

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

For the week of February 9, 2003

***A Call to Prayer***

Solemn, blessed thought! This power has been given us in prayer to provide in the need of the world, to secure the servants for God's work. The Lord of the harvest will hear. Christ, who called us so specially to pray thus, will support our prayers offered in His name and interest. Let us set apart time and give ourselves to this part of our intercessory work. It will lead us into the fellowship of that compassionate heart of His that led Him to call for our prayers. It will elevate us to the insight of our regal position, as those whose will counts for something with the great God in the advancement of His Kingdom. It will make us feel how really we are God's fellow-workers on earth, to whom a share in His work has in downright earnest been entrusted. It will make us partakers in the soul travail, but also in the soul satisfaction of Jesus, as we know how, in answer to our prayer, blessing has been given that otherwise would not have come.

From *With Christ In The School Of Prayer* By Andrew Murray

***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 labors, such prayer will ask and obtain a twofold blessing. There will first be the desire for the increase of men entirely given up to the service of God. It is a terrible blot upon the Church of Christ that there are times when actually men cannot be found for the service of the Master as ministers, missionaries, or teachers of God's Word. The other blessing, every believer is a labourer; not one of God's children who has not been redeemed for service, and has not his work waiting. It must be our prayer that the Lord would so fill all His people with the spirit of devotion, that not one may be found standing idle in the vineyard.

From *With Christ In The School Of Prayer* By Andrew Murray

## *Praying Always for You*

Last week our prayer for this company of believers was “*increasing in the knowledge of God.*”

*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 – “*To be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power.*”

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come,  
he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself;  
but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak:  
and he will show you things to come.*

John 16:13

*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

Ephesians 5:18

## *Imperative Importance Of The Work Of Prayer*

### **Perfection In Prayer**

Men and women of prayer have never lived static lives. They are always growing and maturing, in their faith and relationship with the Lord. The Lord is so patient with us, He will wait a lifetime for a person, but He longs for those who will respond to His work. This is especially true in prayer, He longs for men and women who will respond to His working in our prayers. When reading biographies of great men and women of prayer, the ones God has allowed us to hear about, it is the most common feature to see a constant and continual spiritual growth. These people are far different at the end of their life here on earth, compared to their beginnings.

Our goal should be to grow and mature in prayer, just as these greats of prayer did. An appropriate goal in a life of prayer is perfection in prayer. This goal, when properly sought after, is a pathway lined with stepping-stones of growth and maturity in prayer and as a Christian. Perfection in prayer demands stretching. The world around us is designed for comfort, not stretching. It focuses on normalcy and fights against individual striving for excellence. Individuals and teams striving for perfection catch our attention because they are not the norm. The great men and women of prayer catch our attention because they have gone beyond the norm.

As a football coach, every year I would see freshmen boys come to the first days of training camp. I never got use to seeing those little boys and wondering how they would become the men on the varsity team. Year-after-year I would be amazed, these little boys would begin to workout, running, lifting, and practicing, and there would be a transformation, they would slowly grow and mature into men.

Growth in prayer also comes with hard work; like my freshmen boys; we must be in training if we are to grow. While they lifted weights, ran and ate (oh my can they eat!), we should be working out in the Word. Every prayer session should be centered around the Word. When we pray, we

should have the Word as our companion and guide. Pray the Word; effective prayer is praying the Word. Let the Holy Spirit guide your prayers and speak that which He gives.

The Word and the Holy Spirit are the coaches who will take you to perfection in prayer. Make it your practice to study the Word, this is your strength conditioning. Hide the Word in your heart; this is like daily running; day-by-day with the Word so that it has become part of us. For the athlete a good diet is important, prayer also demands a good diet. Every day feed your prayer life the good food of the Word.

***Study to show thyself approved unto God,  
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing the word of truth.***

2 Timothy 2:15

***Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.***

Psalms 119:11

***But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.***

Matthew 4:4

***Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered,  
seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers,  
ye have need that one teach you again  
which be the first principles of the oracles of God;  
and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.  
For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness:  
for he is a babe.***

***But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age,  
even those who by reason of use have their  
senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***

Hebrews 5:11-14

For perfection in prayer change is important. When coaching basketball I found that many of the girls had bad habits and practices. The best example was how they shot free throws. With almost every girl, we had to teach her a better way to shoot. The style they used would allow them to make a shot now and then, but there was no way to be consistent. A good free throw shooter is one who can consistently make the basket and especially under pressure.

Most of the girls would fight the changes; they went from missing most of the time to missing all of the time. Statements like, "Coach I can't do this. My shot is now really bad. Let me just practice the old way", were common, but the ones that worked with the coaches, slowly began to see improvement. It took a lot of practice and work to change, but those who made the change became consistent shooters. Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, must change some of our bad habits and practices. Perfection in prayer comes only to those who respond to His correcting and coaching.

***Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith;  
who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,  
despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.***

Hebrews 12:2

***Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ,  
let us go on unto perfection;  
not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works,  
and of faith toward God,  
Hebrews 6:1***

There is more in working toward perfection in prayer. My mother is a runner. She amazed everyone by transforming herself from a soccer mom, before there was such a thing, to a marathon runner. For years, every conversation with her included the phrase “personal best”. The key to a good race was setting a new personal best. Finishing second or placing two thousand was okay, if you did a personal best. Paul admonishes us to run the race to win the prize (1 Corinthians 9:24); the road to the prize is regular personal bests.

The runner works with speed and distance work along with all the rest of their tools for improving. In prayer we continually examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith. Self-judgment by the standard of the Word and repentance are the tools of personal best, for Christians. Paul’s command is that we judge ourselves. God’s standard is holiness and righteousness. When we see areas where we fall short of His standard, repentance is the key to growing toward our personal best.

***For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.  
1 Corinthians 11:31***

Just as a sidelight, we all should take a lesson from the runners, they are competitive; but their key to success is striving toward their personal best. They long to be like the great champion of the Boston Marathon or the Olympics, but day in and day out, they run, not against others, but just to reach a new personal best.

***We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves  
with some of those who commend themselves.  
But when they measure themselves by one another,  
and compare themselves with one another, they do not show good sense.  
2 Corinthians 10:12 NRSV***

Perfection in prayer is a goal worth working for. All around us there is a world longing for men and women who will pray. This world is desperate for prayer, are you? You are the answer to their longing; the one who will pray. Perfection in prayer demands stretching, that is why so many talk about prayer and so few pray.

***Be ye therefore perfect,  
even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.  
Matthew 5:48***

**The Road To The Prize Is Regular Personal Bests**

**Time For Perfection in Prayer**

## ***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](mailto:david@innercourt.com)  
include the word JOIN in the subject line

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

Voice of Thanksgiving  
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If you have questions or comments

Send them to David Williamson:  
[david@innercourt.com](mailto:david@innercourt.com)

To have your address removed from our list

Send an email to [david@innercourt.com](mailto:david@innercourt.com)  
Include the word REMOVE in the subject line