



The Caller

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Confidence Comer John F. Board

In this week's *Confidence Corner*, as we begin the new year, we want to supply an answer to all those seeking for the meaning to life. Search far and wide, but one thing I know for sure, only Christianity gives

meaning to life. All other philosophies, followed to their logical ends, lead to chaos and irrationality. One only can be consistent in mind and happy in spirit with theism in general and Christianity in particular.

This is a great argument for truth. A truth-claim must be subjected to the test. Does it work? Does it satisfy? Does it relate meaningfully to life? With other philosophies, a person is left wanting. Christianity is the only "philosophy" that allows a person to be both logically consistent and spiritually happy.

In the book of Ecclesiastes Solomon turned from God, and searched for meaning and significance in other areas. But he was disillusioned at every point: The first lines of the book set the tone, "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless!" (Eccl. 1:1-2). He experimented with various virtues and vices, seeking satisfaction. He tried education, but he described godless education as "a chasing after the wind" (Eccl. 1:17). He tried pleasure, "but that also proved to be meaningless" (2:1). He turned to alcohol. He gave himself to materialism, building an extravagant home for himself. He instituted great public works, achieving great fame. But nothing filled his heart, and he instinctively knew why. The purpose of man is "to fear God and keep His commandments" (Eccl. 12:13).

The French physicist Blaise Pascal said, "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God the Creator made known through Jesus Christ" (see Bill Bright *Jesus and the Intellectual*, p.14). Are you searching for purpose in your life—only God's system of faith provides the answer.

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How to Pray for Your Daily Bread

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread.

As we read the prayer our Lord gave, remember it is the model prayer. The Lord did not say "Pray this prayer," but "Pray in this manner." He taught us something wonderful about prayer: it's not the length of our prayer, the logic of our prayer, or the language of our prayer, but the faith, the focus, and the force of our prayer that causes it to be heard in heaven.

Here are few important steps to follow when praying for "daily bread."

A Proper Priority

Notice the priority in this prayer: First comes God's name, His kingdom, and His will. Only after that comes our need, "Give us this day our daily bread." If you don't get that priority straight, you'll never have power in prayer.

Your Prayerful Petition

Another reason some people don't have their needs met: they don't ask. It's that simple.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him? Matthew 7:11

You simply say, "Lord I have a need." Many people have not because they ask not. (James 4:2) You deny yourself when you don't pray. Prayer is the key that unlocks heaven's treasury.

A Proper Perspective

This doesn't mean you have the key to Fort Knox or you're going to get everything you want. It doesn't say God's going to meet our greed. God is going to meet our need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:19)

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*Mitchell's
 Weekly
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Sunday's Sermons:

A.M. — Hunger & Thirst
Matthew 5:3-12

P.M. — 12 Ordinary Men: Andrew
John 1:35-40

Faith and Traumatic Thinking

When tragedy strikes we have two ultimate responses. We can be disappointed with God (maintaining our faith in Him though severely discouraged) or we can be disappointed without God (turning our back on God and seeking to make it through on our own). It appears the inspired Book of Job shows that Job, though discouraged maintained his relationship with God. Perhaps a key is his close relationship with God before all the tragedy came upon him. Job did so despite the thinking of his friends as they tried to make sense of Job's traumatic experiences.

Often mentioned in connection with traumatic studies is the crash of Delta flight 191 which occurred on August 2, 1985 on its approach to the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport (you may remember the crash as the one where the only survivors were those who were in the tail of the plane that broke off). One trauma specialist who was called to aid with the survivors and the victims' families remembers a statement made by a young stewardess who had come to the Hilton Hotel to "help." When she noticed a chaplain who was present she blurted out, "I know why God allowed this plane to crash." She proceeded to tell the chaplain that she found out that a man was traveling on the plane with another woman; they were headed for a lover's weekend in Las Vegas. This young stewardess was much like Job's friends—she thought that God would "zap" those who were in sin. Is that the God you serve? Is He a God who would take 137 lives to punish 2 people in sin?

No the answer is more akin to what Job told his wife, "Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" It is not that Job was providing a thesis statement—he was more so asking questions in his search for understanding. He learned in the end that he could not comprehend God's mind and the suffering that people endure. He was told by God in essence to keep trusting though he did not have full understanding—"Job, I am God and you are not."

We too must be careful with our faith in times of trauma. Though we may know that God is aware of all that happens in this life (good and bad) to attribute to God the specific purpose for which an act has occurred is to border on the encroachment of the Divine. We must remember as God reminded Job, we are not God.

And here is something that we must not lose sight of as well. When we face traumatic experiences, that trauma can serve to remind us of who we are. We are human and not God. We are human and need God. When we realize this concept we will be drawn closer to God. Though we may not ever know in this life the ultimate meaning to our trauma, we can use it for good to draw us closer to God. Remember to try to work through the depth of despair from a trauma without God leaves us with no hope or understanding.

*John F. Board
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