

Prayer List



Of Our Number

- ◆ Jennifer Derrick—scans April 16
- ◆ Florene Howze—health problems
- ◆ Jim Ward—cancer follow-up treatment April 12th

Others in Need

- ◆ Pray for first responders and those affected by fires and other emergencies
- ◆ Al Aplin—surgery soon
- ◆ Deb Aplin—biopsies soon
- ◆ Thomas Bush—11, cancer
- ◆ Jennifer Cook—cancer
- ◆ Tim Dixon—lymphoma; chemo
- ◆ Keith Grimes—biopsy showed some abnormal cells; more tests
- ◆ Marie Johnson—seizures
- ◆ David Lee—broken hip
- ◆ Jason Rickmon—stage 3 cancer; throat surgery April 12th

Continued in next column...

- ◆ Luis Sanchez—brain cancer
- ◆ Sidney White—short of breath
- ◆ Pray also for those who have lost loved ones, government leaders, military, those traveling, alien sinners, those fallen away, the church at Baker and worldwide.

Events



- ◆ April 25th
4th Wednesday Singing
- ◆ May 6-11
Our Homecoming Meeting with Jason Holladay speaking

Faithful Worship — **1) Praying** to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ (Luke 11:1-2; John 16:23; Eph. 5:20; Phil. 4:6); **2) Singing** without mechanical instruments (Matt. 26:30; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16-17; Heb. 2:12); **3) Preaching** God's Word (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:42; 20:7); **4) Giving** as prospered, cheerfully (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7); **5) The Lord's Supper** on the first day of every week (Matt. 26:26-28; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20-34; 16:2; Heb. 10:23-31).

To Our Visitors

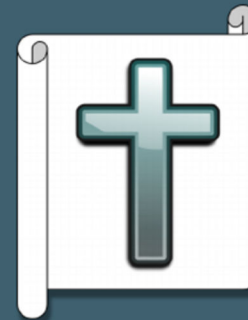


We are happy and honored that you are here! Please fill out a visitor's card and give us a chance to get to know you. If you have any questions about anything said or done in Bible class or worship, please ask. We seek to give a Bible answer for everything we do (Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 3:15; 4:11).

Privileged to Serve



Announcements—Glenn Howze
Song Leading—Caleb Howze (Wed.)
 David Howze (Sun.)
Serving the Lord's Supper
 Head: Leo Derrick; Helpers: Mark Howze,
 Ethan Howze, Caleb Howze
Lord's Supper PM
 Head: Ethan Howze
 Helper: Caleb Howze
Scripture Reading—Braden Hilburn



THE BAKER BULLETIN

The weekly bulletin of

The church of Christ in Baker, FL

April 8, 2018

Meeting Times

Sundays:

- 10AM Bible Class
- 11AM Worship
- 5:30PM Pew Packers
- 6PM Worship

Wednesdays:

- 7PM Bible Class

Other Information

5761 Hwy. 4
 P.O. Box 285
 Baker, FL 32531 USA
 850-669-9117

Website:

churchofChristatBaker.com

Radio Program:

104.7FM Sundays 8:30AM

Jason Hilburn's Info:

850-826-8198
 jasonhilburn@yahoo.com
 TheBibleDomain.com

Automated Prayers?

Ryan Smithey

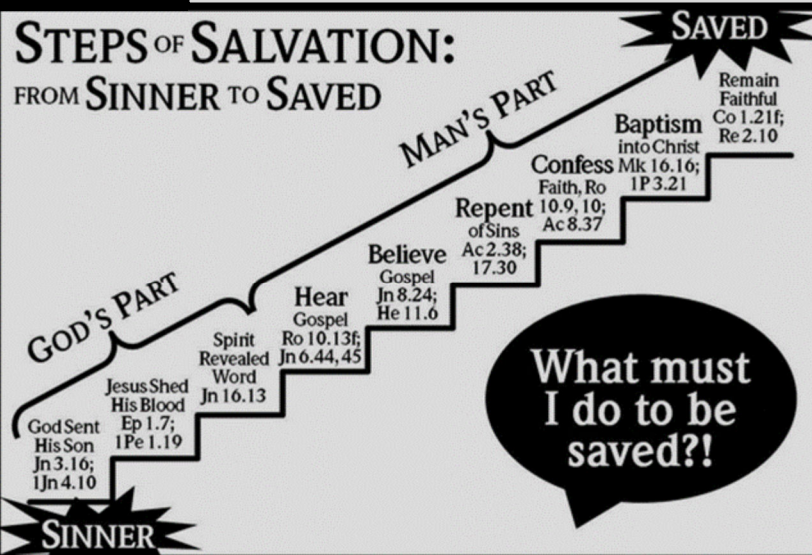
Are you too busy? Do you forget to pray? Do you find that you just don't have time to slow down and talk to God? Do you ever wish that you could have someone pray for you? What if a computer could say your prayers for you?

