

**Miracles that follow the plow :: Asking prayer for church and new person****Asking prayer for church and new person - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/23 18:37**

Beloved,

I am deeply aware of my impotence unless God steps in. I would like prayer for two things:

1) This Sunday, my church will be voting on an outreach/evangelism program. Basically, the Lord led my wife and I to join this church although they had no such efforts going on. We prayed and prayed that God would move in this assembly.. and voila! He has moved in the hearts of the elders and deacons. Now, they will be presenting this evangelism proposal on Sunday, and asking the people of the congregation if they want to go forward with this. However, the fight is far from over. This Sunday, it either goes or crashes. An elder told me that unless a good group of people commit themselves, we wouldn't go forward. I told him if people didn't commit to pray, I would consider that God is not in this. I am asked to give a brief presentation (10 minutes). People will vote, and decide whether or not to proceed.

Please pray that God would give us much grace and move our congregation to go forward and to begin praying fervently in preparation for this task.

2) Today, I just found out that one of the people who has started attending our church is a practicing homosexual. I will spare you the details, but he had to confess to me because of unusual circumstances. I knew he wasn't saved, but I didn't know he was a homosexual. He said he didn't see anything wrong with his homosexuality. I gently and lovingly showed him that it is sin, and that unless he repents, he will not get into the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9). I told him he had to repent of ALL SINS, not just homosexuality. At first, he was devastated, and wondered why God would create him that way if it was sin. I explained that these passions of the flesh are all because of the Fall, and that any corruption was a direct result of this curse. I told him that Jesus had come to deliver us from this curse and corruption and sins. By God's grace, he showed a desire to learn the grace of God. I preached and preached the Gospel, and asked him to call on God. But, the blinders were evidently still on. He honestly admitted that he wasn't able to come to God yet, but that he would want to learn more about Christ and the Gospel. I told him I would work with him for however long it would take. We had an excellent discussion, and I gave him a Bible with some reading assignments.

Please pray that God would make light shine out of darkness, that God would make His light to shine upon my friend. Pray that God would set him free from his sins.

In order to protect the dignity of my church and of my friend, I will keep their names confidential. But, I will tell you that I am currently living in Portland, Maine. You can pray for "Renoncer's church and friend in Portland ME".

P.S.: Since my friend is French-speaking, it is difficult to show him a good ministry which helps homosexuals. If anyone knows about such resources in French, let me know.

Blessings in Christ,
Renoncer

Re: Asking prayer for church and new member - posted by buttermilk80 (), on: 2010/11/23 19:25

Father, it is not Your will that Your people should be powerless. And it is not Your will that men should die at the threshold of Your Church's door. Move the hearts of Your people that they will do the will of the Living God. We stand before Your Holy Throne as a people bought from sin and delivered into the hands of the Living God with Power from On High! How should it be that Your enemies prevail when it is God Himself who walks among them.

Amen!

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Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/23 20:10

Thank you Buttermilk80.

Re: - posted by MyVeryHeart (), on: 2010/11/23 22:05

I will pray brother

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/24 7:33

Thank you MyVeryHeart.

Re: Asking prayer for church and new member - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/11/24 9:16

Renoncer,

I find this scenario troubling: a new member in your brotherhood who is a practicing homo; you are asking this church to support your ministry effort; you expect the LORD to use this church to assist you.

Do you remember what Brother Paul (the apostle) had to say about the leaven?

Do you recall how Joshua and his small band of Israelites were soundly defeated by AI? Remember why?

I do not know how the people in this church will vote, but I see some things that trouble me and I wonder how it will impact you and your decisions...

It just may be that the reason God sent you to this church was to warn this homo.

Is your brotherhood knowledgeable about this man's perversion? Usually this kind of thing is common knowledge...Why would your church tolerate an unrepentant sinner on their membership rolls?

Wishing you the best,
ginnyrose

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/24 11:35

Ginnyrose,

I apologize for the misunderstanding. I did not mean that the person is an "official member"; I meant "member" in the broadest sense, as one who has begun attending our church. I will change the wording in the original post in order to avoid further confusion. My mistake.

I was the first one to know about his homosexuality, and now the pastor as well. I am also the only one who can communicate effectively with him, because he doesn't speak English.

My church is very conservative, and would never condone homosexuality. The pastor made sure that I told him homosexuality was a sin and that he needed to repent. The pastor also told me to show him the grace of God that is offered to him.

The person now clearly understands the church's biblical stance on homosexuality, now that he has confessed it to me and that I have shown him what God's Word says about it. I do not know how he will react or if he will come back to church, but I sure hope that he will come back so that we can minister to him. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. I intend to teach the uncompromised Word as lovingly and as clearly as I can, in the hope that the Holy Spirit will bring him to repentance and salvation.

Thank you for your concerns Ginnyrose. In the light of my bad choice of words, I understand how you have reacted.

