacher in the public school to take about three or five minutes to tell the students how important it would be for them to tell their parents when and how to vote for city officials, rather than a group standing around the polls, being paid to advise registrants who to vote for. It has been said that a voteless person is a hopeless person.

This Week's Sunday School Lesson

HOW SHALL WE PRAY?

PURPOSE OF OUR STUDY

To help adults pray in the spirit of Christ.

SCRIPTURE

Read the lesson from your Bible: Luke 18:1 through 19:27.

We print selected verses below.

Luke 18:1-14

1 And he told them a parable, to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. 2 He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor regarded man; 3 and there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Vindicate me against my adversary.' 4 For a while he refused; but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor regard man, 5 yet because this widow bothers me, I will vindicate her, or she will wear me out by her continual coming.'" 6 And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judges says. 7 And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? 8 I tell you, he will vindicate them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others: 10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.' 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Memory Selection: Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.—Matthew 7:7

Interpreting The Lesson

In the parable of the unjust judge and the persistent widow (Luke 18: 1-8) Jesus was teaching that one must not become weary in prayer. The faith and persistence of the widow finally caused the judge to vindicate her against her adversaries.

In this parable the argument moves from the lesser to the greater. What the unjust judge does is far less than what God will do. If a heartless judge will finally respond to and answer a widow's request, how much more will God in his infinite mercy answer our prayers!

The parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (or publican) contrasts true and false praying. Here we are taught both how and how not to pray. We are not to center our prayers in ourselves as the Pharisee did. Nor are our prayers to be exhibitions of pride in what we have done. The Pharisee took care to exhibit his tithing and fasting as signs of his piety. On the other hand, the tax collector approached God with confession, penitence, and humility. He pleaded only for mercy.

The Pharisee saw himself as big before God when he was

little. The tax collector saw himself as exceedingly little before God. Jesus said, "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" (Luke 18:17). "To become again like a child," states Joachim Jeremias, "means 'to become little again,' that is, before God." This was the position of the tax collector.

Persistence in Prayer

Faithfulness and steadfastness are called for throughout a Christian's life but especially in prayer. The parable of the persistent widow drives home the truth that we "ought always to pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1).

One characteristic of Jesus' life was his faithfulness in prayer. He would rise early to go out to a quiet place for prayer. The night was not too long for him to pray. Prayer permeated all he said and did.

Prayer for the Christian is not like an outboard motor that we can attach to our lives when we want a special power or gift and detach when the need is past. True prayer is not about what we want but about what God desires. Prayer has been called "the Christian's vital breath." Without it he expires.

Someone may ask, "Why should I pray?" The answer is that some things will never happen except through prayer. Through prayer our lives are opened to God in such a way that he can do for us what he could not otherwise do.

The reason for our lack is not that God is unwilling to give, but that we are unwilling to receive. However much they desire it, parents cannot give their children an education if the children will not respond by seeking an education. The spiritual life requires seeking if there is to be finding. "Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7) is the command of our Lord. God does not wish "that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). This means that the burden of prayer rests upon us.

Many reasons can be given why we must persist in prayer and not lose heart. Sometimes God's answer may be postponed in order that we may re-examine our prayers and cleanse our motive. Because we are sinners, though saved by grace, we always need the Holy Spirit to purify and empower us.

Prayer finds a deeper level through the valley of waiting. Through the night of persistent prayer we come to the dawn of a deepening consciousness of God. Perhaps, also, God is answering another person's prayer for us through our own pleading and waiting.

If we have been seeking and knocking and if we have been suffering and pleading for another, God's answers to our prayers are more meaningful.

Persistence in prayer is essential for a Christian in a twofold sense. He must pray frequently because of the needs of his own life. Often he feels he has no other help than that which comes from God.

In the second place, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer observes, "However loving and sympathetic we try to be," there are

person we do not reach. "There are no direct relationships, not even between soul and soul. Christ stands between us; and we can only get into touch with our neighbors through him. That is why intercession is the most promising way to reach our neighbor." I am sure we would be overwhelmed if we knew all the people who have prayed for us. Persistent intercessory prayer is essential for those who follow Christ.

Sometimes making us wait may be God's answer to our prayer. He knows what is best for us now and in the future, and we should never be discouraged in prayer whether answers come slowly or quickly. What seems delay to us may not be delay to God.

We should not assume that God's answers to our prayers always bring bliss. When we pray for the Holy Spirit to guide us, he may lead us to a cross for his sake. When we pray for a burden to be lifted from our hearts he may first place another's burden upon us.

Pharisee and Tax Collector

In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector we look into the souls of two men. They expose themselves in their prayers, as we do, in ours. At the same time we see their idea of the God they worshiped.

The Pharisee looked upon God somewhat as his equal and reminded God of what he did that proved he was a righteous man. His tithing and fasting had really exceeded the legal requirements. The tax collector stood "far off," without lifting his eyes toward heaven and pleaded for God's mercy. He sensed the infinite distance between him and God. God is holy and righteous, but he was a liar and a cheat.

The Pharisee was the center of his own world. He could not see either around or through his "I." He thought of himself as superior to everyone else. But the tax collector turned away from himself and found God as his center.

The Pharisee had the idea that he could manipulate God with his legal righteousness. In a sense he tried to hide from God behind his own righteousness. There is never a safe hiding place for a sinner.

The tax collector, like Isaiah, saw the holiness, majesty, and sovereignty of God.

Your idea of God determines how you regard both yourself and your neighbor. No man is sufficient to himself as the Pharisee thought. The man who closes the door of his life to his fellow men and to God turns the key of death. On the other hand the man who opens the door of his life to God and to his neighbor finds new life and joy.

The Pharisee's prayer was nullified by his spirit of self-righteousness. Jesus might have said to him "The tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matthew 21:31).

The tax collector was not declared righteous because of his goodness. In spite of his badness and because of God's grace and forgiveness he was justified. The Pharisee had everything in his favor except the one thing needful namely a penitent heart. The

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