



April 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and Peace in the name of our risen savior. He is risen indeed! I am so happy that we follow a savior that brings us new life. The old is gone, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17) I pray that this Easter season brings some new beginnings in your life.

We just finished our sermon series "Draw the Circle." This series was on prayer, and we looked at how we need to "draw a circle" around those things that we are led to pray for. We learned we are supposed to pray hard and pray long, meaning we are to have a long-range outlook when it comes to prayer. In the final message, I shared how our prayers have a ripple effect in which the lives of those who come after us are touched by them. Our prayers will be answered by God in the lives of our children and grandchildren long after we are gone.

I asked folks to submit to me testimonies of how God had answered prayer in their own lives. I heard several stories, and I want to share just a couple short ones with you here.

Here is part of the story from a parishioner who suffered from a terrible illness: "When I started getting sick from a mysterious illness, I was scared. The doctors couldn't find the answer as to why I was so sick. I prayed and prayed that an answer would be found. The final time I was hospitalized, no one could figure out what was wrong. I had just about lost my faith in God. [After slipping into a coma, the doctors, through a miraculous set of circumstances, figured out what was wrong] Six days later I came out of the coma. For the next five weeks, I prayed to God every morning to help me get through the day. All of my doctors were surprised when I walked out of the hospital five weeks later using a walker. God kept me going. He didn't let me die as I was so close several times. He's helped me live with and overcome the fear. I firmly believe God has plans for me yet."

Another parishioner writes the following: "We lived on our farm between Gotham and Sextonville. Our house was a 6-bedroom house. We rented out the farmland. We didn't need such a big house. I had prayed for a long time, that when the time came for us to move off the farm, God would show us the house we should move to. I prayed this prayer a long time. [Our

son's family] decided they needed a bigger house and so we offered our farm if they wanted to buy the farm. They would get the big house. They decided they would buy it and we started looking for a house. We wanted to stay local. We knew of several that were for sale, but not exactly what we wanted. The Shopping News arrived one day and there was a house in Sextonville that had the things we wanted in a house. [My husband] saw it and he said, "Here is the house I want for us". We called the Real Estate person and told him we were interested in seeing the house. We went to see it and I told him I had been praying for the right house for us and he said he had been praying for the right buyer to come along. That is how God answered my prayer."

God answers our prayers, in His time, in His way, but always for His glory. What is God laying on your heart to be praying for? If Jesus were to appear before you and ask, "What do you want me to do for you?" what would you say? Draw a circle of prayer around that. Please keep your pastor and my family in your prayers and continue to pray for the ministry of our church. Pray that God would open windows of opportunity to share the gospel message with others. Pray that God would make His vision for our church clear to our leadership.

As always, KEEP PRAYING!

*Pastor Wiley Gladney*