

# Testimonies

The studies of this book have been factual, objective studies of prayer from a Biblical standpoint. This is the way it should be, for our message is to be the Word of God. It will be the sanctifying truth we can count on (John 17:17). It will be a lamp to our feet and a light to our pathways (Psa. 119:105).

Many published treatments of the subject of prayer are heavy on human experiences. People's experiences are many times interesting to read, but our faith should come from hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17) so that our faith will not be built on the varying and sometimes contradicting experiences of people but on the unvarying and always dependable teachings and promises of God.

But as a reader you have the right to ask, "Do Christian people today still receive answers to prayer as people of Bible times did?" The answer is yes, and in confirmation of it you will thrill at the testimonies of answered prayer that follow.

## Room For Just One More

By Donald G. Hunt

Between the Sacramento (Calif.) and Troutdale (Oreg.) Gatherings of 1951, as we were in northern California on our way up the coast, word came by telephone that I must return to Ottumwa (Ia.) to care for some important business. It had to do with purchasing the school Administration Building for Bible training classes at 908 N. Court Street. It was so urgent that neither driving, taking the bus, or taking the train would have gotten me there by the deadline.

Flying was the only possibility, but its prospectiveness was dimmed by an airline strike which affected all planes from Portland east. When I arrived in San Francisco, I found 'everyone and his brother' crowded into the airport terminal trying to get flights east. And there I was with no reservation.

The ticket agent said there was no chance for me. It was still 4 hours before the flight that I would catch. I never left the terminal but waited there either for a flight east or to learn the worst. How did I pray,

as any Christian man of responsibility would have done under those conditions.

Finally the time came for the passengers to load the flight. It seemed as if the terminal had suddenly become depopulated, so many were heading out the gate. But I stayed on. Finally the agent called me to the window and told me he would sell me a refundable ticket that would entitle me to a seat on the plane in the event that a regularly scheduled reservation failed to show up. So I bought the ticket and went to the proper gate only to find others waiting ahead of me and with the same privilege.

Those holding reservations filed up the steps into the plane, and a long period went by. Finally this little group concluded that all the passengers must have shown up. Just then the first of us was fingered forward and permitted to board the plane. After another long period we concluded that he must have gotten the last seat available. But in time the man and wife ahead of me were signaled on. How this did fan a greater hope than ever within me! If there were just one more seat, it would be for me, I realized. It would be impossible to state the overjoyed feeling that swept over my soul when I too was called for, boarded the plane, and saw the door shut behind me. I was the last one on!

I think I have never praised God more. He went on to lead in taking care of all the other important details of that trip; to the securing of the property and to the safeguarding of the several thousand dollars which had already been made upon it.

## Never "Tire" of Praying

By Burton Barber

In the spring of 1946 I graduated from college at San Jose, California. Following the closing exercises we were scheduled to leave on our move from California to Iowa. Once there, we were to make all necessary preparations for an evangelistic meeting that was to be conducted by Archie Word, which later resulted in the formation of the

Centerville, Iowa church.

Tire rationing had been lifted, but tires themselves were scarce. The tires on our car were only moderately good, with no spare. It was essential that we obtain one new tire so that one of the poorer ones could be used for a spare.

We had neither the money or the prospect for a new tire. The night before, my wife Opal and I had special prayer for a tire, and money to pay for it, expecting that we would receive the money through the normal channels. The mail brought no money, and no one handed us any. But the day was only begun.

Early in the morning I learned that a friend of ours was in a similar predicament, except he had money but no tires. In faith I asked another friend, who operated a service station, to secure a tire for me if possible. I left the rim so it could be mounted, trusting that both a tire and money would be forthcoming. We believed that God does answer prayer, even though not in the precise way that we sometimes expect.

When I arrived at the auditorium to preach my graduation sermon, I was met by friends who lived some sixty miles distance. They brought with them a new tire, saying that they felt that we would need one on our return trip. No money came, but a tire did. The service station notified me that a tire had been secured. So I sent the tire I had along with my tireless friend (and his money), and the 'swap' was made that provided for both of us.