Love in Christ,
Renoncer

Re: Thanking God - posted by JoanM, on: 2010/11/24 12:51

Praying for both needs...and noting the relationship both have to one another, and the timing. Thanking God for how He is growing you, teaching you in all this.

Commitment to prayer is central in a fellowship. Here is a link to something that has been helpful in my fellowship that I posted on Sermonindex:

https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?viewmode=flat&order=0&topic_id=28004&forum=45&post_id=&refresh=Go

Regarding your friend: Coming to understand that "God did not make him that way" anymore than God made others to be thieves and liars, is a major truth blow to the lie that has moved him -- the lie that he has exchanged for the truth. I have witnessed God renew the minds of several beset with the sin of homosexuality.. In all, coming to know and confess truth about who God is and thanking Him was central. In one case, CONFESSION OF TRUTH and THANKING GOD was the very starting point (belief of Him as creator and thanksgiving for giving them life - straight out of Romans 1:21). Any and every confession of revealed truth about God and any thanking is the point here.

I find that thanking God is a first step of the faith that is received from God. Every person, drawn by God, easily says why and what led them to that. That is a good place to encourage them, given it is where the Spirit of God has worked/began with them. Honestly, I am nearly always surprised by the Word of God that God uses in beginning with someone. I don't think that I have ever thought that that specific truth would be the entrance of revelation.

In His love
JoanM

A right view of God leads to both a changed life and a changed view of self. No matter how small, Light always overcomes darkness. Rev. 12:11

Re: - posted by buttermilk80 (), on: 2010/11/24 12:59

"I don't think that I have ever thought that that specific truth would be the entrance of revelation."

It does us good to remember that we serve the "Living" God. He who resided during the early days of the church also resides with the church today. Though the availability of sins and the various nature of them is notable, He is keenly aware of each individual's situation. It is a given that He will address us where we stand when He decides to move in our lives.

In short..... I agree with what you said.

Re: The ways of God - posted by JoanM, on: 2010/11/24 13:23

Thanks dear one.

I have something of a collection of His Word I have witnessed in the working of His power in the lives of others. The one that began that collection staggered me. I was burdened for the salvation of another. After doing/saying all that I knew to do and say I "complained" in prayer to God: I was young in Him, never seen anyone saved, why was He pressing me so to witness, etc. God's response was: You have to see something in order to be a witness, (DUH-that is now part of my definition of witness), Be still and know that I am God. I knew He was going to save her right in front of my eyes.

The Word He used was "and on his thigh a name was written KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." Having never even read Revelation, and many other books of the Bible, I never would have come to that.

P.S. It was more than a year before I came across "Be still and know that I am God" in His Word.

How I love Him and His ways!

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/11/24 19:22

Thanks for sharing this Renouncer. I am glad this homo is not a member of your brotherhood. This post clears up all questions I had.

God go with you and may you be blessed!

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/24 20:28

Ginnyrose,
I'm glad this could be clarified. Thank you for your prayers.

I pray that I might have mercy upon him the same way that God had mercy upon me. God saved me from the tyranny of wickedness; and I know that God can save my friend as well.

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
(Titus 3:3-7)

Re: - posted by Joyful_Heart, on: 2010/11/26 13:02

Praise God this man, who God created - whom Jesus went to the Cross in his place, is at your Church. The Holy Spirit brought him to you to take to Jesus. Glory to God. This is an exciting privilege and honor.

This morning and last night - you and he and your church was heavy on my heart. I was thinking of how we treat people and what we call them.

I was thinking of when the Holy Spirit fell on me and my eyes were open and my heart ready to receive Jesus Christ. It happened like this. First there were two brothers giving thanks to God for an apple. That caught my attention so I asked them about it. Then I was invited to a Bible study. I accepted.

The huge point I am making is extremely important for us and for Churches. I was received into this house. Dinner had already been served and cleanup done. But they went and got out food and made a table for me. The joy and the love of the people were just amazing to me. Point - the greeting I received made me feel at ease to hear the Bible study. I felt loved and accepted. Me an unsaved sinner.

No one called me a great sinner or treated me like I had a plague etc. Just the pure sweet love of the Savior. It was real. No one was whispering or giving me the look. I felt so much love so much acceptance.

I say the most important people are the greeters in the Church. If they are just mingling with the ones they know and the congregation too and not shaking hands and welcoming the new people we have already lost them. It is in every Church I have been at since. The greeter may be welcoming enough but then it stops. Everyone is talking amongst themselves and I am standing there not being welcomed. A great, great sin in my opinion.

I was reading in Revelations one day and was shocked at this verse.

He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral person and sorcerers and idolaters and ALL LIARS, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Rev. 21 7 & 8.

My point is that all these awful sins we have all committed one time or another. In thought, in word or in action. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. The one that stuck out to me was - all liars - hmmm. Who has not told a lie?

Even though we have all sinned - There is the Savior - Jesus Christ - And when we repent we are forgiven and washed

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by the Blood of the Lamb. And our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life and Heaven bound. And I can shout from the mountain top - Hallelujah!

