

THE PRAYER THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust. (Psalm 16:1)

One day a man decided to build a tavern in a small, "dry" town. The local church responded by calling an all-night prayer meeting. That night lightning struck the bar burning it to the ground. The tavern owner sued the church claiming their prayers were responsible for the fire.

The church in turn hired an attorney to argue that they were not to blame. This case terribly conflicted the judge who said, "No matter how this case comes out, one thing is clear. The tavern owner believes in prayer and the church does not."

A Prayer Already Answered

The 16th Psalm may have been written by David during his flight from the wrath of Saul. Tired and feeble, David prayed that God would sustain him. The interesting thing is this prayer was answered before it was prayed. Only God could have preserved David for so many years.

As we have experienced God's providence and His protection, we have also experienced God's preservation. The third verse of *Amazing Grace* says:

*Through many dangers, toils and snares,
We have already come.
T'was Grace that brought us safe thus far
And grace will lead us home.*

*It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His
compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.
(Lamentations 3:22-23)*

The testimony of our heritage is "prayer changes things." However, there are times when God actually changes us. When this happens, we may begin to see obstacles as opportunities. The question is no longer "How can I get out of this?" but "What can I get out of this?"

A mother sent her terrible son to his room to pray about his horrendous conduct. When he returned, she asked if he had asked God to change his behavior. The bad boy replied, "NO! I asked God to help you to put up with me."

How Everything Changed

"In thee do I put my trust."

David could not change everything but when his prayer changed, everything changed. His prayer began with "Preserve me" (v. 1) and concluded with the fullness of joy found in God's presence (v. 16).

The difference is trust. The focus of David's prayer shifted from his trouble to his trust. We have little or no control over what we face, but we can decide who we trust. In verse 8, David says, "I keep my eyes always on the Lord."

To trust God is to surrender to His will for our lives. When the sailor throws the hook from the boat to the shore, he pulls the boat to the shore (not the shore to the boat). We pray to align ourselves with God's will. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, "Not my will but Thine be done."

TRUST IN THE LORD

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

- **Thought for Today**

Something happens when I pray that doesn't when I don't.

-Unknown

- **Scripture Reading**

Psalm 46:1,10

Proverbs 18:10

Isaiah 54:17

Nahum 1:7

John 16:33

- **Reflect**

1. What does it mean to trust God?
2. Have you ever prayed about something only to discover that God had already meet your need? If so, please elaborate.
3. Think about a time when it was difficult to trust God. What did you learn in that situation?
4. How has your prayer life changed you?

- **Prayer**

Father, life happens and sometimes it hurts! At times, You have changed things; at times, You have changed us. Thank You for being trustworthy and for directing our paths. Amen.

- **Fix My Prayer Life**

The Problem – Marital Discord

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

-1 Peter 3:7 (NIV)

A husband's prayers are hindered when he mistreats his wife. We believe that this is also true of a disrespectful wife.

The Solution – Love and Respect

Ephesians 5 cites love and respect as foundational elements of a healthy, functional marriage. If you are married and this is a challenge, how can your spouse and you better practice love and respect?