Two days out, we had a blow-out. On the spare tire we made our way to a small town and stopped at the first service station. Asked if he had any tires, the attendant replied, "Yes, I took in a shipment of eight last night. You are lucky. One hour later we would have been sold out." We had driven all night, and this was 7:30 in the morning.

I hereby testify that God does hear prayers, even for tires, and answers in ways far different from what we may anticipate. Never, never should we place God in a straight-jacket!

## Trusting Prayer Foils a Terrible Crime

By a 21-Year-old Christian Mother

On the afternoon of January 7, 1966, my 19 month-old son and I were getting ready to leave a shopping center on the east side of San Jose, California. As I sat in the car for a minute looking for the ignition key, I glanced to my left, and there, beside the car, stood a man with a gun pointed directly at me. He said sternly, "Move over--don't say a word and look straight ahead." As he started the car, he said, "If you love your baby, you will do what I say." I asked if he would allow me to pray before we left, but he told me to shut up. I prayed out loud anyway.

He turned left as he drove out of the shopping center, and after going about a mile, he forced me to put my son in the back seat while still pointing his gun at me. Then he told me to lie down in the front seat. I was praying silently all the time he was driving.

After a while he turned on to a bumpy road. Then a few minutes later, he stopped the car and told me to sit up and put my hands behind me. Then he handcuffed me. He sat there a few minutes, asking me such questions as, my name and how long I had been married. Then he pulled my hair back and asked me if I wanted to have it chopped off. All I could think to say was that the Bible mentions that a woman's long hair is her glory.

The man then got out of the driver's side of the car and went around to the passenger side and opened the door. He made me lie back down and began disrobing me. As he prepared to finish this terrible act, I began praying out loud again: "Dear God, have mercy on this poor man, for in the end he will truly be punished for what he is doing. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen."

Suddenly the man went no further. He began dressing me and told me to sit up. He went around to the other side of the car, got in, and took the handcuffs off me. He then brought my son into the front seat and made both of us lie down again, out of sight, while still pointing the gun at us.

He drove almost all the way back to the shopping center and pulled to the side of the road and

stopped. Then he said, "You should be thankful I didn't harm you." I told him I WAS thankful to my God for sparing us. He made me get out of the car and walk back to the shopping center. He said that when I got there, I would find the baby safe in the car, parked in the same place as before. He said, "If you run, you will never see your son again." He wanted to allow enough time to escape before I reported the incident to the police. As I walked to the shopping center, I continued to pray. When I reached the car, I found my baby, scared and crying, but safe.

God had taken care of us both. I am thankful to this day that God answers prayer. I am also thankful that I serve a living God who is always near to guide me whenever I need Him.

## **Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread**

By James Gibbons

While I was a young, unmarried preacher in training, I preached "part time" in a traditional church in central Kentucky.

When summer vacation came, I moved to the place where the church was located. Since the church could only partly support me, I took a job working with a construction company, clearing highway right-of-way (which is very hard work to say the least).

I secured a room where I could sleep and planned to eat out at a restaurant for meals. I made a practice of going by the church building every morning for a time of prayer before I went to work (and a very good practice it was).

Before the first week really got under way, I suddenly became aware that I was out of money. Perhaps it had never been your lot, but to face a week of hard physical labor with the problem of where the food would come from was not a very pleasant prospect. The next Sunday I could expect some money from the church, but in the meantime there was no help for me. I hesitated to tell the church of my plight. What was I to do?

But I had to go to work that day, so I climbed the steps of the church building for my talk with God as I had been doing each morning bright and early.

Only on this morning there was a little more desperation and fervor in my prayers. I really opened my heart, letting the Lord know the nature of my problem.

