

PRAYER UPDATE

HOSPITALIZED & SURGERIES this past week

Ethan Pope (age 6) leukemia treatment, LPCH Stanford Day Hospital every 10 days until the end of May. Aside from the monthly hospital treatments starting in June, he will have daily oral chemo, steroid bursts, and home blood draws for the next 3 years. Please pray for stamina for the whole family and for Ethan's little body.

Liz Bishop Please pray for conclusive results and complete healing as Liz goes through several more procedures.

Gary Barton (son of Paul and Nelda Barton) has been diagnosed with late stage colon cancer. Pray for an effective alternative treatment for him.

Rhonda Harmon Karen Speelman's daughter, had a severe heart attack in March and is now home. She is facing a heart procedure in the near future but her family is encouraged by her progress.

HOME WITH THE LORD

Please pray for Celia Brown, whose husband, **Julien Conrad Petersen**, passed away this week after an extended illness.

Our prayers are with the family of **Diane Garaway** who was welcomed into heaven this last week. Please keep her husband, Bill, and her children in your prayers.

Please pray for peace and comfort for the family of **Barbara Barrett** as they grieve the loss of their wife and mother.

A complete prayer list is available at the information desk.



RECOGNIZING AND CURING TOXIC FAITH

MAY 31 & JUNE 1 // RENÉ SCHLAEPFER

Paul foresees a time when many church leaders will be externally religious but internally corrupt... and warns Timothy:

"They have depraved minds and a **counterfeit faith**." 2 Timothy 3:8 NLT

I. SYMPTOMS OF TOXIC FAITH

"But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be **lovers of themselves, lovers of money**, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, **lovers of pleasure** rather than **lovers of God**—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people." 2 Timothy 3:1-5

It's about false loves:

- Lovers of _____ (v. 2)
- Lovers of _____ (v. 2) See 1 Tim. 6:5
- Lovers of _____ (v. 4)

"...rather than lovers of God."

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF TOXIC FAITH

• EMPHASIS ON _____
“Holding on to a **form of godliness** although they have denied its power...” (v. 5)

“They **act religious**, but **reject the power** that could make them godly.” NLT (See 1 Timothy 4:1-3)

• PREYING ON THE _____
“They are the kind who work their way into people’s homes and **win the confidence** of **vulnerable** women who are **burdened with the guilt of sin** and controlled by various desires.” (v. 6) NLT

• ENDLESS _____
“...forever following **new teachings**, but never able to understand the truth.” (v. 7) NLT

• CLAIMS OF _____
“**Just as Jannes and Jambres** opposed Moses, so also these teachers oppose the truth... But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.” (v. 8,9) (See Matthew 7:15-23)

3. CURES FOR TOXIC FAITH

• LEARN FROM _____
“You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me... In fact, **everyone** who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted**.” (v. 10-12)

• LEARN FROM _____
“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known **the Holy Scriptures**...” (v. 14-15)

BOTTOM LINE: LIVE A LIFE _____ BY _____
_____ FOCUSED ON _____!

DAILY MEDITATIONS

MEMORY VERSE: “The Holy Scriptures are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus...” 2 Timothy 3:15b

MONDAY: Look back over your notes from this past weekend. Read Matthew 7:15-23. What did Jesus say about how to discern false teachers? Does “fruit” mean character or results (see Galatians 5:22,23)? If the ability to prophesy, drive out demons, and do miracles is not proof someone is a genuine teacher, then what is? How does this parallel what Paul says in 2 Timothy 3? *Ask God to protect your church against toxic leadership and to keep our leaders healthy.*

TUESDAY: Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5. If the people Paul talks about have all these vices, what “form of godliness” could they possibly display? What things does Paul say they are “lovers of”? In context, Paul is saying these things will be true of teachers in the church. Are you surprised the Bible warns so strongly against abusive church leaders? Why or why not? If the Bible warns so consistently against toxic religious leaders, why do people keep getting fooled by them? *Ask God to give you wisdom for discerning healthy leadership from toxic leadership.*

WEDNESDAY: Read 2 Timothy 3:6-9. Jannes and Jambres, according to Jewish tradition, were Pharaoh’s magicians. How do they help reveal what Paul means by counterfeit religion? Why do people still seek this kind of flashy ministry instead of the steady character shown by Paul in verses 10 and 11? Ask God to help you seek character instead of flash in the people you follow! *Ask Him to help your teachers and pastors develop deep Christ-like character.*

THURSDAY: Read 2 Timothy 3:10-15. In contrast to the flashy signs of the magician-like false teachers, what does Paul emphasize to Timothy about his own ministry (v. 10,11)? Why does Paul emphasize his character and his suffering? By contrast, what is happening to the false teachers and imposters (v. 13)? Why is it important to be reminded that suffering does not always mean you’re wrong, and prosperity does not always mean you’re right? *Ask God to help you endure your own hard times, focusing on the hope He offers in Christ that He will work all things together for good!*

FRIDAY: Paul had begun warning Timothy about false teachers in his first letter. Read 1 Timothy 1:3-6, 4:1-3; 6:3-5. How is Paul’s goal for people (verse 5) different from what the false teachers are training them to expect? The Bible warns so strongly against false teachers because their abusive behavior is exactly the opposite of the freeing effect of the true gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith in Christ. *Ask God to help you make love your goal, and to keep you from the “meaningless talk”, “myths”, and a love of money that drove the false teachers.*

SATURDAY: Read 2 Timothy 3:16,17. Please pray for this weekend’s services, that God’s word is taught well. Pray God will richly bless all who attend! Thanks!