



Surprised By Prayer

My Trip to California and a Girl in Need



TIMOTHY BRAHM'S MONTHLY UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 1, 2012

Dear Friend,

A couple of weeks ago, my pastor asked me how my support-raising trip to California went. I said to him what I've said to the many others who have asked the same question. "It went incredibly well; God really came through for me." That God came through was actually the main theme God impressed upon me throughout the trip. God answers prayers, so I should take prayer more seriously than I do. The clearest example of this is the still-developing story of a young woman named "Jessica."

Early in my trip, I spent a day with a family I've been close to for about seventeen years. We reconnected and discussed Justice for All and the state of the pro-life movement. Two days later, I received a text from one of them, "Rachel," telling me that her friend Jessica was planning on having an abortion the next day. We talked on the phone for about half an hour, and I did my best to help her prepare for a very difficult phone call. Unfortunately, when Rachel called, Jessica hung up on her. To my shame,

Her friend Jessica was planning on having an abortion the next day.

what crossed my mind when I found out that Jessica wouldn't talk to Rachel was, "Great. Now all we can do is pray."

In retrospect, I think I sometimes have this strange attitude that prayer is a hopeless exercise. Consequently, I tend to pray after I run out of ways to fix things myself. But it's false that prayer is hopeless. Scripture teaches the opposite. (See Matthew 6:8-13; 7:7-11; 21:22; John 14:13-14; and John 16:23 for just a few examples.)

People all over the country joined Rachel and I in praying for Jessica, but the next day I felt pretty down, believing that Jessica's baby was surely going to die.

That afternoon I received a text from Rachel telling me that Jessica left the clinic without having the abortion! I don't have any way of understanding what happened apart from God's grace and his answering our prayers.

Although it wasn't a problem in how I prayed for this situation, I recently realized that I also fall into the more subtle trap of praying too generally. I was talking with my

Answers to Prayer in California



I visited sixty-two people during my three and a half weeks in California and had wonderful fellowship with each of them. When you're trying to coordinate with that many people, scheduling complications are inevitable. But almost every time God provided a solution. During the planning process, I was worried about the cost of the trip, but God knew how much it would cost and blessed me time and again through the generosity of my community. One friend even let me borrow his truck for a week and a half to keep car rental costs down.

God also provided by giving me places to stay. One day I drove from Paso Robles to Los Angeles (250 miles) not knowing where I would sleep that night, but God provided a place to stay in San Pedro. Then, when I needed a place to stay near Biola, my Aunt, who lives five minutes from Biola, texted me and offered to let me stay at her house while her family went on vacation.



friend Matt a few months ago, and after he shared his frustration at being unable to find a suitable Christian woman, he told me that he recently prayed for God to help him out by introducing him to his wife. I thought, "That's a great idea! If that is something you earnestly desire, then why not ask it of God?"

Being single myself and wanting a family, I decided I should follow Matt's example and pray specifically for a wife. But strangely, I didn't put it into practice. Months later I realized that I hadn't been praying in that way. Somehow I got into the habit of praying generally, not having the confidence to really entreat God, and merely praying, "Your will be done." If my parents asked me what I wanted for Christmas, I wouldn't say, "Just give me whatever you desire to give me, you know better than I do what's good for me." We should pray with humility and acknowledge that God knows what is good for us, but we should also ask for what we want because he loves us and answers our prayers.

If prayer matters as much as the Bible says it does, we should pray often. And if God loves us and hears our prayers, we should ask him for the specific desires of our hearts.

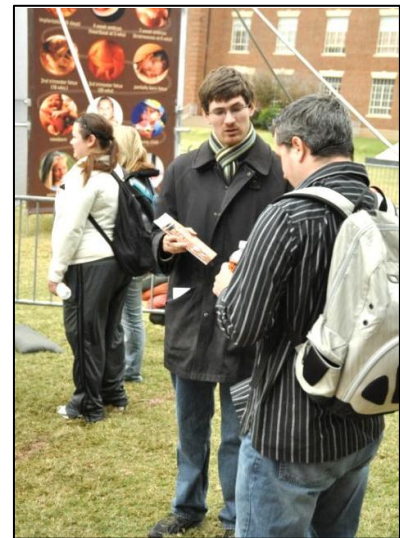
Would you try an experiment with me? Would you commit to praying for me every day? Put this letter on your fridge or tape it on your mirror or something. I feel a bit forward and even presumptuous asking something like this, but given what God has been showing me recently about prayer, I really crave yours. This month, please daily ask God to grant me the courage to forthrightly invite people to invest financially in my ministry, and ask him to move in people's hearts to say, "Yes." I'm eager to shift my time from support-raising to training pro-life advocates. And of course, Jessica's story isn't over. She is still pregnant, and we're trying to connect her and her family with a local church. Please pray for her every day, too.

I don't have any way of understanding what happened apart from God's grace and his answering our prayers.



At a seminar last fall, I showed high school students how to start dialogue using our free speech board.

In Christ,
Tim



Last year at Oklahoma State University (OSU), I had many conversations like this one. I look forward to another outreach at OSU this October.

Support Raising Update

As of August 30, I have reached **41%** of my support goal for my position at Justice for All. To the 33 families and individuals who have joined my support team, thank you very much!

If you have not yet joined my financial support team, please prayerfully consider partnering with me to change hearts and save lives.