Well, you are in luck! That's right, now you can subscribe to an online service that will use "the latest technology in text-to-speech synthesizers...with the aim of helping those who are unable to pray as frequently as they like." You can go online and pay to have a computer speak aloud your prayers for various costs based on the length of the prayer.

Sadly, what I have written is no joke. This is an actual online service that was founded in 2009 (www.informationageprayer.com; quotes from the site are in italics). I was made aware of this website this week and I must admit I was amazed; a lot of things do not shock me because I know that many people will justify just about anything in the name of religion, but I could have never imagined this one. So many questions come to mind: Are we really so disconnected from worship to God that we imagine that a computer could fulfill our religious duties? What happened to worshipping God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24)? What about Jesus commanding His disciples that when they prayed they were not to use "vain repetitions, as the heathen do" (Matthew 6:7)? Is not having an

STEPS OF SALVATION: FROM SINNER TO SAVED

"...ye were the servants of sin..."
(Romans 6:17).



"...but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17b-18).

inanimate object, which while it says the words, has no concept of what it is saying, vain repetition?

Consider just a few claims made on this website's frequently asked questions page:

“Are the prayers meaningless, will subscribing really make a difference? As with all prayer, the final results are up to God as everything follows His will. We make no claims regarding the efficacy of the service, however it is our opinion that the omniscient God hears the prayers when they are voiced, as He hears everything on this Earth...”

Notice the site states they “make no claims regarding the efficacy of the service.” So they are charging for a service and make no claims as to whether it is effective or not -- yet you are to rest more comfortably knowing that your prayers are being said for you! Why not just believe the Bible when it states, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16). God tells us that indeed prayer is effective and we are assured that the “eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers” (1 Peter 3:12).

“Are prayers blasphemous when voiced by a computer? We recommend you contact your local clergy for a personal answer, however we think that Information Age Prayer is a new and exciting way to connect with God.”

The question is not what any person thinks of this “service” but what God thinks of it. No preacher, elder, religious leader, or any person in this creation is who we need to turn to in order to answer spiritual questions – it is the word of God. Yes, others can help us study, but ultimately our choices and decisions must be based on what God's Word reveals. After all, God's word is revealed that we “may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:17) and in it He has “given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). When one goes to the Bible he can find examples of one person praying for another on their behalf (intercessory prayer) but another person or object can never do your praying for you. If we are to do things according to what God authorizes (Colossians 3:17) then we will stick with the simple and powerful means of communication that we have to God as His children, the avenue of prayer through Jesus Christ.

“Can I write my own prayer to be said? In the future we hope to include this ability. We are waiting until we can be sure no malicious prayers will get through...”

Notice again that not only is a lifeless machine “praying” but it is nothing more than vain repetition. The service offers a number of pre-written “prayers” that the computer will say for you but it is not you coming “...boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). It is not your words, thoughts, and emotions that are being spoken – in fact you (the individual) have been quite removed from the process. Now you can move on with your busy life and forget about praying to God (*please note sarcasm, RTS!*)

Of course, to be fair, the site does say: “*we think our service should be used like a prayer supplement, to extend and strengthen a subscriber's connection with God. Traditional prayer is an integral part of this connection and should never be forgone, even after signing up.*” But are they still not suggesting that the computer can do at least some of the subscribers' praying for them? Are they not suggesting that now someone can be involved in worshiping and talking to God and not even be aware of it (if it is scheduled for a certain time and they are asleep or busy doing other things)? If so, why not extend this to other things? Why shouldn't I have a computer sing for me? Or maybe I could pay someone to attend worship for me? Maybe I could have someone be baptized for me? All of these things remove the individual from personal involvement in all of these actions and are not authorized by scripture.

Now let me close with a warning. As shocking as this idea is (of having a computer do my praying for me), let us examine ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5) and make sure that we are not moving in this direction without knowing it. What I mean is let us make sure that our worship and service to God does not become mindless. If our prayers are empty words spilling out of our mouths simply from habit, with no thought and emotion attached, then why not have a computer do it – it would do about as much good! If we mindlessly come to worship God and simply go through the actions with no involvement of ourselves – not worshiping both in spirit (correct attitude) and in truth (correctly according to God's Will) (John 4:24) – then we would do just as well to have a robot or some paid “actor” to play our role. Instead let us remember that we are coming before God's presence and worshiping Him, and this is a great honor reserved for those following God (Hebrews 4:16; 1 Peter 3:12). This is not something to be done thoughtlessly, but with awe and respect to our Father which is in heaven, whose name is hallowed (Matthew 6:9).