

Voice of Thanksgiving
Calling a Company of Believers Together For Prayer
Inner Court Ministries

For the week of January 26, 2003

A Call to Prayer

The Storm Center on the Battlefield
From *The Believer's Prayer Life* by Andrew Murray

Mention was made in conference of the expression “strategic position” used so often in reference to the great strife between the Kingdom of Heaven and the powers of darkness.

When a general chooses the place from which he intends to strike the enemy, he pays most attention to those points which he thinks most important in the fight. On the battlefield of Waterloo there was a farmhouse which Wellington immediately saw as the key to the situation. He did not spare his troops in his endeavor to hold that point: the victory depended on it. So it actually happened. It is the same in the conflict between the believer and the powers of darkness. The place of private prayer is the key, the strategic position where decisive victory is obtained.

The enemy uses all his power to lead the Christian—and above all the minister—to neglect prayer. He knows that however admirable the sermon may be, however attractive the service, however faithful the pastoral visitation, none of these things can damage him or his kingdom if prayer is neglected. When the Church shuts herself up to the power of the prayer closet, and the soldiers of the Lord have received on their knees “power from on High,” then the powers of darkness will be shaken and souls will be delivered. In the church, on the mission field, with the minister and his congregation, everything depends on the faithful exercise of the power of prayer.

*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,
and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*
Ephesians 6:18

This Week In Prayer

- Pray for Israel. I have been calling you to prayer for Israel for several weeks, and continue to do so this week as we have not yet been relieved from this assignment.

*Ye have not gone up into the gaps,
neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel
to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD.*
Ezekiel 13:5

*And I sought for a man among them,
that should make up the hedge,*

***and stand in the gap before me for the land,
that I should not destroy it: but I found none.***

Ezekiel 22:30

- Pray for safety and protection for Christians around the world. In many places even day-to-day living is hazardous. For many Christians today is always a day with life hanging in the balance because of their commitment to the faith. Pray for Christians you know who live and work in “harms way”. If you are unaware of men and women to lift up in this call to prayer, then pray for Christians in North Korea. Many of our brothers and sisters there are living in a war zone today. Here is an email news article as an example:

NORTH KOREA: At "War" with Christians

Recently, a group of 24 young North Koreans were captured in northern China. While being interrogated back in a North Korean prison camp, one of the young people admitted that the group had been studying the Bible in China. Twenty members of the group were immediately executed.

This is yet another example of the rampant inhumane treatment of North Korean Christians. Local radio broadcasts warn their listeners against believing Christians - "They teach you to 'turn the other cheek.' "They are trying to soften up our people, and then they will invade our homeland. Do not believe them!"

Despite the warnings, North Koreans routinely escape to China looking for churches where they know they can receive help. Chinese Christians take great risk to help these refugees, knowing that they could wind up in prison themselves.

- Pray for the president of the United States. I know that some of you are not citizens of the USA, but I believe we are to be praying for George W. Bush. While asking the Lord about what to include in this week's ***This Week in Prayer***, I sensed God's strong call for prayer for this man. At times in prayer there is a somewhat causal “conversation” between us as the Lord and I walk together. This morning the specific call for prayer was, “pray this week for young George”.

***For kings, and for all that are in authority;
that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.***

1 Timothy 2:2

Praying Always for You

Last week our prayer for this company of believers was “That we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.”

***For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you,
and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and
spiritual understanding;***

***That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,
being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;***

Colossians 1:9-10

This week pray – “*That we would be fruitful in every good work*”

Our desire as we pray for one another, is that we will see fruit. There are two considerations in this prayer this week. First that we would be involved in “good work”, we need the Spirit’s guidance in developing a specific strategy so we are focused on the decisive point of the battle. Secondly, that we would see fruit that remains.