When I rose from praying, something within me seemed to say, "This is going to be a long hard day; you had better order a big breakfast for you will need it." I made my way across the street to the restaurant, and did just that (although I did not have a penny in my pocket). I ate the hearty breakfast and walked up to the cash register as if to pay, but not knowing what to say. Before I could speak, the voice of the gentleman behind the cash register rang out the clear tones, "It's yours; you do not have to pay for it."

I thought that I had prayed in faith, but I wasn't ready for this---such a speedy answer to my prayer. I cried out, "O God, help my unbelief! May I never again doubt your power."

Needless to say, I was 'in the clouds' all that day because of what God had done. The owner of the restaurant, although not a Christian, made it clear that I was to eat breakfast all that week at his expense, which I did. My other meals were provided by good-hearted church people who invited me into their homes.

I have prayed about many things since that experience, but it has proven to be the most speedy and obvious answer to prayer I have received. Thank God that He does hear and answer prayer! Praise His name!

## **Just Enough and Right On Time**

By Edward Werner

It was my last year in the Midwestern School of Evangelism. I was looking forward to traveling to South Portland, Maine, to help for a few months in a newly established congregation. After that I planned to drive to Los Angeles, California, where I had accepted an invitation to teach several classes in a Bible training program. During that time I planned to establish a new congregation in that area. I looked forward with great anticipation to the coming events. For these trips I needed money, but I also needed

much time to prepare for the classes I was to teach.

I was then preaching to two small country churches in Missouri. I had a very good part-time job, but when the Christmas holidays were over, business dropped considerably, and they began to lay off some of the employees. Knowing that I had only one more semester of school, and since I was employed only on a part-time basis, the store decided that I should be among those laid off.

Would I have to cancel my plans? I needed sufficient funds to make the trips, and it was only a few more months before I would begin my travels. I was out of work, and no one was hiring after the holidays. Was God leading some other direction? I prayed He would lead me and show me His desire for my life.

One evening Donald Hunt of the school faculty, invited me to his home to give me some helpful pointers on teaching. While there he told me of a lady who might be of some help to me. He wrote her, explaining my situation, and in few days he received a letter from Mrs. W. Leo Austin. The first paragraph of her letter read as follows: "Your letter is a real blessing for today. I have been praying for God to direct me so I might put my money where it will help the church most, since the church is all I have to live for... So I feel this privilege of helping Eddie is a real answer to prayer."

She sent me enough money that I did not have to work the rest of that semester, and so I had the much needed time to study in preparation for the classes I was to teach. In the months ahead, I carried on correspondence with Sister Austin which was a great encouragement to me. But I was never privileged to meet her in person. She passed away in June, 1963.

My time spent in the east proved a real blessing to my life, and God rewarded our efforts. On my way to California I stopped at my home in Nebraska. I had a nickel and 5 pennies in my pocket, and was scheduled to be in Los Angeles within 2 weeks. I was able to get work for a neighboring farmer in the harvest field part of the first week, but I still lacked a considerable amount to make the trip to California.

I preached at my home congregation at Deweese, Nebraska on Sunday night, planning to leave the next morning, but still not knowing how I

would be able to do so. I had not mentioned my need to the congregation. Just as I was leaving the building that night, a lady in the church handed me an envelope, and inside was enough money for the trip.

God always provides according to His will, even if it is at the "last minute."

## **No Payments For Seven Months**

By Al Schwartzkopf

We became Christians at Gering, Nebraska on June 20, 1954, during a revival meeting conducted by Burton Barber. After three weeks I gave some thought to enter the work of preaching. I spoke with Brother Barber about the expense of going to school and the advisability of studying by correspondence. He indicated that attending classes would be more profitable but the decision needed much prayer. Then we thought of something that could help us decide. It called for God to answer a specific prayer request.

