

Harmony Presbyterian Church

Prayer for Week of April 13 - 19, 2011

(Prayer Requests also found at www.HarmonyPres.com)

We finish chapter 7 of the Gospel of John and move into chapter 8 this week. Jesus is moving us through the places we reject Him and find it hard to stand with Him, and to the realization it is only with His involvement in our lives that we can stand at all. As we finish up this Lenten season, and move into Holy Week, and on the end of the month, the Day of Resurrection, these readings are important. Palm Sunday we welcome Jesus with great enthusiasm, and by Friday we yell for his crucifixion. To be his faithful servants, to trust Him, we need much more conversation (prayer) with Him, and we need to let Him lead us - trust Him to lead us. Hopefully these prayers will open you to that conversation with Jesus and lead you to deeper faith and trust. The Kingdom of God waits your involvement.

As usual, any ideas or suggestions are gladly received at the writer's end, since long ago we found we can't think up all the good stuff alone. - Larry
(For individual prayer requests, check www.HarmonyPres.com go to "News" page and there You will find the "Prayer Requests" with the latest prayer needs & these listed on the bottom.)

Wednesday, April 13

John 7: (The Message) ⁴³So there was a split in the crowd over him. ⁴⁴Some went so far as wanting to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him.

⁴⁵That's when the Temple police reported back to the high priests and Pharisees, who demanded, "Why didn't you bring him with you?"

⁴⁶The police answered, "Have you heard the way he talks? We've never heard anyone speak like this man."

⁴⁷The Pharisees said, "Are you carried away like the rest of the rabble? ⁴⁸You don't see any of the leaders believing in him, do you? Or any from the Pharisees? ⁴⁹It's only this crowd, ignorant of God's Law, that is taken in by him—and damned."

O God of creation and life, we are fickle people, who blow hot and cold at the weirdest times and seldom are predictable. We know the feelings of the Pharisees, we have that religious streak in us that learned something once upon a time and we just won't let You inform us of Your truth since it is not how we want it to be. We love You, believe in You, and yet we will stay quiet or even worse, contribute to the negative things opponents say about You. Our sin trips us up, again and again. We meet You and are set on fire by You. We desire to be with You always. And then we get with our old, non-Christian friends and we find fault with You, just to be include with them. Forgive us, heal us, convince us that we can stand up for You. When people we trusted - religious leaders, political leader, educators, tell us we will be damned for knowing You, we get scared. We are insecure in our faith. It is hard being Your disciple because our world is so pervasive and it is so subtly evil, that when we stand with You, we are threatened, punished and pulled back to their Pharisaic view of existing. Deepen our faith, and let us trust and walk with You, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Thursday, April 14

John 7: [\(The Message\)](#) ⁵⁰Nicodemus, the man who had come to Jesus earlier and was both a ruler and a Pharisee, spoke up. ⁵¹“Does our Law decide about a man’s guilt without first listening to him and finding out what he is doing?”

⁵²But they cut him off. “Are you also campaigning for the Galilean?” ⁵³Examine the evidence. See if any prophet ever comes from Galilee.”

Then they all went home.

O God, You know me, inside and out, better than I allow myself to know me. You see my fears and worries, You hear my cries and rejoice with me in my delights and successes. I come before You today, hearing Nicodemus echo in my head. He stood by You, supported You, believed in You and acted in faith for You. You loved him and delighted in him. He challenged those who could make him poor or deride him or ostracize him. He stood up for You and the Pharisees cut him off and left. I get scared that this could happen to me. I so like the applause of those around me. I am so insecure that I crave attention. I measure what I say so as not to incur static, much less anger or reproach or abandonment. And here I meet You - loving me, calling me to stand with You and let You be my support. I am conflicted and I need Your Holy Spirit to be able to move - it is more than I can do, I know what I want, but I am weak without You. Lord, I believe, help me with my unbelief. Amen.

Friday, April 15

John 8: [\(The Message\)](#) ¹Jesus went across to Mount Olives, ²but he was soon back in the Temple again. Swarms of people came to him. He sat down and taught them.

Jesus, You are always there - right where I look, there You are. In the temple, in the garden, where people gather, there You sit, quiet and comfortable, in charge and at ease. You break off Your private times of prayer and meditation, You interrupt Your Father/Son times and come to teach me - and all the others too. You call us to Yourself, and we come. It feels so natural to sit and listen to You, that I feel I was made to always sit at Your feet, to listen to You. Not only that, I find I love it, I could do it for ever, I pray, let me do so for eternity with You. Jesus, You are engaging, relevant, hopeful, healing - all I need is fed in You and even parts of me I wasn't aware of, are cared for by You. Thanks You for being there where I can sit and be with You. Amen.