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:6

*But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit,
some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*

Matthew 13:8

*The righteous flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
They are planted in the house of the LORD; they flourish in the courts of our God.
In old age they still produce fruit; they are always green and full of sap,
showing that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*

Psalms 92:12-15 NRSV

Imperative Importance Of The Work Of Prayer

The Shopping List

Milk, bread, tomato paste... Has your prayer life become a shopping list? Prayer easily slips into nothing more than a shopping list, telling God my wants and expecting Him to deliver. The list becomes like a mantra, say it with conviction, fervor, and enough; the answers will come. Without realizing it we have begun to treat God like our private stock boy. His job to give us everything we ask; we command him to go and fetch this and that.

If we are honest, we almost view Him as a very rebellious stock boy; we get frustrated because He doesn’t listen well, He seldom responds to our first request, and often we have to explain even the simplest things to Him. Take winning the lost, we ask for revival for our city, this is a simple request. But, nothing happens, we don’t see a problem with us, no it is that stock boy. We come to the point of thinking something like, “If God loved this town as much as I do, He’d bring revival.”

Now before you send me a nasty email; I know you would never say things like that; I know your prayer time is never selfish time; I know you never treat God that way. I exaggerate to make my point. This attitude is so silly we would never go this far (or admit to such behavior), but it is easy to drift into bad habits and thoughts. The question should be regularly asked, why are you praying? If we are not careful, in very subtle ways our prayers become more like shopping lists than part of, a very special part of, our relationship with God?

I believe that prayer is about answers. I have so stated in earlier editions of ***Voice of Thanksgiving***, and so state now, but God is not a glorified stock boy, here to respond to our every request. He is God, but He is always looking for relationship with us. He longs for prayer partners who will join with Him in His daily work. He ever lives to make intercession for us and He longs for men and women who will join with Him in this intercession.

He is not a stock boy God, but a jealous God, one who longs for and desires relationship with His children. In every aspect of our life with God, He wants relationship. He wants us to know Him.

***For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice;
and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.***

Hosea 6:6

He longs for time with you in prayer. You are more important to Him than item on our lists. He is pleased to give us our requests and more, but of greater importance is the relationship. He loves us and is interested in even to the counting of the hairs on our head. He is looking for that same intimacy and knowledge to be ours with Him. See how Paul responded to God desire for this two-sided intimacy.

***That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection,
and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;***

Philippians 3:10

Adam was made to be in the Garden with God, their relationship was a wonderfully close; they walked and talked together daily. Adam could ask his Father for any and everything he needed, but more importantly this was God and Adam's time to be together. You can hear God cry over the broken fellowship, the broken relationship, when He comes to the garden in the cool of the day, looking for His friend Adam, but Adam and his wife have hid themselves from God's presence.

***And they heard the voice of the LORD God
walking in the garden in the cool of the day:
and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God
amongst the trees of the garden.***

Genesis 3:8

God is calling out to you today, just as He called to Adam on that day. God longs for His special time, the time He spends with you, like He enjoyed with Adam, Enoch, Abraham, and Moses. He longs for the joy of walking and talking with you. Running the universe is a full time job, but it is worthwhile, if He can spend time with His prayer partners, time with you. He knows the needs on your list, but first and foremost he longs for the two of you to walk and talk together as one.

***That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him,
and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:
For in him we live, and move, and have our being;
as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.***

Acts 17:27-28

***Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear,
than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.
Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God:
for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.
For a dream cometh through the multitude of business;
and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.***

Ecclesiastes 5:1-3

***For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice;
and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.***

Hosea 6:6

Joining This Company

All Christians who will pray are welcome. ***Voice of Thanksgiving*** is sent by email or letter to all who will commit to prayer as member 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. Send me an email with the word JOIN in the subject so I know you are interested in continuing to receive ***Voice of Thanksgiving***. 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 email:

Send an email 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

If you have questions or comments

Send them to David Williamson:
david@innercourt.com

To have your address removed from our list

Send an email to david@innercourt.com
Include the word REMOVE in the subject line