

From the West Meadow
Pastor Wes Higgins

Over the last few months this column has addressed several aspects of prayer. There is one more that needs focusing on, and that is the history-changing potential of prayer. Prayer is the means that we have of communicating our deepest thoughts, our desires, our concerns, our joys, our needs and our hopes with the One who has the power to change not only us but the world as well.

Our God is called by the glorious and awesome name, the “Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 28:58). He is the Lord, our God, the “God of the living”, and He has allowed us to personalize Him by addressing Him as Father (Mark 12:27, Matthew 6:9). It is our God who by His inherent power created all that exists. And by that same inherent power He sustains all that He created. The laws of physics and nature all function and work at His say-so. And He can suspend them any time He wants, too.

Take the parting of the Red Sea or the stopping of the Jordan River in flood stage. Or when God made the sun and moon stand still for a whole day at the request of Joshua (Joshua 10:12-14). And don't forget when God caused the earth to reverse course 10 degrees at the request of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:9-11). Just think of how many laws of physics that God changed or suspended so that the earth stood still for a day, or reversed 10 degrees, and did not kill every living thing on earth!

The Bible records numerous times when God intervened and changed the course of history, many times at the express request of His people. Jesus reminded us that through prayer we can move mountains (Matthew 17:20-21). And James wrote that “the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” (James 5:16) In writing this James commented on Elijah, who prayed for rain to stop. It didn't rain for three and a half years in Israel. Then, when he prayed for rain, it started again. And Elijah was a man who, as James told it, has a nature just like ours.

These are earth-changing and marvelous miracles brought on by communication with God. But what about our lives? Have you ever considered the history-changing aspects of prayer in your life? God tells us that when we make a covenant with Him, He will show us mercy for generations (Deuteronomy 7:9). It doesn't matter what our life history is, how many generations of brokenness may exist—the door is always open to God. When we or when one of our fathers before us first accepted God's calling, life-changing history was made: our lives and the lives of our children and perhaps generations to come were changed for all eternity.

Trust God—prayer changes history.

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