We had equities in two houses, so we decided we would pray something like this: "God, if it is your will that I go to school and become a preacher of the Gospel, answer by providing a sale for one of the houses." After offering this definite prayer, I went to a realtor in Scottsbluff and had the house listed with him. I decided that if it could be sold within six weeks, I would enter school and take up preaching. After this six weeks I planned to spend my two weeks' vacation attending the Centerville (Iowa) Rally. So, after explaining this to the realtor he replied, "We will list your house, but houses are not selling this time of year, so I doubt it will sell in six weeks. Don't build your hopes too high."

Then we began to pray, "If it is your will, Lord, that we go to school, let us know by sending a buyer for this house at the price we asked." In two weeks the realtor called saying he had a buyer for our house, providing we would wait for a few months as this party would need to arrange for a G.I. loan. We agreed to wait.

I told my wife there was nothing else to do except to begin packing as God must have wanted us to move to Ottumwa, Iowa. We signed a contract with the buyer in which he agreed to have the loan

completed within three months. We immediately started to pack our things, selling those items we didn't intend to take with us, and I terminated my job at the dairy.

Loading our belongings into a U-Haul trailer, and with no house or job to go to, we took off for Ottumwa. Upon arriving, we looked for a house but found none. We unloaded our things into a student's garage and returned to Nebraska for another load of furniture. We arrived back in Ottumwa and again began looking for a house. It was here that God really showed His providential leading and care in our behalf.

We finally found a house for sale through the help of other Christians. We called the real estate man, who had an equity in the house due to a trade he had made and was paying an elderly widow \$40 a month payments. After we looked the house over, and agreed to take it at the price being asked, the realtor asked us what terms we could meet. We offered him \$100 and \$40 per month until we received the equity from our house in Scottsbluff. He asked us to consider it further, and he would return in an hour to close the deal. In that hour we talked about it and prayed over it. When he returned he said, "My wife and I have decided to allow you the \$100 down payment in return for a little fixing up that needed to be done." So we signed the contract and agreed to pay \$40 monthly to the realtor, which he, in turn, paid to the widow.

When the 1st of October came, I went down to pay the \$40 dollar payment, but he refused to take it. He said, "You use that, as I know starting college takes a lot of money."

I didn't have very much income during October, and by the 1st of November I didn't have the \$40 payment. When I went down to tell the man I was sorry I couldn't pay yet, he said, "That's all right, I've already made my payment to the widow."

During the month of November things went better. I did some yard work and received some money from my home congregation (Gering, Nebr.). When I went to make the payment on the 1st of December, he again refused it, saying, "Winter is setting in, and Christmas is coming, so you will need it. Just go ahead and use that \$40."

In the mean time the three months were up

on the contract for our house back home but still no money because the man had not yet had his G.I. loan go through. So we signed another contract extending the period for another three months.

By the 1st of January we were short again. I went down to tell the man that we didn't have the money, but that I would borrow on my insurance to pay the \$40. He said, "I wouldn't think of having you borrow on your insurance. I appreciate your coming in. I was able to make the \$40 payment to the widow."

On the last night of the January Gathering I received a call to come back to work for a machinery dealer for whom I had worked previously.

On February 1st I again went down to pay the \$40 payment, and, again he refused it. This time he said, "You've just started to work, and it's only a part-time job at that. You need it."

March came...the same thing. He refused to take it. But still no money came for the house back home. We did, however, receive word that the loan had been approved.

In April we received our equity for the house back home. With it we paid the real estate man his equity in our present house and then made payments to the widow every month thereafter.

You talk about God's divine leading! We experienced it and praised His name for it. Here was a man we had never met; no one in the School of Evangelism knew him; yet he allowed us to live in his house for seven months WITHOUT PAYING ONE RED CENT.

## **Challenged By the Death of a Child**

By Paul Crist

The big, yellow school bus rolled to a stop as usual that Friday afternoon. The children were home and ready for another weekend vacation from school activities. It was a pleasant day, September 20, 1963. Fall was beginning in Missouri. This is very beautiful

time of year: a season when the days are warm but not too hot, the nights are cool, and often the haze of Indian Summer lingers in the skies. This particular day was the beginning of many days, weeks, and months that were to be filled with anxiety, sorrow, tears, and prayerful pleadings. Also, there would be soul-searching, the learning of lessons, and yes, the joys of knowing we serve a prayer-answering God.