Saturday, April 16

John 8: [\(The Message\)](#) ³The religion scholars and Pharisees led in a woman who had been caught in an act of adultery. They stood her in plain sight of everyone ⁴and said, “Teacher, this woman was caught red-handed in the act of adultery. ⁵Moses, in the Law, gives orders to stone such persons. What do you say?” ⁶They were trying to trap him into saying something incriminating so they could bring charges against him.

Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger in the dirt. ⁷They kept at him, badgering him. He straightened up and said, “The sinless one among you, go first: Throw the stone.”

⁸Bending down again, he wrote some more in the dirt.

O Jesus, I feel part of this story. My life hasn't engaged in the same sins, but I am still guilty of having been in both places, the one caught and the one judging. I want to be so right, so self-sure that I am always startled to look up and there You sit. I am

filled with fear of You discovering how broken I am, yet I know You already know. I try to be good, righteous, and legal in all I do as if my acting could cover the underlying brokenness, but You really know me. I am usually just 'covering my tail' and trying to buy time to find my excuse. The stain of sin is so depressingly deep in me that even when I try to behave, I mess up. You scribble in the dirt, send messages in video, song, print, and conversation, all to remind me of the 10 Commandments that should guide my life. You more than subtly speak to me, trying to keep me from being in her role, one who violates relationships and lives for my own pleasures. And at the same time, You call me from being the one who righteously wants to punish another for something I also participate in. O Jesus, You are truth that sears away the false veneer of my choices, revealing the brokenness of my life. You are the law that calls me back to Your covenant. You are the grace that calls off my judgment and violence that wants to harm others in the name of love. How crazy I am and how lovingly You redeem me and make me grow into Your image. Save me from being the sinful me and let all my actions look like You. Amen

Sunday, April 17

John 8: [\(The Message\)](#) ⁹Hearing that, they walked away, one after another, beginning with the oldest. The woman was left alone. ¹⁰Jesus stood up and spoke to her. "Woman, where are they? Does no one condemn you?"

¹¹"No one, Master."

"Neither do I," said Jesus. "Go on your way. From now on, don't sin."

Lord, we have so miscast You in our human drama. We continually pose You as the mean and uncaring judge, the one who carries unreal expectations of perfection that are established to catch us in brokenness and then dump on us. We live in fear of You, fear of Your power & perfection, and our guilt keeps us from intimacy with You. Yet here, we read of Your true loving nature - You are interested in redeeming us, in saving us, in finding us moving toward Your healthy and gracious model of life. There is no game being played to catch us doing wrong, instead just Your consuming gracious love. The woman knew she was guilty, but You instead of judging her, forgave her and called her to new life. 'Go, sin no more.' Your freedom is there for me as for her. You forgive my actions, set me free to live the path You created me for, and You call me to accept Your Lordship over my life. That is the only way I can sin no more, to have You, Jesus, at the center of my very being. Thank You, Master, for my life. Thank You for Your gentleness toward me. Amen.

Monday, April 18

John 8: [\(The Message\)](#) ¹²Jesus once again addressed them: "I am the world's Light. No one who follows me stumbles around in the darkness. I provide plenty of light to live in."

Jesus, You are the light of the world, an imagery that is amazing. I am afraid of the dark, the places where evil hides to devour the innocent. I am scared of what I can't see in the darkness, of falling into some dangerous place, of bumping into things I do not want to know about. I think of all who are in the dark, those in deep depression, those in addiction to something deadly, those scared and frightened people living without freedom or hope. I sense You as the only hope, as the light that shines in the dark of every lost

soul and brings Your illuminating presence. Light can be harsh and edgy or soft and sleep inducing. You are both at various times in my life. You are warmth, You are energy, You move things just by being, You illumine, You free and bring liberty. You also reveal my brokenness, show my illness and reveal my sin. In Your light, growth occurs and like plants, we blossom and bear fruit for You. You are the light that brightens all my world, that lets me live in wholeness and joy. You are sufficient to all my needs, more than enough light to make life wonderful. Graham Kendrick caught it in his hymn: Shine, Jesus, Shine. Fill this land with the Father's glory. Blaze, Spirit, Blaze. Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light. Shine on me, Lord, shine on me. Amen.

