

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

For the week of March 23, 2003

A Call to Prayer

Regardless of any man's ability, he will fail if his endeavors are not backed by prayer. The major cause of failure in Christian enterprises is an omission of prayer.

Whether your goal is to witness to one man or to preach the Gospel to nations, you will succeed or fail based entirely on your prayer life. One percent of your time spent in prayer will produce only one percent results. Eighty percent prayer will bring 80 percent results. This formula works every time. The obvious question is, "But how can I expect to receive 100 percent results? I can't spend all of my time in prayer. "Oh yes, you can!"

Prayer is an attitude. It involves more than just making requests. Prayer is communicating with God. You can live in an attitude of prayer constantly, being in communication and fellowship with your heavenly Father every hour of the day.

From *Prayer Your Foundation for Success* by Kenneth Copeland

This Week In Prayer

- Pray for Israel and Jerusalem.

- Pray about the War in Iraq. Soon the war will be over and the hard work will begin. How will the many factions of the country work together? How will the Gospel enter this country? The doors of opportunity for the Iraqis is here and now, if we will pray.

*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise,
as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward,
not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
2 Peter 3:9*

- Pray for local outreaches.

- Pray for mission outreaches. *Brotherhood Beyond Boundaries* is a conference for pastors from Belarus, Ukraine, and Lithuania. The first *Brotherhood Beyond Boundaries* conference will be held in June. This will be a time of great blessing and help. This is the first of many steps in further reaching these countries with the Gospel. Pray for the details of the conference and its cost. (Please pray about a van, placed in Poland, used for these conferences and other European ministry)

- Pray for Mark's ministry trip in April. He will be ministering in Polish speaking churches across Australia. Pray for this time of ministry, protection for Mark and his family during this time, and for his church, Christ Church International, while he is away.

Praying Always for You

Week by week we are praying for one another as members of this company of believers joined together for prayer. We have been using prayers of Paul as our guide. Last week our prayer was "*That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you.*"

This week pray – "*That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified ... and ye in him.*"

*Wherefore also we pray always for you,
that our God would count you worthy of this calling,
and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness,
and the work of faith with power:
That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you,
and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

Our entire dependency upon God and our full accountability to Him are not contradictory but are complementary parts of one whole. It is the grand privilege of faith to make free use of Christ, and it is our duty to live unto Him, yet that is only possible by constantly drawing from Him. Without Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5), but energized by Him we can do all things (Phil. 4:13). Then let us see to it that we are "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 2:1).

"According to the grace of our God" is to be regarded then as referring to *the whole* of His benignant design toward us. It is on that basis all our supplies must be asked for, it is from that fountain all the streams of blessing do flow, and it is to that divine attribute all must be ascribed. It is the grace which sets His power to work on our behalf. Were the operation of His power suspended for a moment, even the "new man" would instantly be paralyzed. He "holdeth our soul in life" (Ps. 66:9), and should He "let loose his hand" we would be at once "cut off" (Job 6:9). For the resisting of any sin or the performing of any duty we are in need of the gracious power of God moment by moment. Nevertheless, we are not mere automatons. "He which hath begun a good work in you will . . . [finish] it" (Phil. 1:6), yet not without our concurrence, as though we were blocks of wood. Finally, we must not so eye "the grace of our God" as to lose sight of "and of the Lord Jesus Christ." In the Greek there is only one article here, and it is in the singular number, which not only exhibits the unity of the divine nature but also reveals the two Persons engaged in a common work.

From Gleanings from Paul by Arthur W. Pink

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 15:5

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 2:1

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4:13

Imperative Importance Of The Work Of Prayer

Prayer And Vigilance

From *The Necessity Of Prayer* by E.M. Bounds

Part 2

In his Epistle to the Romans, Paul indicates the nature of his soldier-life, giving us some views of the kind of praying needed for such a career. He writes:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea."

Paul had foes in Judaea -- foes who beset and opposed him in the form of "unbelieving men" and this, added to other weighty reasons, led him to urge the Roman Christians to "strive with him in prayer." That word "strive" indicated wrestling, the putting forth of great effort. This is the kind of effort, and this the sort of spirit, which must possess the Christian soldier.

