

**From the Preacher's Pen...** Do you ever struggle with your faith? Years ago I met a young Christian that claimed she didn't think she had ever sinned. It was incredibly sad to realize that she felt that she really didn't even need a Savior.

Years ago I met a man about to lose his physical life that claimed he didn't think he needed any help, that he didn't need someone to save him. As he ignorantly faced certain death, he, much like the Christian, failed to recognize real danger and was perfectly comfortable in believing a lie... even if it cost life and soul.

The Apostle John expressed the problem like this: *If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.* (1 John 1:8-10)

So let me ask again, "Do you ever struggle with your faith?" Let's consider our need for...

## More Holiness

Originally written with the title of "My Prayer," this is one of many songs by the well-known 1800s song writer P. P. Bliss. While a large number of secular songs are about lost love and difficulties in life, most hymn writers share the good news of positive love and lessons from God.

In P. P. Bliss' case he shared his joy with his wife Lucy. Just three years after he wrote what he often talked about as his favorite prayer song he and his wife lost their lives in a railway crash when a bridge collapsed. P. P. Bliss was last seen alive trying to rescue Lucy from the burning wreckage of the train.

The great lesson of this prayer is an important one for each of us as we are called to live like Christ's family in this world where there are so many challenges to our faith.

*More holiness give me, more strivings within.*

*More patience in suffering, more sorrow for sin.*

*More faith in my Savior, more sense of His care.*

*More joy in His service, more purpose in prayer.*

Jesus' request in the Garden of Gethsemane for God's will to be done is not, as many see it, a cop-out for not getting our own way. Rather it is the most mature and difficult request we can make of our Father. A request for God to do what is truly best and that we will not be just okay with it but truly accept it as our will, too.

When we've truly let go of our lives and let God direct us, we can begin to grow in the right direction. Seeing His will and truly accepting it leads to real faith, real understanding, real joy and real purpose.

*More gratitude give me, more trust in the Lord.*

*More pride in His glory, more hope in His Word.*

*More tears for His sorrows, more pain at His grief.*

*More meekness in trial, more praise for relief.*

Gratitude is one of the easiest positive attitudes to fake and one of the hardest to truly feel. It's based on humility and understanding that He is truly greater than we are.

Never are we more vulnerable than when we lose our pride in ourselves. Never are we more grateful than when we find our greatest pride in our Savior! When we truly kneel at the cross and make Him our greatest joy we begin to appreciate the giver and His matchless gift.

*More purity give me, more strength to o'ercome,*

*More freedom from earth-stains, more longings for home.*

*More fit for the kingdom, more useful I'd be,*

*More blessed and holy, more, Savior, like Thee.*

Purity! It is so easy to say and so hard to maintain. Like a young child trying to keep clean when there's a perfectly good mud puddle around, we struggle to keep pure in a world filled with seemingly fun and desirable sin. It is a lifelong struggle but one that is oh so worth making if we would just remember what home is like.

Too many times we confuse God's wonderful mercy and grace with a false sense of humility. Yes, we are sinners and yes, we are never worthy of God's matchless gift of forgiveness. But the very moment we excuse our failure to do our very best in obedient service, we risk being totally unfit, unholy and unblessed.

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### Opportunities to worship, study & serve:

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY ..... 10 AM

WORSHIP ..... 11 AM

EVENING WORSHIP ..... 6 PM

WEDNESDAY ..... 7 PM

THURSDAY LADIES' BIBLE CLASS ..... 10 AM

Congregational Potluck 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
each month after morning worship  
(except June, July & August)

**Welcome to all!**  
**We are glad you are here!**

**Enter to Worship...**  
**Leave to Serve**

**Welcome to our visitors today!** We hope & pray you'll be blessed by your time with us & will join us again soon!

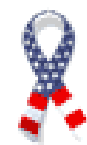
**Visitors Last Week included:** Carole & Jim Rouse of Golden, CO (will be winter members next year); Shelby Teal of Casa Grande; Jennifer Lempke of Brutus, MI (last Sunday for this winter); Michael & Vanessa Lovejoy of Maricopa; Joe & Gayla Aldridge of Maricopa; Dave & Donna Johnson of Golden, CO; Devyn Kartchner of Casa Grande; Trudy Aldridge of Maricopa; Mickey & Sharon Dewitt of Lamar, CO.

