



FOCUSED LIVING PRAYER

March - April 2013

Six months ago we sat down for lunch, caught up on our families and exchanged a few sports highlights. Then, he dropped the bomb. "Perry, what is joy? People think I've got it all, but after 45 years I've never experienced joy? What do I do? Where do I go? How can I get it? I'm desperate!" For the next hour we discussed the following insights from the truth of God's Word.

◆ Pursue **joy** not **happiness**. ◆ Happiness is a **cheap substitute** for joy. ◆ Joy is not a **feeling**, it is a **decision**. ◆ Joy is found in a **Person**, not a philosophy, program, personality or formula. ◆ Joy is a character trait of the heart when a man decides to **walk with God** rather than **whine about his circumstances**. ◆ Happiness is **built on circumstances** but joy is **based on God's character**. ◆ Joy is **permanent** while happiness **temporary**. ◆ Happiness depends on what **we do** or what we have (position, power, performance, possessions). Joy depends on what **God has already done** for us through grace in Christ at the Cross (forgiveness, mercy salvation,)! ◆ Joy (*chara*) is built on the firm foundation of God's grace (*charis*) and cannot be experienced apart from it. ◆ Joy is not the **absence of suffering** but the **presence of the Lord**. ◆ Joy begins when a man starts to **enjoy God** because he understands how much **God enjoys him**. ◆ Men don't need to have the best of everything when they realize **God has given them the best of Himself** in Christ!

- ◆ "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." John 15:11
- ◆ "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!" Phil 4:4
- ◆ "In Your presence is fullness of joy." Psalm 16:11
- ◆ "And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." Acts 13:52
- ◆ "I will see you again and your heart will rejoice and no one will take your joy away from you." John 16:22
- ◆ "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe in Him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Rom 15:13
- ◆ "To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy." Jude 24

Because my friend now knows Christ, he can daily experience joy inexpressible! May you walk in the joy that is yours in Christ this Easter season.

Ministry Prayer Requests:

MEN'S FORUMS

Pray that God would help each man who attends the forums to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" as we start a new forum theme, "In the Grip of His Grace" from the book of 2Timothy.

DISCIPLESHIP

Pray for the GRIP groups (**Godly Realities In Progress / Growing Relationships In Prayer / Guys Really In Pursuit**). These are discipleship groups geared toward men who are "owning" their spiritual journeys and leading other men along."

Bowers group meets **3/18** and **4/22**. Andes group meets **3/28**, **4/25**. Buck group meets **3/21** and **4/20**.

Pray also for the men who will attend the Advance getaway on April 11,12 in Clinton that they take next steps in their following of Jesus.

DAYBREAK CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTER

Would you join us in praying for a point person(s) to take the leadership of the Daybreak men's ministry that God has birthed through us. Praise for the good connections with the men who attend the parenting class in Jan-Feb.

OUTREACH

Two shooting outreach events are in the works for March and April: Guns n Roses shooting event for fathers and daughters and a Shootout outreach. The purpose is to have a fun shared experience and make the connection to having a spiritual "aim" in life.

CALENDAR ITEMS FOR PRAYER

March 22 – Initial meeting for the Guatemala team (trip is 7/6 – 7/13)

April 6-9 – Perry preaching and speaking in Philadelphia at Christ Covenant Church

April 14 – Core gathering

April 21 – David preaches at Columbia Crossroads Church

PERSONAL PRAYER & PRAISE

BOWERS FAMILY

Perry:

- **Pace:** Pray for a steady endurance and times of deep heart/soul refreshment as the ministry is at full throttle for the year. I would remain faithful to the Sabbath as God has commanded.
- **Face:** that I would seek and enjoy the Father's face during my daily time of prayer and Scripture reading.
- **Grace:** that I would understand the depth of the Lord's grace in my life and reflect His grace in my attitudes, thoughts, motivations, words, and actions.
- **Marketplace:** that the Lord would open many doors for compassionate and effective ministry with men who do not yet know what it means to follow Christ.
- **Replace:** my focus word for 2013 is "repent" so that the Lord would help me to replace in my life...lies for truth; complaining with contentment; fear with faith; worry with worship; and dead idols with the living Christ.

Janet: Janet: Stillness before the Lord as I discern resetting priorities and how to invest my time in this season of life. For accountability to address some health issues I've put "on hold" during the busyness of caring for Perry's mom and my mom.

Joy and Eddie Centurion: Health for the children. Being "stuck inside" due to lots of rain, the kids have passed around the stomach bug and now the respiratory virus plus the usual "fussy nights" of teething. Please pray for healing, sleep, strength and energy for Joy in particular as she cares for Lulu, Ezra, Ezequiel, & Elenor.

Pray for Eddie as he leads the way in planning Outreach events for New City Fellowship for the summer.

Megan and Marc Hunsaker: The Hunsakers thank God for an answer to prayer and more direction for their future: Marc was accepted into the PhD program at Michigan State in East Lansing. Please pray for them as they face the challenge of networking for jobs in central Michigan. They are praying to find contacts in Michigan that can help them get their foot in the door.

ANDES FAMILY

“Fill us with your Spirit, Lord, so that we would walk in a manner worthy of You: always pleasing You, bearing much fruit, knowing you more and more, and experiencing Your power which works in us.”
Amen

David & Katherine – Praise God with us for a great connecting time with some new neighbors (4 couples) at our soup night on March 2nd and for follow up in the weeks to come. Pray also that we would not give in to “parenting for the moment” when it comes to enforcing boundaries and expecting independent responsible behavior with the boys.

Austin (14) – Praise for the young godly men in Austin’s life – Tanner and EG. Pray that Austin would increasingly embrace doing things independently (i.e. without assistance)

Cameron’s (10) – Please pray for a soft heart and a spirit that is not easily offended.