I thank God He took me to a place where the people knew Him, walked with Him and truly had the love of Jesus in their hearts. I would have walked away not knowing Christ that day if I hadn't felt and seen His love in them. They would have been like every other place I had been.

So, I praise God for you brother and your church. You have the love of Jesus and can take this man to Him. Glory to God. He's not a homo. He's a sinner like us all who need the Savior.

We need to not look at what kind of sin. Be it pornography, lying, stealing, drug abuse, murderers, slanderer, adulteries, fornicators, lust etc. it is all sin and all in need of deliverance.

Oh, God please prepare the Churches, your people, to see our own sin, our own unworthiness, our own filthy rags of righteousness so that we can see the awesomeness of Your forgiveness, Your love, Your righteousness and walk in it with such deep love and compassion that when You bring, by Divine Appointments, we can take others to you. That they can see we will already have been with You and can truly take people who are broken and hurting to You.

Heavenly Father, please, please prepare the Churches, tear down the walls Lord of self righteousness, of legalism that kills. Fall upon the body of Christ today Holy Spirit and convict our hearts of this that we can see our own depravity and know Your true love and forgiveness for us that we may have Your heart and Your eyes of mercy and compassion for Your creation. Forgive us and help us O' God. Prepare us to receive all You have brought to us that none slip away due to our lack of love. Be glorified O' God. Be glorified.

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/26 14:35

Thank you JoyfulHeart.

These past few days have been unusually intense spiritually. I know we're in the thicket of the battle. I don't know what will come out of it, and although I care about the outcome, I am learning to submit to God's way. In my arrogance, I often tell God how things should happen. But, God graciously disciplines me and humbles me whenever I sin like that.

Although I claim to want to glorify God, whenever I am unwilling to submit to God's way, I am not glorifying Him at all. May God have mercy on me. May I fervently seek His face and His will, and may He receive the glory due His holy Name.

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/26 22:54

I want to thank those who are praying for me.

Tonight was especially challenging. Understand the analogy: I walked into a small dark room filled with gun power, holding a match in my hands without which I would not have been able to see.

Only by God's grace did things turn out somewhat okay. I was insulted, discouraged, looked down upon, and accused of being self-serving. People are getting tired of the salt. Normally, I should have exploded, but the grace of God was upon me to react with humility and love. But, there is a lot of resistance. The enemy has the people in bondage. I will need wisdom for Sunday.

Maybe the Lord doesn't want that church to do outreach... I don't know. I will need God to give me His words. This may be the only platform they will ever grant me. I need wisdom from above.

Re: - posted by Theophila (), on: 2010/11/27 11:58

O Father,
May your high and holy name be exalted forever!
Thank you for the season you have Renoncer in. Thank you for fulfilling your purposes in his/her life.
Father, I know that no purpose of yours can be withheld from you.
So Lord, i ask your kingdom come and your will be done both in Renoncer's life and this congregation of believers. Strengthen this dear one's heart with a supply of your holy spirit.
Grant your servant extra boldness and gentleness to stand firm for you, Lord. Grant, also, i pray wisdom. Let the way be made clear before your own, Lord.
Though the darkness is thick, your grace is waaay thicker.

Blessed be your name, Father.
Grant these things, i pray, in the name of Jesus, Amen

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/27 12:44

Thank you Theophila.
I felt a measure of grace as I read your prayer; that much more strength to get through the fire.

Often, I feel weak though, but I am confident that God's power is made perfect in weakness.

God bless you richly,
Renoncer

Re: - posted by Theophila (), on: 2010/11/27 17:45

Man of God,
God's strength is perfected in our weakness. He never lets us have more than we can bear.

Grace to you, my brother!

PS: as a fellow new englander, i feel a kinship with your situation in your congregation. Jesus is Victorious!

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/28 21:07

Wonderful update:

God answered our prayers! Honestly, apart from God's serious intervention, I don't know how it's possible! I'll keep praying, though, because the battle for people's souls is far from over.

1) The church decided to go forward with the evangelism program. Details will still be confirmed, but they have agreed to "get out of their comfort zone" (as one member phrased it). Also, providentially, God also sent people randomly to our church, one of whom said he would like to participate in evangelism.

2) My friend who I've challenged about homosexuality came back to the church! He attended an English lesson/Bible study. He's only holding by a thread, though. I'll keep praying for him.

Thank you so much! Praise the Lord for these amazing answers to prayers. The pastor told me how surprised he was that so much support was given. Only by God's grace. Praise the Lord, for He is good; His steadfast love endures forever!

Re: - posted by Joyful_Heart, on: 2010/11/29 1:56

Praise God! I will keep praying. God is so faithful as it is His Will we share Jesus. It is the Lord who opens eyes to see and hearts to receive as we continue to pray. All glory to God. The battle is the Lord's. Hallelujah!