**Our Prayer List:** Keep the following in prayer this week as you "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17): Nora McNeil, Matthew Odom, Lois Nowlin, Heather Ries, Hunter Shirley, Rene Turner, Ruth West, Everett Martin, Anna Mae Hardin, Jennette Ivory, Eric Aragon, the Najera family, Bill Hall, Reta Wallace, Jim & Ann Holder, Kristi Martin, Wally Myers and...

**Our Missionaries:** Jack Farber and Aaron Knotts and families.

**Previously Announced Family & Friends:** Robin & Marc Estabrook (Julie Evan's sister & nephew), David Reffner (Flora Doster's grandson with MS), Art Stoneking (friend of Carl Catozzi, cancer), Leslie Hill (John's mother, cancer), Jeremiah Haller (Flora Doster's grandson), Annette (Cindy Turpin's sister), Cole Myers (grandson of friend of Myers), Sheila Simpson, Lillian Wilhite & Danny Wilhite (relatives of Lynn Shirley), Teresa Acosta, Rosemary Glasier (Crystal Mora-Landroth's mother), John Hoover's relatives with personal difficulties, Shelly Cooper (friend of Carl Catozzi), Lucas Espinoza (Brian Campbell's friend), Sharon Laurita (Barbara Grubbs friend, cancer), Kaesha Raffterfer (Gene Pinkston's cousin, cancer), Randy Landreth's dad (cancer), Chuck Keels (friend of Grubbs with cancer), Terri Fillipski (cancer, Julie Evans' cousin).

**Special Requests:** WBS & WEI Bible study students; Kevin & Nancy Chambers & World Christian Broadcasting; Judy Hagner, son Preston, daughter Angela & son James. Brandi Schroeder (Flora Doster's granddaughter with MS); Dallas Purcella's mother; Paulina's father (Arnold); Julie's father; Laurel's father, Marla Henderson's father.



**OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL:** Nate Panka (Cleo Wise's grandson); Javier Najera; Fernando Najera, Frank Torres (Javier's brother & cousin); Eric Shirley; Trevor Farrow (Allen's son); Scott Hoover (John's son); Ariel Gomez; Paul Sipes & April Belovedstone (Sue Wolfe's son & daughter); Robert Strickland (Cleo Wise's grand-nephew); Ismael Lopez; Robinson Goldman (Cindy Turpin's son-in-law) Nathan Bagley.

**New:**

**Jason:** son of Carl Catozzi in need of prayers.

**Dr. Yanni:** friend of John Hoover with cancer.

**Susan Fowler:** friend of Bob & Sherry Harrison with MS.

**Michelle Harrison:** daughter of Bob & Sherry, spiritual struggles.

**Michael Lightheart:** son-in-law of Flora Doster, health problems.

**Carlene Cunningham:** Jeanne Martin's sister-in-law with cancer.

**Amy Vestle:** lupus.

**Jim Henness:** friend of Odom's with back problems.

**Jimmy Handtegen:** friend of David Davis following a stroke.

**Derwin Jackson & family:** with his job.

**Sean & Vickie:** Carl Catozzi's friends with struggles in their lives.

**Terri Hoover:** John's daughter-in-law with serious health issues.

**Monica Lopez:** George Mora's aunt with breast cancer.

**Rhett Booher:** Gary & Toni Pierce's grandson with chronic migraines from Traumatic Brain Injury while in the Army.

**Melinda Wendt:** Julie Evan's aunt in hospice.

**Jacob Shirley:** struggles.

**Marty Hall:** son of the Halls recovering from surgery.

**Ray Stephenson family:** youngest son's cancer has spread.

**Jerry Odom:** recovering from shoulder surgery

**Ann Holder:** in Oasis room C-109

**Millie Cunningham:** also in Oasis room C-109

**Allen Farrow & family:** at his brother's passing.

**Barbara Grubbs:** recovering from hip replacement surgery.

**Michael Hill:** diagnosed with arthritis in back & hip.

**Sherry Harrison:** recovering from knee replacement surgery.

**Kay Kerby:** friends of Tom Haney

**Adele Fink:** recovering from surgery for colon cancer.

**John Mark:** in Afghanistan as he is in danger for his faith.

**The Saints in South Sudan:** as they face great trials.

**Also Our New Christians, those travelling and especially those with spiritual struggles.**

## Help Update Our Prayer List!

If you have someone listed in our *Previously Announced Family & Friends* prayer list & would like them to REMAIN on the list, please fill out one of the *Prayer Request* cards in the foyer & give it to Lester.

