

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Inner Court Ministries

For the Week of December 7, 2003

A Call to Prayer

“A tourist, in climbing an Alpine summit, finds himself tied by a strong rope to his trusty guide, and to three of his fellow-tourists. As they skirt a perilous precipice he cannot pray, ‘Lord, hold up my goings in a safe path, that my footsteps slip not, but as to my guide and companions, they must look out for themselves.’ The only proper prayer in such a case is, ‘Lord, hold up our goings in a safe path; for if one slips all of us may perish.’”—H.

CLAY TRUMBULL

This Week in Prayer

- Pray for Israel. There is so much to pray about when praying for Israel. The struggle over the land and people continues at a feverish pace. The world is willing to sell Israel short for “peace”. Many posture trying to appear as neutral, but their actions, time-and-again are anti-Israel. We must pray.

Here are a few excerpts from some news articles.

The Palestinians are now in the testing stages of a new generation of Qassam rockets. The Qassam 4 is to have a range of 17 kilometers (55.5 miles). It should be noted that the previous generation of Qassam rockets was tested and completed during the last ceasefire and then fired at the Ashkelon Industrial Area after the ceasefire ended.

A peace agreement, the “Geneva accord” has gotten much attention, but this “peace” is entirely hallucinatory. It is written as if Oslo never happened. The Palestinian side repeats solemn pledges to recognize Israel, renounce terror, end anti-Israel incitement, etc. -- all promised in Oslo. These promises are such a dead letter that the Palestinian side is openly bargaining these chits again...

A Palestinian state, of course. Evacuating every Jewish settlement in new Palestine, of course. Redividing Jerusalem, of course. Return of Israel to its 1967 borders, arbitrary and indefensible, but without any serious security safeguards. Palestine promises to acquire and buy no more weapons than specified in some treaty annex. This is a joke. Oslo had similarly detailed limitations on Palestinian weaponry, and nobody even pretended to enforce them. Last year, a massive illegal boatload came in from Iran on the Karine A. What did the world do about it? Nothing.

And on the critical question that even the most dovish Israelis insist on -- that the Palestinians not have the right to flood Israel with Arab refugees -- the agreement is utterly ambiguous. Third parties are to suggest exactly how many Palestinians are to return to Israel, and the basis for the number Israel will be required to accept will be the mathematical average!

- Pray for the ***Brotherhood Beyond Boundaries*** pastors and their families; pray for the work of these men in Belarus, and Lithuania.
- Pray for outreach, December is great month for sharing. Pray that we will be ready to talk about the hope that is within us.

***But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,
and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you
a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;***

1 Peter 3:15 (NKJV)

Praying Always for You

Pray for one another. Pray for joy. The joy of the season is a calling card to many around us, making opportunities for sharing our faith, but only if we are enjoying the joy of the Lord. No one enjoys hearing from a humbug, but filled with the joy of the Lord, we have a message for this season or any other.

Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Neh. 8:10 (NKJV)

***Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.***

Habakkuk 3:18 (NKJV)

And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Romans 5:11 (NKJV)

***For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?
Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?***

1 Thes. 2:19 (NKJV)

Imperative Importance of the Work of Prayer

The Attributes Of God

The Love Of God

A W Pink

(Continued from last week) The love of God...

It is *sovereign*. This also is self-evident. God Himself is sovereign, under obligations to none, a law unto Himself, acting always according to His own imperial pleasure. Since God be sovereign, and since He be love, it necessarily follows that His love is sovereign. Because God is God, He does as He pleases; because God is love, He loves whom He pleases. Such is His own express affirmation:

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” (Rom. 9:19). There was no more reason in Jacob why he should be the object of Divine love, than there was in Esau. They both had the same parents, and were born at the same time, being twins; yet God loved the one and hated the other! Why? Because it pleased Him to do so.

The sovereignty of God’s love necessarily follows from the fact that it is uninfluenced by anything in the creature. Thus, to affirm that the cause of His love lies in God Himself, is only another way of saying, He loves whom He pleases. For a moment, assume the opposite. Suppose God’s love were regulated by anything else than His will, in such a case He would love by rule, and loving by rule He would be under a law of love, and then so far from being free, God would Himself be *ruled by law*. “In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to”—what? Some excellency which He foresaw in them? No; what then? “According to the good pleasure of His will” (Eph. 1:4,5).