Tuesday, April 19

John 8: (The Message) ¹³The Pharisees objected, "All we have is your word on this. We need more than this to go on."

¹⁴Jesus replied, "You're right that you only have my word. But you can depend on it being true. I know where I've come from and where I go next. You don't know where I'm from or where I'm headed. ¹⁵You decide according to what you can see and touch. I don't make judgments like that. ¹⁶But even if I did, my judgment would be true because I wouldn't make it out of the narrowness of my experience but in the largeness of the One who sent me, the Father. ¹⁷That fulfills the conditions set down in God's Law: that you can count on the testimony of two witnesses. ¹⁸And that is what you have: You have my word and you have the word of the Father who sent me."

What an astounding argument is raised against You, Lord, that Your word would not be enough to stake our lives on. You are God! What more could we stake our lives on - if You can fail, we are totally lost. You are the Word, You created all that is by Your word alone - You spoke and all became. Only You have the power to save us since You alone made us. You are the only one who has been here from before when there was a here to be alive in. You alone are the voice of truth, the absolute veracity upon which we take a pledge to speak the truth in court. You are the essence of reality, if You are false, there is no truth anywhere. You Lord, You are the only one we can trust. In the face of those who reconstruct history to satisfy their own purposes, we find You refreshingly self authenticating. You are who You say, and You are still here to prove it. All who try to pull You down are gone, but Your word lasts, carries on and still speaks to us. Let us stand in Your truth, and trust You fully. You, Jesus, are the Word. Amen.

GENERAL PRAYER AREAS

Generic Prayer needs that seem to always be there, a list of categories or topics You can fill-in with Your prayers:

Prayers Especially for Japan with the Earthquake/Tsunami/Nuclear disaster going on. For New Zealand with the massive earthquake they had several weeks ago. For Lybia & other Islamic nations who are having demonstrations for change - some good, some questionable, but all need our prayers for peace and wholeness.

Pray For: Family, Relationship, Friends, Children, Parents, Divorce, Births, Deaths, finances

For: Illness, healing, broken bones, broken spirits, emotional problems, depression, Rage, addictions, surgery's, cancer, suicidal thoughts, unknown emerging issues

For: Employment, harassment, promotion, challenges, opportunities, entrepreneurs, retirement, service, & businesses that they use Christ-like methods in all their actions,

For: workers that they are safe in the work place and especially for American workers that they can stay employed and produce good products; for the unemployed that their spirits are lifted up and they keep trying to find that job – open opportunities for all who want to work

For: Bills, stewardship, debts, loans, homes to live in, cars that work, for Banks and financial institutions, the Government's debt load, (& Harmony's debt load)

For: the world – for Racism & Slavery that is bigger than ever, the poor, medical needs, economic needs, development needs, moral and social needs,

For: people and nations on every continent and island area, for floods, earthquakes, typhoons & hurricanes, tornados, fires, avalanches & blizzards

For: The environment, prayer for all the critters that have no voice, from the seemingly least to the biggest, prayers for their environment, prayers for poachers, for those who pollute, for the clean-up of polluted areas, for wisdom & good intentions in Governments, environmental groups, citizens as well as industry & business.

For: Harmony & all churches, faithfulness, trust in God, belief in the word of God, for those who are not saved, for those who sit in church and don't yet know God, for unity in the Body of Christ. For other religions, especially those who consider us their enemy, prayer for peace, and God's Spirit to work

For Peace, for our enemies, for our Military, for Military families, for terrorist groups, for all who use violence and evil means to take away freedom and liberty,

For our Government, at all levels, that they look to God for leadership and vision, and have the courage to follow.

For our courts that they seek truth and practice justice in all their actions, always eschewing politics, power, position or bribes.

For our fellow citizens that they become active and involved in the political process and vote, that we exercise our Constitutional rights under guidance of God's Spirit.

For all the governments of the world, for an end to racism, despots & tyrants, rule by pitting groups against groups. An end of genocides, oppressions of minorities, withholding education or food or medicine from anyone.

For: Immigrants from lands with failed economies or governments, for patience and loving action by states and federal government, for safety for all people, for those who are refugees and those who have no home, for our debate about those here illegally.

For all who do not know Christ as their Lord and Savior, that they will hear the good news and respond in faith.

(Any more to add, anything we forgot? Let us know at RevKunter@aol.com, we'll add them in too.

