

WEEKLY FELLOWSHIP

Aug. 21, 2022

The church in Phoenix

Announcements

Meeting Schedule

Lord's Day

10:00 am – Lord's Table Meeting

11:00 am – Prophesying Meeting

Tuesday

Church Prayer Burdens:

<http://www.churchinphoenix.org>

7:30 pm – English-speaking prayer meetings at Districts 1 & 2

7:30 pm – Chinese-speaking prayer meeting at District 2

7:00 pm - Spanish-speaking prayer meeting in the homes

Friday

6:30 pm – English-speaking College Meetings

7:00 pm – Chinese-speaking Student Meetings

7:30 pm – Small Group Meetings

Saturday

9:30 am – Cleaning & Maintenance

7:30 pm – Young People's Meeting

7:30 pm – Small Group Meetings

Continue in the Ministry and the Word

Holy Word for Morning Revival

Meeting God's Need and Present Need in the Lord's Recovery – Week 5

Ministry Publication Reading

The Meaning and Purpose of Prayer, ch. 1

❖ Brother Benson Phillips's Departure 8-15-2022

- Our dear Brother Benson Phillips went to be with the Lord on Monday, August 15, 2022.
- Two Memorial Meetings:
Lord's Day, September 11, 2022 2:30 pm (CDT)
The church in Irving and LSM meeting hall, Irving, TX
Lord's Day, October 9, 2022, 2:30 pm (PDT)
LSM Campus-MCC, Anaheim, CA
- Link to livestream: www.memorial-meeting.org

❖ Labor Day Blending Conference in Denver

- The meetings will be held in the Denver meeting hall at 2180 South Leyden Street.
- Meeting Schedule:
Meeting 1: Saturday, September 3; 9:30 am
Meeting 2: Saturday, September 3; 7:00 pm
Lord's Table & Meeting 3: Lord's Day, September 4; 9:30 am
Meeting 4: Lord's Day, September 4; 7:00 pm
Meeting 5: Monday, September 5; 9:30 am
- Limited hospitality will be provided.

❖ 2022 International Thanksgiving Blending Conference

- The 2022 International Thanksgiving Blending Conference will be held at the Washington Hilton in Washington, DC.
- Reservation: There is a special group rate of \$104.00 USD/per night plus tax for single, double, triple, and quadruple occupancy rooms. For room reservations, please call 1-202-483-3000 or 1-800-HILTONS and request the Living Stream Ministry group rate by providing the code: LSM1. To make online reservations at the special group rate, please go to: <https://book.passkey.com/go/LSM>. Reservations must be made on or before 5:00 PM local time (EDT) on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2022 in order to get this reduced rate.
- Meeting Schedule:
1st meeting: Thursday, November 24..... 7:30 pm
2nd meeting: Friday, November 25..... 10:00 am
3rd meeting: Friday, November 25..... 7:30 pm
4th meeting: Saturday, November 26 10:00 am
5th meeting: Saturday, November 26 7:30 pm
6th meeting: Lord's Day, November 27..... 9:30 am

❖ Offerings

- Please send your offerings through Zelle to the church's bank account using the following email address: offerings@churchinphoenix.org.

Riches from the Ministry

Our natural views concerning spiritual matters differ from God's views...We have natural concepts concerning every spiritual matter. Because we are narrow and even in darkness, our concepts are often far removed from the divine revelation. Hence, we need the divine revelation in every spiritual matter so that we may see God's view.

Some believers think that prayer is simply to talk to God or to cry out to Him...but prayer is not merely talking to God or crying out to Him. If God would open our eyes to see His view of prayer, we would realize that we do not understand prayer...Therefore, I have a heavy burden to speak to the saints concerning the meaning of prayer.

First, prayer is to absorb God; prayer causes man to obtain God. God is reality; hence, He is contactable and obtainable...The God whom we worship is Spirit; He is a real spiritual entity...We can worship Him, and we can also contact, absorb, and obtain Him.

If we want to obtain God, we must pray...Regrettably, many believers pray often and for long periods of time, but they do not seem to obtain much of the element of God, because they do not understand the meaning of prayer. They have not seen that prayer is to contact God and obtain Him.

To pray is to contact God and to absorb Him in that contact. Thus, the importance of prayer does not depend on how much we say to God or on how much we cry out to Him but on how much we contact Him. The more we contact God, the more we will absorb Him, and the more we absorb Him, the more we will enjoy God and salvation.

We can contact God through prayer. A brother once told me that he was very weak and did not know why he could not rise up. After a few encounters with him, I asked whether he prayed. He said that besides praying before his meals, he did not pray much. I was then clear that his weakness was the result of not contacting God or, rather, of not contacting God adequately...[If] a person does not pray, he does not contact God and therefore cannot be strong.

Many believers have the natural concept that before they can pray and draw near to God, they must wait until their condition improves or until their inner feeling is strong. This concept is not according to the meaning of prayer. To pray is to come to God just as we are. The closer we are to our true condition the better. We do not need to wait for anything, change anything, or prepare anything. Even if we are weak, confused, sad, and speechless, we can still come to God.

God is everything to us. The expectation to be strong and have words for prayer without contacting God is vain. God does not want us to have such expectations. He is not concerned about whether we are bad, weak, or wrong. Our condition does not bother Him. He is concerned only about our seeing and contacting Him. As long as we come to Him, He has a way because He is the way. If we are weak, He is power...If we are unable to rise up, He is rising up...If we do not have words, He is the Word. He is everything. We do not have to wait or improve ourselves. The more we come to God according to our condition, the better.

In Luke 15:11-21 after the younger son had squandered his estate by living dissolutely and spending all he had, he did not improve himself before returning to his father's house. He did not have anything that would enable him to improve himself, nor did he know that this would not deter his father. The younger son did not change himself; rather, he returned to his father in his true, unchanged condition and let his father change him. His father said, "Bring out quickly the best robe and put it on him...And bring the fattened calf; slaughter it, and let us eat and be merry" (vv. 22-23). The father changed his son's robe and his food, that is, his son's outer condition and inner condition. Previously, the younger son wore rags, but he now had the best robe. Previously, he ate carob pods, but he now ate the fattened calf. The father brought about these changes, not the son. This is the principle of prayer. To pray is to come to God just as we are in our true condition, without changing or improving ourselves. Our coming to God in this way is not an ordinary crying out; it is our meeting and contacting God. When we contact Him, we absorb Him.

If we would contact God, wait on Him, linger in His presence, behold Him, and absorb Him daily, He will cause our condition to change. We do not need to ask Him for many things, such as power, strength, victory, zeal, or the ability to rise up. We only need to touch Him every day, and after some time He will become our everything.

The first meaning of prayer is to absorb God, and the second meaning is to express God. These meanings are related. To express God means to let Him speak, that is, to let God be expressed. Prayer is not our speaking or expressing ourselves. Prayer is our letting God speak and express Himself.

In Genesis 18 Abraham prayed for Lot and also for Sodom (vv. 23-33). However, the end of that chapter says, "Jehovah went away as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham" (v. 33). Although it was Abraham who prayed, it was Jehovah who spoke. It was Jehovah who finished speaking and who expressed His intention.

...The best and most valuable prayer is not one in which we speak but one in which God speaks. The best and most valuable prayer is not one in which we cry out or beseech but one in which we inquire and let God speak. To cry out is to tell God the things of man, but to beseech is to beg for the things of God. The best prayer is to inquire. To inquire is to let God speak so that the words spoken are God's speaking within man, God's expressions. This is the best prayer. (Lee, *The Meaning and Purpose of Prayer*, ch. 1)