

October 2017

→ **MINISTRY UPDATE** ←

David Nichols — President (405) 613-3120  
Dondino Melchorie — V.P. (702) 688-3165  
Ron Minnick — Sec. Treasurer (405) 473-2378

# UPDATE

Thank you all for your prayers regarding David Nichols' mom. She has passed away to be with the Lord and we are asking that you pray for the Lord's peace and comfort to be with the family during this time.

—Hand Up Ministry

## PRAYERS MATTER

Some of us spend a lot of time wondering if God's listening to us. If our prayers aren't answered within our set timeframe, if we ask to hear from Him but only notice silence, we can feel as though He's not paying attention to our needs.

But God is always listening to us, even if we don't hear Him. More often than not when we can't come to terms with why He hasn't given us what we want or made it clear why we can't have it it's not because He's not paying attention to our needs, He

does constantly, but because we're not paying attention to them.

How many times have you asked God for something, felt that He was punishing you by not giving it to you and then later on discovered that He was actually protecting you? How many times have you desired something but not actually prayed for it, instead hoping that God would just make it happen?

It's crucial for us to remember that even when we don't hear, see or feel God's response, He is there. Losing confidence in prayer as a tool to communicate with Him will not only be detrimental to our prayer life but to our spiritual life as a whole.

If you've been talking to God and you're starting to lose faith that His ears are open to your prayers or a particular request, let's refresh your memory when it comes to what you need to do to reach out to Him and have Him respond.

**John 9:31**—We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will.

**Psalms 65:2-3**—You who answer prayer, to you all people will come. When we were overwhelmed by sins, you forgave our transgressions.

**1 John 5:14-15**—This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears

us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

**Psalm 66:17-20**—I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened and has heard my prayer. Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!

**Mark 11:25**—And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.

**1 Peter 3:12**—For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

**John 16:24**—Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

—*Jeff Wendel*

## TESTIMONY

I grew up in a split marriage family, and lived most my childhood with my dad and grandparents. My grandmother is Japanese, and as a child she and my dad were buddies. I struggled with the “idea” of God for a long time.

From the time I graduated high school until I was 26 years old, I was a heavy drug and alcohol user. I had

lived in the U.K. With my mom while I was 19 and started drinking a lot.

Upon my return to the U.S., I found out what my M.O.S. (job title) was really going to be, I went A.W.O.L. After my release from the army, I started hitch-hiking across America. While doing this for years, I experienced a lot of hard drugs and “free” living. It was during this period of my life that I made really stupid choices that led to my incarceration.

Years of that kind of living went on. Then in December of 2009, I went to live with my grandparents outside of Washington D.C. While living there, I stopped using hard drugs but was still in the grips of alcohol.

After receiving Christ in August of 2010, I became a truck driver for the second time. Since I didn't stay in church to get a solid foundation in Christ, I continued to live in my drunken life style. That was until I was arrested in Feb of 2012, and forced to become sober. Thank God.

While in prison I really started to understand what a relationship with God was, though personal study of the word and Bible correspondence courses. I also graduated V.B.I. (Victory Bible Institute) while in prison..

Although the whole experience of prison was not good, I thank God that I was able to get sober and seek Him more. I also praise God for bringing me through and giving me a place to live while I get on my feet. A place to give me a Hand-Up! Amen and thanks be to our Lord Jesus Christ!—*David Hill*

## HOPE

Have you every felt like there was no hope? Have you felt like the light at the end of the tunnel was probably just an oncoming train?

We need God's help to lift up our heads, hearts, and hands. We have to build positive Christian hope. Here are 10 reasons to hope:

1. Hope moves us forwards: Christian hope is a realistic expectation of and joyful longing for future good and glory based upon the reliable word of God. The more we long for the future, the less we will yearn for the past. Hope deletes regrets and underlines expectation. It diminishes drag and increases momentum.

2. Hope energizes the present: It is worth living today because the eternal tomorrow is so much brighter. What's doomsday for most, is coronation day for us. What is most dread, we desire.

