**Why? Making Sense of God’s Will: God’s Love Prevails**

First United Methodist Church, Sallisaw — Weekly Prayer & Study Guide 9/2/12

Prayer — Use this prayer to begin your time with God each day.

Lord, You stay the same through the ages. Your love never changes. There may be pain in the night, but joy comes in the morning. And when the oceans rage we don't have to be afraid because we know that You love us.

Your love never fails. We pray in the name of the God who loves us. Amen.

**Monday** — Read Romans 8:26-39. Paul helps us understand that nothing can separate us from the love of God. In fact, Paul says that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. How could a man like Paul who suffered so much for his faith make a statement like that? He saw that God was continually present in his life and working to bless him even in the face of great suffering. He believed that we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. How does it make you feel to know that God is always with you? Spend some time in prayer thanking God for loving you.

**Tuesday** — Read John 3:16-17. This often quoted scriptures reminds us of God’s love for us through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus came into the world because God loved the people in the world so much. In John’s Gospel, Jesus makes it very clear that he has come into the world not to condemn people but to offer people grace, forgiveness, and life. Christians understand that sin separates us from God and leads to death. There is nothing we can do to overcome our sin or death to earn forgiveness and eternal life, but in Jesus, God has provided a way where there was no way. It is through Jesus that God's love prevails in our lives. Through grace, mercy, and forgiveness in his name. Spend some time thinking about the way you have experienced God's love through Jesus. Spend some time praying to your Lord.

**Wednesday** — Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 & Mark 12:28-31. I Corinthians 13 is often called The Love Chapter. What is God's love like? Paul tells us, “Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” Love never ends. How does this idea of love compare to how you usually think about what love is? When Jesus sum up the commandments by calling us to love God and to love our neighbor, he is calling us to love with this kind of love. One of the ways that God's love prevails is when we live out this commandment through our love and worship of God and in the ways that we love our neighbors. Spend some time praying for God's love to grow in your heart.

**Thursday** — Read Romans 5:1-11. In verses 3-5 Paul states, “And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. These verses show us how God’s love prevails even when we suffer. Spend a few moments committing these verses to memory so you can remember them when you go through a difficult time. Paul goes on to say, “But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. Spend some time thinking about the way God has demonstrated God’s love to you through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Offer a prayer of thanks to your Lord.

**Friday** — Read John 4:7-21. Over and over again in the Bible, God shows us love. Jesus demonstrated God’s love to us all in what he did. How should we respond to God’s love? John says, “Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. **11** No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.” This passage reminds us that **14** We love because God first loved us. Before we even think about God, God reaches out to us because God loves us. Methodists call this Prevenient Grace. How should we respond to God’s love in our lives? **16** The commandment we have from him is this: “Those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.” As we share God’s love with each other and the people in our lives, we help God’s love to prevail. Spend some time praying about how you can show someone in your life the love of God.

**Saturday** — Read Revelation 21:1-7. This passage is often used in funerals because it reminds us of how God’s love prevails even in the face of death. It tells us very clearly that God will always be with us. **1** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” We can hope in this promise because we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ who conquered sin and death so that we might have forgiveness and eternal life. Praying for the people you know who have recently experienced the death of a loved one.

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**God’s Love Prevails**

Dr. Trevor Smith

**Who will separate us from the love of Christ?** Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? **28** As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.” **29** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **30** For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, **31** nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. —Romans 8:35-39

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon:

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**Prayer List**

New & Short Term Requests*

- Family of Godfrey Brant
- Dr. Raymond Denny, treatment for throat cancer.
- Joan Gerken, leg infection, hospitalized.
- Kellie Smith’s grandmother.
- Hazel Dennis, health issues.
- Thanks for answered prayer from Anne Bottof
- John Augustine, congestive heart failure and foot infection.
- Dexter Edwards, broken ankle surgery.
- Teri Ferguson, surgery, Julie Ferguson’s daughter.
- Kendall Stavel, recovering from surgery, no appetite and week.
- Velma McClaran, husband passed away, Susie Harris sister-in-law.
- Taylor Webb, knee injury, Alex McMillian’s friend.
- Greg Steele, surgery, Barbara Jones’ brother.
- Jayla Davempt, 13 year old recovering from heart surgery.
- Families who are suffering because of the fires.
- Unspoken request, Dale Wood.
- Guy Jones, Fibromyalgia.
- Curtis Davis, severe eye injury, Relston's grandson.
- Violet Crosse, lymphoma, Mary Sue Mos' aunt.
- Rain and cool weather.

Hospitiled / Continuing Treatment

- Emma Grace Frisby, 7 year old diagnosed with brain tumor and rare form of cancer.
- Chelsie Stearns, lymphoma, Debbie Bartel’s niece.
- Jan Green, cancer metastasized, Reba Green’s niece.
- Kim Edwards, lung cancer.
- Shelby Hiser, rehab, Ruth Knight’s grandson.

On-Going Needs

Pris Bartram
Jackson Probst
Kogi Christians
Janet Luttrell
Gil Lyons

Our Service People

Jared Rape
Jack Hodge, Afghanistan
Jessica McMilian

*Names on this list will remain for three weeks.

Call Anne Bottof at (918) 775-2072 to start the Prayer Chain.

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www.sallisawfumc.org