

Anaheim SDA Church
Mid-week Pastor's Update
January 11, 2017



“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

What a great promise! The God of heaven, who so easily could give his attention to so many other things, wants to hear from us! In this passage he’s asking us to be in humble dialogue with Him!

Surely most of us, on the surface at least, acknowledge the profoundness of this concept. But if you’re anything like me, you find yourself praying surprisingly little; embarrassingly little, even, given the opportunity we have. Why is this?

Maintaining a personal prayer life is tough. So often when we pray, we seem to get nothing but silence in return. Meanwhile, the buzz and chirp and beep of so many devices and appliances call us constantly to their attention. What hope is there, then, of ever finding the “still small voice”?

Prayer is fundamentally a mystery to us. We don’t know how the Holy Spirit communicates our prayers up to Jesus & God the Father in heaven, we don’t know how God could be paying attention to all of us simultaneously, as if we were the only one seeking his attention. We don’t know how or even if our prayers are meant to affect God’s decisions somehow, or if they’re intended only to change us.

Overwhelmed with all these questions with no seeming answers in scriptures, it’s very understandable that we as often as not find ourselves taking care of daily tasks, or watching entertainment, rather than investing that time in personal prayer and devotions.

Despite all these obstacles, though, and despite all the unanswered questions we have, the Bible comes back with one unequivocal verdict on prayer: we should do it! “What about all my questions?” we ask. “DO IT!” the Bible says. “What about all my doubts?” We say. “DO IT!” is

its reply. “What if I don’t know it’s working?” We question. “DO IT!” is the scripture’s response.

When it comes down to it, prayer is a matter of faith. It is truly where ‘the rubber meets the road’ in our faith life, because it takes real time, and real discipline, to do it. We have to trust that God is there, trust that God cares, trust that God hears, and trust that God responds in his perfect will to our prayers (Hebrews 11:6).

It is also paradoxical, but beautiful, that the God who knows our needs before we ask (Matt. 6:8), still wants to hear from us! I don’t know how frequently I cut off my wife in the middle of her sentence saying “I know. I already talked to them about that” or something similar. But God does quite the opposite! Though all-knowing, God longs, and loves, to hear the voice of his children coming to him in faith. This is incredibly pleasing to God! (Heb. 11:6)

You likely know that this week we are gathering together nightly to pray for God’s guidance and blessing in our lives. Whether or not you’ve been able to attend so far, I pray you are making time for personal prayer time in your daily routine. If you haven’t, it’s never too late to start! Pray with your families, pray with a prayer partner over the phone, pray alone in your closet. Come to the church any of the future nights this week, or take a look at the attached files which outline what we’ve been going over. Just pray in faith! The prayer of faith is powerful, effective, and avails much (James 5:15-16). We have God’s own guarantee! What more convincing do we need?

God bless you all.

Pastor Mark Tatum

Prayer List:

- Please pray for continued blessings in our special Week of Prayer meetings. If you haven’t been able to attend previous nights, but would like to begin, please do! Find a couple of our scripture/prayer model sheets attached.
- Esther Sellers is praising the Lord that situations have improved for a couple of her counseling patients. She still asks us to pray though, as some of them are still going through hard times.
- Please continue to pray for Giancarlo Angulo, who is gradually recovering from injuries due to the car accident he was in a few weeks ago. Pray for continued minimization of pain, and a full recovery for him. Thankfully, Margarito, who was also involved in the accident, has fully recovered.

- Please pray for several members who have on-going health problems, that God could minimize their symptoms, and, if it be His will, heal them, bringing them back to good health. Pray for the doctors and medical procedures being undergone as well.
- Pray for several ‘prodigal’ children of church members who have left the faith, whose parents are praying fervently that they come back. (The Lord himself knows this feeling many times over!)
- Pray for our church as a whole, and all its volunteers, that we may work efficiently and happily in ministering to our members, families, and overall community.
- Pray for our leaders, both local and national, that they may make wise decisions, and that we may have a peaceful and stable society to do our Spiritual work in (1 Tim. 2:1-4, John 9:4)

Announcements:

Week of Prayer: Thanks to all those who have been coming out and helping our week of prayer be a big blessing! Week of prayer continues each evening this week at 7:00 in the church sanctuary. May the blessings continue through 2017 as we see God working His will in our lives!

Adult Sabbath School: Each week, our Adult Sabbath School program starts at 9:30 AM in the Sanctuary. These are the topics for this month:

- Jan. 14 – the Power of Personal Testimony (pt. 2) with Dr. Roger Tatum
- Jan. 21 – the Power of Personal Testimony (pt. 3)
- Jan. 28 – the Power of Personal Testimony (pr. 4)

In addition, remember that our Sabbath School quarterly theme for first qtr 2017 is “The Holy Spirit and Spirituality”! I can’t think of a better theme as we go into our New Year, and our month of Spiritual Emphasis. ☺

Start Your Sabbaths in the Word! We will be holding a weekly Bible-study on Friday evenings from 6-8 p.m., with Nicholas Tomeo and Pr. Mark. This Friday, the 6th, will be our first meeting. We will study some of the Old Testament prophets, beginning with Isaiah. Come and enjoy fellowship as we discern God’s will for our lives. Refreshments will be provided as well.

Annual Birthday Party: Mark your calendars! Our church-wide Birthday Party is scheduled for January 21. This is where we celebrate everyone’s birthdays at the same time. So if you never get to have a birthday party, now is your chance! If you have any questions, you can ask Maritza in the church office, or Mrs. Furness.

Food Bank Hours & Distribution: We are open every Saturday from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the room adjacent to the fellowship hall. Please share about our Food Bank with your relatives, friends, neighbors, or anyone who might benefit from receiving food. We are also looking for

people who can volunteer to during the week to pick up food from grocery stores, take extra food on the weekends to homeless people (and we can suggest places to take it to). If you would like to volunteer, please contact Vivian Rodriguez at ([714](tel:7144042325)) [404-2325](tel:4042325) or via the Church Office.

Pastor's Office Hours: Both this week and next, Pastor Mark plans to be at the church from 2-6 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday. Feel free to come by to talk/pray/study the word together. If these times are not convenient to you, or you would like to schedule a special meeting at a certain place/time, don't hesitate to contact Pr. Mark at the information below.

Weekly Pastor's E-mail: If you know someone who benefit from receiving this weekly devotional thought, please have them contact Pastor Mark at prmarktatum@gmail.com, or ([714](tel:7146501245)) [650-1245](tel:6501245) with contact info to be added to this e-mail list.

Alright! I think that pretty well sums-up what's going on at the church lately! Go give yourself a thumbs-up in the mirror if you read this far. As always, we pray that your week is blessed until we meet again. God bless you and yours in this New Year.

Sincerely,
Pastor Mark Tatum