

QUIET TIME GUIDE
FOR Thursday 6/19/08
FROM JACK MILLWOOD

Greeting:

I get many notes daily regarding my quiet times. I got this one this past week from some one who will remain anonymous. It was about Psalm 103 that was upcoming. In an attempt to answer that question and in an attempt to help us all, I have written today's quiet time. The e mail said, "I was anticipating and waiting to hear what God has to say through your quiet times of Psalm 103. This is the psalm I read a few weeks back when I was very angry at God when I read "He heals all your diseases" and I was crying to him "Why don't you heal me?" This is a great question and one we have all asked in some way or other. We have all prayed and wondered why God did not answer our prayer. Some times it was about healing but sometimes it was about some other request. This question came as a result of these verses in Psalm 103.

Scripture for today:

Psalm 103: 1 Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. 2 Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits- 3 who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,...

Life Application:

There are many reasons why we do not see our prayers answered. I want to share ten reasons why we do not see our prayers answered. Let me however, point out that one reason is that we do not pray. The Bible says "we have not because we ask not." Some times we ask and it seems as if God does not answer. He always answers but the answer he gives some times is "NO." Some times the answer is "yes." Sometime the answer is "wait awhile." We tend to think that any answer except yes is not an answer. Here are ten problem areas in most people's prayer life. The first is we do not realize we have UNCONFESSED SIN. The Bible says "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." Psalm 68:18 (NIV). It also says "How often have we sinned and turned against you, the Lord God? Our sins condemn us! We have done wrong." Isaiah 59:12 (CEV). Again it says, "...The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results." James 5:16 (NLT) The point is that if I am disobeying God in some areas of my life it effects how my prayers are answered. Here is a **Principle to remember**: Before I pray for a change in CIRCUMSTANCES, I should pray for a change in CHARACTER. A second problem area is an UNFORGIVING spirit. Matthew 18:21; 5:23, 24 **Principle to remember**: Our relationship with OTHERS must be right before our relationship can be right with our FATHER. Another problem area to our prayer life is An UNSURRENDERED will. "Yet, even when you do pray, your prayers are not answered, because you pray just for selfish reasons." James 4:3 (CEV) **Principle to remember**: We ask and do not RECEIVE because we ask WITH THE WRONG MOTIVE. We can be asking for a good thing for a bad reason. God is concerned about our heart and our motive. Another problem is a disregard for OTHERS. "The Lord looks down from heaven and sees the whole human race." Psalm 33:13; Romans 8:28 **Principle to remember**: When God sees me, he also sees the CROWD.

God hears the coaches on both teams who are praying to win. He hears the golfer praying for no rain and hears the farmer praying for rain. We are not the only people praying. Only God can handle that load. His answer to our prayer affects the answer to other's prayers. Another area of concern is a disregard for SOVEREIGNTY. In other words, he is in charge not me. **Principle to remember:** If ALL your prayers were answered, you, not God, would be in CONTROL of EVERYTHING. No parent gives a kid everything he asks for. God knows what is best and we do not. Another problem area is a lack of FAITH.

"If any of you need wisdom, you should ask God, and it will be given to you. God is generous and won't correct you for asking. But when you ask for something, you must have faith and not doubt. Anyone who doubts is like an ocean wave tossed around in a storm. If you are that kind of person, you can't make up your mind, and you surely can't be trusted. So don't expect the Lord to give you anything at all." James 1:5-7 (CEV)

"...because of your faith you will be healed." Matthew 7:20 (CEV) This is the reason every time but can be a reason some time. A **Principle to remember:** To make my prayer a force, not a farce, I must hunt for the QUESTION MARKS in my life. Questions like, "What keeps me from believing and trusting?" Some times another problem in our prayer life is a lack of PERSISTANCE. ...*The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.*" James 5:16 (NLT) some times God wants you to persist in prayer so that he can do something in your heart during the process. A

Principle to remember: Prayer doesn't CHANGE GOD; it CHANGES ME. A eighth problem often is a lack of ACTION. Some times God wants you to do something about what you are praying about. *"My friends, what good is it to say you have faith, when you don't do anything to show that you really do have faith? Can that kind of faith save you? If you know someone who doesn't have any clothes or food, you shouldn't just say, 'I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to eat.' What good is it to say this, unless you do something to help? Faith that doesn't lead us to do good deeds is all alone and dead!"* James 2:14-17 (CEV) A **Principle to remember:** My need is not faith AND works, but faith THAT works. Another major area of concern in our prayer life is a misunderstanding of GOD'S WAYS. *"My thought are completely different from yours' says the Lord. And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."* Isaiah 55:8,9 (CEV) this is especially true in the area addressed in this quiet time. We do not always know what God is doing in our lives. Paul learned to "*glory in his weakness*" so that Christ could be exalted. I know that I personally have learned more about God through my struggles and difficulties than I have in my victories. Here is a **Principle to remember:** GOD'S

thoughts are not OUR thoughts. Along the same lines this a real issue. a misunderstanding of GOD'S PURPOSE. Some times God wants to use what we are praying for him to take away. One lady prayed hard that her son would not move to a certain city because it was big and she feared the bad influences. The kid moved and it was in that city he met a man who lead him to Christ and he made an impact on the world for Christ. God had a different plan. Here is a **Principle:** God may not give me my FIRST desire, so that he can give me his SUPREME desire. Paul had a physical problem that he prayed three times for God to take away. Paul came to understand that God had a plan to use his physical problem for a higher purpose.

Spiritual exercise:

This verse in Psalms does not guarantee that God will heal every sick person or, on command, answer any prayer with a “yes” when it comes to a problem in our lives. I suggest two things relative to this. Test yourself. Go through the ten problem areas above and see how they fit in your life. Second, trust him. Trust that he knows best. Trust him to heal and trust him to give you the power to deal with anything in your life that he determines to leave there. He has not promised to take away all physical suffering in life. Many godly people in Scripture dealt with problems and pain. He can, and does at times, remove these problems. At times he uses them and teaches you and others through the problem. Trust him either way.

Thought for the day.

Trust even when you do not understand.