3. Hope lightens our darkness: Hope does not deny nor remove the reality of dark and painful realities. However it does shine a bright light into these valleys and points to the sunrise at the end of them.

4. Hope increases faith: Faith fuels hope, but hope also fuels faith. As Hebrews 11 makes very clear, hope and faith are very closely tied together, the one energizing the other. Without faith we cannot soar in hope, but without hope faith will limp home. The greatest believers are the greatest hoppers...and vice versa.

5. Hope is infectious: Just as we can drag others down by blaming others and moping, so we can inspire and motivate through our inspiring hoping. It

not only encourages other sagging Christians but it also impacts depressed unbelievers who cannot but ask a reason for the hope they see in us (1 Pet. 3:15).

6. Hope is healing: When I counsel depressed people, one of the first things I do is try to give them hope. By definition, depression is a sense of hopelessness. Things cannot and will not get better. That's why I want to give them the hope that in the vast majority of cases, they will get better, there is a way out, and there are things that they can do to help themselves in their felt helplessness. That hope itself is a huge step towards healing.

7. Hope is practical: Hope does not mean we just sit and wait for Utopia to appear. Not at all! Hope motivates action. When we hope for better days for the church, we serve the church. When we hope for the conversion of our children, we are motivated to share the Gospel with them. When we hope for God's blessing on His Word, we listen to it much more passionately. Hope produces action.

8. Hope purifies: Whatever suffering we experience in this world, the day is coming when we will not be just called sons of God, we will be like the Son of God. This is what inspires and motivates the apostle to persevere to the end and to persevere in holiness. "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:1-3).

9. Hope stabilizes in the storm: There are sixty-six drawings of anchors in the catacombs, the caves and tunnels that

persecuted Christians hid in during the Roman persecutions. Hope was their anchor during those dark and stormy days (Heb. 6:19; 10:34). Like the anchor, hope grabs what is out of sight. As one puritan put it: “The cable of faith casts out the anchor of hope and lays hold of the steadfast rock of God’s promises.”

10. Hope defends: Paul also depicts hope as a defensive helmet (Eph. 6:17; 1 Thess. 5:8) that must not be taken off and laid aside until the battle is over. The helmet also points us to the area of greatest vulnerability and danger – our mind or thoughts. That’s where Satan usually works to present reasons to doubt and despair. And that’s why we need our minds daily renewed by the power of hope and wisdom that He has called us to live by. Galatians 3:11 says, “*Clearly no one is justified before God by the law (by obeying God’s Word perfectly) because, “The righteous will live by faith.”*”

It is by faith—thanking Him continually for rescuing us—rescuing me from the pit I was in before knowing Him—this all done out of His love and sacrifice of Jesus—His life for mine, that He has called us to live. It is by faith—embracing His never-ending love and help and involvement in our lives and sharing His willingness to help others, that He has called us to love. **This is real Christianity and nothing else is!** It’s not about how good we are although living for the Lord is very important. It’s not about our own self-righteousness—an oxymoron in God’s

world! What Jesus did—not what we do in our own efforts to be good is what true Christianity is! So... Forgive me Lord when I go through the motions of Christianity which becomes dead religion, instead of leaning on and embracing you by faith each day. It is the only acceptable sacrifice you are looking for and the living sacrifice I want to offer to you each day!

Let’s get this right. Let’s lean on Jesus everyday. Let’s cry out for and ask Him again and again to help us find ways to touch others with His love and share the story of God’s transforming power at work in all those who truly live by faith!

In the first chapter of Romans 12, what it basically says is: So here is what I want you to do, God helping you: take your everyday ordinary life – your sleeping, your eating, your going-to-work, and walking-around-life – and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for Him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you live in it without thinking. Instead fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. —*Jeff Wendel*

**We appreciate all our partners and donors. It is your support that enables us to assist individuals back into society as new brothers and sisters in Christ.**