Manford, our youngest son who was 5 years old, had just started his first year of school. To him school was a great joy. When he had to miss for some reason, it was a time of tears. Even though when asked what he liked best about school, he would mischievously reply, "Recess." He loved to ride on the big, yellow school bus, and, to him books were a never-ending source of enjoyment and challenge. Books were a means of opening up new worlds and fresh ideas, and they were to become his constant companions through many hours of illness. Toward the last, he was proud to and happy to purchase his own Bible and to read, with understanding, many verses from it.

As soon as he was in the house that evening, he lay down on the divan and went to sleep. His mother, knowing this to be a departure from his normal activity, soon discovered he had a high temperature, (in excess of 105 degrees).

His grandparents were at our house that evening, and my father and I were out in the field tending cattle. John, our son just older than Manford, came out to inform us that Manford was sick. We lost no time taking him to the hospital, where we learned he had a throat infection. It was there we also learned that he had a unusually high count of white blood corpuscles. About 8,000-12,000 is normal. His was 35,000 and increasing. Our doctor said that Manford probably had leukemia and sent us to the University Medical Center in Columbia, for additional tests. It turned out that he had a very rare type of leukemia, acquired in children, and we were told he could pass away at any time. Amidst the tears we found great comfort in fervent prayer, knowing God was taking care of all things, and that many Christians were also praying.

The medicines available were not very effective in this type of leukemia, but within a few weeks he had responded to treatment in a remarkable

way. He even returned to normal in his activity and appearance for a few months. We know this was a answer to prayer. It brought amazement to the doctors and gratitude to all of us. All the while we knew God COULD heal him completely, but it would have to be according to His will, and we must not be selfish if He wanted to call His own to be with Him.

The doctors told us this type of illness could affect many parts of the body and result in much suffering. Our prayer was that, if God saw fit not to heal him, his suffering would be at a minimum. This prayer was very definitely answered. In the 9 months of his illness, aside from shots, tests, ear infection, and the normal strain on his nervous system, he suffered very little. His suffering could have been tremendous, but God was merciful.

Our little Manford displayed much patience during his entire illness, asking only once if he would always be sick. From the very first he dreaded the many tests and shots he had on his visits to the doctor and hospital, but eventually he learned to take these in stride with little or no objection.

Naturally we talked to him often about spiritual things. His faith was that of a child, with no pretense. A few weeks before he died, I was talking with him about Heaven and what it would be like, and in the course of our conversation he made this statement: "Someday I will know what it is like." Yes, to him, Heaven was a reality.

Among the many things granted through prayer, in connection with his sickness, we are appreciative of the physical health, strength, and material means supplied to us in order to meet the extra obligations.

Undoubtedly the greatest result of all this- perhaps the purpose God had in mind- was that various ones indicated to us that our boy's illness caused a real challenge to their lives spiritually. We know it certainly did to ours.

While he was in the hospital, his mother and I took turns caring for him. On the morning of June 27, 1964 we attended him during a prolonged nose bleed. He was conscious, seemingly in no pain, and talked some. While I stepped out to summon the doctor, he slumped over in his mother's arms, into unconsciousness, and soon into eternity. The doctor's efforts to revive him were futile. God had called him

home.

Many members of our family lived some distance from our area, but since that weekend was vacation time, many of them were home and able to come to the funeral. At any other time this might not have been possible. At the memorial we were all blessed with a true and challenging sermon. Was this all just coincidence? No, for we know it was the work of a wonderful, prayer-answering God.

