

Sermon Text for September 1, 2019

By Rev. Robert K. Bronkema and Participants in the Congregation

Service of witness to miracles in healing

On May 19 we asked the question: Does God still heal? We used the Scriptures of the foreign King Naaman who was healed in a most unorthodox way by having to go to the puny Jordan River as opposed to the powerful rivers of Damascus in his home town. But he obeyed, not really willfully, but he obeyed and was healed by Almighty God. We looked at our Acts Scripture and saw Peter heal Aeneas who was paralyzed and bedridden for 8 years and followed that up with Dorcas, our favorite name in the Bible, who was raised from the dead, again by Peter. We asked the question if these events, if these miracles, if these types of life situations still happen, or are they forever relegated to Biblical times.

I told you what my understanding was, I told you how I interpret Scripture that what these writings depict are not antiquated truths, but rather the fountain of life for today and that healings and miracles still take place if we would only give God the chance to reveal Himself. I gave you a task and on May 19 I said, and I quote: *Today, I want to give you some homework. I want you for 15 weeks to choose one person to pray for every day, pray for a healing of some sort in their lives. Do you know someone in your family who needs to be healed from a physical infirmity? Do you know someone who needs to be healed from alcohol, drugs, adultery, or any other issue that is destroying them in more ways than one. Pray for that person every single day and expect God to answer.*

On September 1 we will have a miracle service of just witnessing to how God has worked in our lives to create real miracles that only God could have created. Believe that in the name of Jesus our lives can be changed, and they will.

Today is September 1 and we are going to have that service of witness to God's healing power. We are going to recount how God has acted in your lives. Thank you for responding to my call last week and sharing your stories. I'm going to start it off with an email from Gary and Marvis Hambleton: **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord.**

I'll invite Sandy Frye to say a few words about her story of a miracle of healing. **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord**

Linda Bredin and the entire Deborah Circle had been praying for Donnie, June Stum's brother. If you didn't know he had been in very critical condition for a very long time. His prognosis was not great, in fact it was so dire that his life expectancy was minimal. He had a

feeding tube and throat condition which was not healing and the doctors did not see a way in which it could heal because of the severity of his condition. Linda and the entire circle prayed specifically that he would be able to make it home, in any condition, by September 1. God answered in a way, as God often does, that far exceeded our expectations. Donnie made it home over a month ago. He has been able to do rehab, in a little over a week he will be having a swallow test which will allow him to eat for the first time in months. Slowly but surely starting to get back to his life as normal. **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord!**

We have a couple here in this congregation who has been praying specifically for reconciliation for their son with their granddaughter. It has been over five years that this granddaughter has not communicated with their son in any healthy way. Over these past three months they have seen this granddaughter reach out to their son in a location where they found themselves together by chance. They have seen this granddaughter ask their son for help as she moved into college. They have seen this granddaughter and their son spend the day together going out to lunch and at the end of the day the daughter hugging their son and saying: I love you dad. **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord!**

Over these past 15 weeks we have seen a couple praying for three people in their family independently of each other until last Sunday they asked each other who they were praying for and they discovered it was for the same three people in their family. They have seen the miracle of restored mobility for two members of the family and continual prayers for healing from pain for another member of the family. God is at work and is at work in a way that is miraculous. **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord!**

How many of you know Dianne Nesbitt? Okay, many of you do. I have an email in my address list that I thought was of Dianne Nesbitt and it actually is of another Dianne Nesbitt who lives in Maryland. She had asked me numerous times to remove her from our list and I thought I had a couple of times. Finally, she wrote me an email after another one of my enews, this was probably about 4 years ago, and said something like: Can you keep me on? I enjoy reading about what is happening in the life of the church. Here is her input, not the real Dianne Nesbitt:

Read email. **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord!**

Carol Reinmiller and Kathy Via shared about two different co-workers whose bodies were riddled with cancer and over this 15 week period miraculously the doctors can find no cancer, they are both cancer free. **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord!**

The Pontz have been praying for their niece Deb. This is what they say.

Lynda Cornelia shared her witness of praying over these months. Read what Lynda wrote:

Wayne and Fran Carr also shared their prayers...

We have a father who has been praying for his daughter. A daughter who is lost and unhappy with herself and with her life who just last week was questioning everything about a recent move, which in turn made her question everything about life and she was starting to spiral into a not so good place. On Thursday she called her father in a way that he described as excited and bubbly and felt as if she had a new lease on life. She doesn't know Jesus, and that was his primary prayer, but he feels that this new lease on life is the first step in taking her to a walk with Christ. **Let the whole church say: Praise the Lord!**

Now, there are times, probably more often than not, that your prayers are like those of a member who prayer for a friend who was diagnosed with cancer, and they just passed away a few weeks ago. Where does that leave us, this is a service of witness, not a Pollyana, unrealistic, naïve service that tries to identify God as only making sense to us on our time frame and our rules.

When we eventually finish with Acts I think we might look at Colossians. Paul's letter to the church in Colossea is a letter of a person, a pastor who absolutely loves and adores this church and the people that are in it. He writes to them in chapter 1, read what he says: In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.

Our journey together as a family has as its ultimate goal what we read Paul tell this church in vs.28: It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

What we do together is so that we can be presented to Christ as being mature in our faith. That is why we read Scripture together in our 90 Day Challenges. That is why we learn about tithing together, it has nothing to do with the bottom line of the church, but it has everything to do with you being able to experience the fullness of God's blessings in every area of your life. That is why we pray together, yes so that people will be healed, but primarily so that God's kingdom can be revealed to those who do not know, and that we may be counted as mature in Christ on that day when He comes back to claim us as his children. Pray without ceasing, knowing that if you seek first the kingdom of God, then all things will be added to you. Amen.