It is *infinite*. Everything about God is infinite. His essence fills heaven and earth. His *wisdom* is illimitable, for He knows everything of the past, present and future. His *power* is unbounded, for there is nothing too hard for Him. So His love is without limit. There is a depth to it which none can fathom; there is a height to it which none can scale; there is a length and breadth to it which defies measurement, by any creature-standard. Beautifully is this intimated in Ephesians 2:4: But God, who is rich in mercy, for His *great* love wherewith He loved us: the word “great” there is parallel with the “God *so* loved” of John 3:16. It tells us that the love of God is so transcendent it cannot be estimated.

No tongue can fully express the infinitude of God’s love, or any mind comprehend it: it “passeth knowledge” Eph. 3:19). The most extensive ideas that a finite mind can frame about Divine love, are infinitely below its *true* nature. The heaven is not so far above the earth as the goodness of God is beyond the most raised conceptions which we are able to form of it. It is an *ocean* which swells higher than all the mountains of opposition in such as are the objects of it. It is a *fountain* from which flows all necessary good to all those who are interested in it (John Brine, 1743).

It is *immutable*. As with God Himself there is “no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17), so His love knows neither change or diminution. The worm Jacob supplies a forceful example of this: “Jacob have I loved,” declared Jehovah, and despite all his unbelief and waywardness, He never ceased to love him. John 13:1 furnishes another beautiful illustration. That very night one of the apostles would say, “Show us the Father”; another would deny Him with cursings; all of them would be scandalized by and forsake Him. Nevertheless “having loved His own which were in the world, He love them *unto the end*.” The Divine love is subject to no vicissitudes. Divine love is “strong as death ... many waters cannot quench it” (Song of Sol. 8:6,7). Nothing can separate from it: Romans 8:35-39.

“His love no end nor measure knows,
No change can turn its course,
Eternally the same it flows
From one eternal source.”

It is *holy*. God’s love is not regulated by caprice passion, or sentiment, but by principle. Just as His grace reigns not at the expense of it, but “through righteousness” (Rom. 5:21), so His love never conflicts with His holiness. “God is light” (1 John 1:5) is mentioned *before* “God is love” (1 John

4:8). God's love is no mere amiable weakness, or effeminate softness. Scripture declares, "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). God will not wink at sin, even in His own people. His love is *pure*, unmixed with any maudlin sentimentality.

It is *gracious*. The love and favor of God are inseparable. This is clearly brought out in Romans 8:32-39. What that love is from which there can be no "separation," is easily perceived from the design and scope of the immediate context: it is that goodwill and grace of God which determined Him to give His Son for sinners. That *love* was the impulsive power of Christ's incarnation: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). Christ died not in order to make God love us, but because He did love His people, Calvary is the supreme demonstration of Divine love. Whenever you are tempted to doubt the love of God, Christian reader, go back to Calvary.

Here then is abundant cause for trust and patience under Divine affliction. Christ was beloved of the Father, yet *He* was not exempted from poverty, disgrace, and persecution. *He* hungered and thirsted. Thus, it was not incompatible with God's *love* for Christ when He permitted men to spit upon and smite Him. Then let no Christian call into question God's love when he is brought under painful afflictions and trials. God did not enrich Christ on earth with temporal prosperity, for "He had not where to lay His head." But He *did* give Him the Spirit "without measure" (John 3:34). Learn then that *spiritual* blessings are the principal gifts of Divine love. How blessed to know that when the world hates us, God loves us!

Joining This Company

All Christians who will pray are welcome. ***Voice of Thanksgiving*** is sent by e-mail or letter to all who will commit to prayer as members of this company. It is a guide to challenge us and direct our prayers. The fee for joining is your commitment to pray. Please join us in praying for the nations.

To join send an e-mail with the word JOIN for the subject. Tell your friends and prayer partners about ***Voice of Thanksgiving***. The call is to gather a company of believers who will pray. Together we will reach nations for Jesus Christ.

To receive ***Voice of Thanksgiving*** by e-mail:

Send an e-mail to david@innercourt.com
include the word JOIN in the subject line

To receive ***Voice of Thanksgiving*** by regular mail:

Voice of Thanksgiving
Inner Court Ministries
P.O. Box 2125-80502
Longmont, CO 80502

The ***Voice of Thanksgiving*** is available online

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If you have questions or comments

Send them to David Williamson:
david@innercourt.com