## A Phone Call Leads to An Eye Operation

By Bill Paul

One day in 1947 I began noticing a dimness developing in my vision. Up until then I had 20/20 vision. So I went to the eye doctor thinking I possibly needed glasses. After an extensive examination the doctor bluntly said, "Son, you're going blind." Naturally, this hit me very hard. I had developed cataracts on both eyes.

But the dimness in vision got worse very gradually. After deciding in 1950 to preach the Gospel, I was enabled by God to use my eyes sufficiently to get through school and begin preaching the Word of God.

However, by the early 1960's the cataracts had so impaired my sight that I could distinguish only light in my left eye. The right eye was considerably better but still far below normal. This condition was getting so bad it was threatening to end my labors as a Gospel preacher. I could not drive at night, and driving during the day was very risky, especially in the bright sunlight. Bible study and sermon preparation required the use of a powerful magnifying glass to see the print, especially the fine print of commentaries and reference works. I was becoming quite concerned about my condition and began to wonder if, perhaps, the Lord was through using me in the ministry of the Gospel.

Being a disabled veteran from World War II, I was eligible for Veterans Administration treatment and hospitalization. One VA eye doctor in St. Petersburg, Florida told me an operation was needed soon on my left eye due to the muscles of that eye becoming

weakened. (Since I could not see objects with that eye, it tended not to move as far to the right or to the left as the other eye).

Two Navy eye specialists at the Jacksonville Naval Air Station examined the eye carefully and said that, due to an "absorption" process that had developed, neither of them would attempt the operation.

Another eye surgeon at the Bay Pines VA Hospital agreed to operate but gave no assurance whatever of success. He was a very gruff and unsympathetic man, and I was unable to feel any confidence at all in him, especially when it involved cutting into my eyes.

A private ophthalmologist in my own city (Orlando), examined me and showed willingness to operate on the eye. He was optimistic about it, saying the operation stood a 95% chance of being successful. But since he was a private physician, my eligibility to VA care would not cover the expense if he operated. I didn't have that kind of money. So there things stood. All we could do was pray and wait upon the Lord's leading.

Then one day in 1963 I was talking on the phone to the state Vocational Rehabilitation about a person in the church who was being considered by them for possible assistance. In the course of our conversation I had occasion to testify to this counselor how God had blessed me through the years of study while preparing to preach, in spite of cataracts in the eyes, a chronic skin condition, and the handicap in appearance of a scalp disease. I pointed out to him that though I had been hospitalized 6 times (up till that time) for my condition, God had mercifully granted me 16 years of service for Him.

This somehow impressed him, for he said, "May I ask you a few personal questions?" A little surprised, I replied, "Why yes, I guess so." He then asked about the extent of my present eye disability, how much it was handicapping me in my work, the size of my family, and the amount of my income. After giving him the answers, he asked me if I would come to his office for a personal interview. I agreed, although it seemed a little strange he would take such an interest in my problem since my original conversation with him had absolutely no bearing whatsoever on my own needs. I wondered if this,

perhaps, could be God beginning to work all things together for good, as He promised.

When I received the call from the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor, he informed me the State of Florida had authorized that an operation on my left eye be performed completely at their expense. They agreed to pay the doctor's bill, the hospital bill, and even for the contact lens I would need and the tedious work of having it fitted correctly. They allowed me to select my own surgeon and even the very time I wanted to be operated on. What a marvelous blessing! Surely God is able, "to do abundantly above all that we ask or think."

The operation went fine. I had very little discomfort (actually no more than from an ordinary toothache). I was able to be in a local hospital near my family and friends for only 10 days. The eye healed perfectly. I was later fitted to a contact lens, giving me 20/15 vision in that eye. I became able to drive a car easily both day and night. With my improved ability to read and study again I was able to continue preaching.

All the credit and glory must be given to my wonderful God, through Jesus Christ the Lord! Praise His name for His might acts.

\*THE ABOVE TESTIMONIES ARE FROM THE BOOK, "TELLING ON GOD," BY WILLIAM E. PAUL AND ARE USED BY PERMISSION.