## Upcoming Events...

**Potluck: TODAY** — Group #4 [Laverne Jackson's group] set-up, serve & clean-up

**Monthly Singing:** April 30 at 2:30 in Coolidge.

**Men's Business Meeting:** May 7 after evening worship.

**5th Wednesday Prayer & Song Meeting:** May 31

Few Scriptures are more threatening to this excuse-making than Hebrews 6:4-6. As we are challenged to quit acting like babies and grow up (a challenge the Apostle Paul also made in Ephesians 4:14-16), we are reminded that if we do not grow into greater holiness that we will lose everything that Christ died to accomplish.

May we always continue to strive to be more fit for the kingdom, more useful, more blessed and holy, more like Jesus!

— Lester P. Bagley

### Box for Deployed Military Personnel

*We hope to get the box sent by the first of May. See Mary Ann for updates on needed items.* Here are some suggested items:

- \*Thank you cards (16 to 20 address them to: Dear Soldier)
- \*Tic-Tacs
- \*Beef jerky (must be beef only, no pork products allowed)
- \*flavored water mixes
- \*gum
- \*crackers
- \*instant coffee (packages of instant- example: *Tasters Choice*)
- \*popcorn (and other salty snacks)
- \*peanut butter (the small package ones)
- \*any type of hard candy (example: *Worthers*)
- \*local newspapers
- \*crossword puzzles
- \*Rice Krispies treats
- \* Wet wipes / Baby wipes
- \* Eye drops
- \* Toiletries: Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, cotton swabs, shaving lotion, disposable razors, shampoo, individually packaged tissues.
- \* Personal care: Individually packaged baby wipes, eye drops, lip balm, lotion, aspirin or other pain reliever, feminine hygiene products for women.

Any items that can spill or leak should be placed in freezer-type plastic bags (the bags are useful, too, when they arrive!)

## Family Night

**Saturday, April 22 @ 4-7 p.m.**

**Hotdogs will be provided. Bring other foods to go with them & join in the fun!**

## *Champions for Change!*

*For NM Christian Children's Home*

*Cans are available in the foyer. Time to take one, fill and return it. We are also collecting **Liquid Dishwasher Detergent** for the home..*

***Pickup is scheduled for April 28***

**Last Week: 5+ Pew-Packers**



**Be "in the picture" every week!**

## ✓ Checkup ✓

*How are we doing?*

*Attendance Last Week:*

*Sunday Morning Bible Class = 66*

*Sunday Morning Worship = 148*

*Sunday Evening Worship = 53*

*Wednesday Evening = 55*

**Giving**

*2017 Weekly Budget = \$3,180.00*

*Contribution Last Week = \$3,920.00*

Church of Christ  
805 East Racine Place  
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Postage

**TO:**

## Privileged to Serve

### Sunday Morning April 16

Adult Bible Class: • *Acts of the Apostles* ..... Lester Bagley  
Announcements: ..... Allen Farrow  
Song Leader: ..... Mike Evans  
Prayer: ..... Tom Haney  
Serve Communion: ..... Brian Campbell, John Hoover, Kim Myers, Delbert White, Paul Ries  
Sermon: • *Matthew 26 - Part 2* ..... Lester Bagley  
Closing Prayer: ..... Curt Odom

*Count Contribution: Curt Odom & Ray Ochoa*

### Sunday Evening April 16

Song Leader: ..... Mike Evans  
Prayer: ..... Curt Odom  
Sermon: • *Christ in Us* ..... Lester Bagley  
Serve Communion: ..... Kim Myers  
Closing Prayer: ..... Bill Hall

### Wednesday Evening April 19

Song Leader: ..... George Mora  
Prayer: ..... Charlie Stephenson  
Devo: ..... Allen Farrow  
Closing Prayer: ..... Jerry Odom

## Anniversaries



April 25: *Michael & Barbara Grubbs*

May 1: *Dell & Carla Hartfield*

May 14: *Brett & Jessica Myers*

May 28: *George & Nancy Young*

May 30: *Jerry & Billie Odom*

June 1: *Bob & Sherry Harrison*

## Birthdays



April 18: *Krystal Ramirez*

April 22: *Charles Jack*

April 23: *Millie Cunningham*

April 25: *Jean Grubbs*

April 30: *Kyle Davis - Nora Lou McNeil*

May 1: *Lindsay Sutton*

May 3: *Chris Didelotte*

May 4: *Joan Davis*