Here is a great soldier, a captain-general, in the great struggle, faced by malignant forces who seek his ruin. His force is well-nigh spent. What reinforcements can he count on? What can give help and bring success to a warrior in such a pressing emergency? It is a critical moment in the conflict. What force can be added to the energy of his own prayers? The answer is -- in the prayers of others, even the prayers of his brethren who were at Rome. These, he believes, will bring him additional aid, so that he can win his fight, overcome his adversaries, and, ultimately, prevail.

The Christian soldier is to pray at all seasons, and under all circumstances. His praying must be arranged so as to cover his times of peace as well as his hours of active conflict. It must be available in his marching and his fighting. Prayer must diffuse all effort, impregnate all ventures, decide all issues. The Christian soldier must be as intense in his praying as in his fighting, for his victories will depend very much more on his praying than on his fighting. Fervent supplication must be added to steady resolve, prayer and supplication must supplement the armour of God. The Holy Spirit must aid the supplication with His own strenuous plea. And the soldier must pray in the Spirit. In this, as in other forms of warfare, eternal vigilance is the price of victory; and thus, watchfulness and persistent perseverance, must mark the every activity of the Christian warrior.

The soldier-prayer must reflect its profound concern for the success and well-being of the whole army. The battle is not altogether a personal matter; victory cannot be achieved for self, alone. There is a sense, in which the entire army of Christ is involved. The cause of God, His saints, their woes and trials, their duties and crosses, all should find a voice and a pleader in the Christian soldier, when he prays. He dare not limit his praying to himself. Nothing dries up spiritual secretions so certainly and completely; nothing poisons the fountain of spiritual life so effectively; nothing acts in such deadly fashion, as selfish praying.

Note carefully that the Christian's armour will avail him nothing, unless prayer be added. This is the pivot, the connecting link of the armour of God. This holds it together, and renders it effective. God's true soldier plans his campaigns, arranges his battle-forces, and conducts his conflicts, with prayer. It is all important and absolutely essential to victory, that prayer should so impregnate the life that every breath will be a petition, every sigh a supplication. The Christian soldier must needs be always fighting. He should, of sheer necessity, be always praying.

The Christian soldier is compelled to constant picket-duty. He must always be on his guard. He is faced by a foe who never sleeps, who is always alert, and ever prepared to take advantage of the fortunes of war. Watchfulness is a cardinal principle with Christ's warrior, "watch and pray," forever sounding in his ears. He cannot dare to be asleep at his post. Such a lapse brings

him not only under the displeasure of the Captain of his salvation, but exposes him to added danger. Watchfulness, therefore, imperatively constitutes the duty of the soldier of the Lord.

In the New Testament, there are three different words, which are translated "watch." The first means "absence of sleep," and implies a wakeful frame of mind, as opposed to listlessness; it is an enjoinder to keep awake, circumspect, attentive, constant, vigilant. The second word means "fully awake," -- a state induced by some rousing effort, which faculty excited to attention and interest, active, cautious, lest through carelessness or indolence, some destructive calamity should suddenly evolve. The third word means "to be calm and collected in spirit," dispassionate, untouched by slumberous or beclouding influences, a wariness against all pitfalls and beguilements.

All three definitions are used by St. Paul. Two of them are employed in connection with prayer. Watchfulness intensified, is a requisite for prayer. Watchfulness must guard and cover the whole spiritual man, and fit him for prayer. Everything resembling unpreparedness or non-vigilance, is death to prayer.

In Ephesians, Paul gives prominence to the duty of constant watchfulness, "Watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication." Watch, he says, watch, WATCH! "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."

Sleepless wakefulness is the price one must pay for victory over his spiritual foes. Rest assured that the devil never falls asleep. He is ever "walking about, seeking whom he may devour." Just as a shepherd must never be careless and unwatchful lest the wolf devour his sheep, so the Christian soldier must ever have his eyes wide open, implying his possession of a spirit which neither slumbers nor grows careless. The inseparable companions and safeguards of prayer are vigilance, watchfulness, and a mounted guard. In writing to the Colossians Paul brackets these inseparable qualities together: "Continue in prayer," he enjoins, "and watch in the same, with thanksgiving."

When will Christians more thoroughly learn the twofold lesson, that they are called to a great warfare, and that in order to get the victory they must give themselves to unsleeping watchfulness and unceasing prayer? "Be sober, be vigilant," says Peter, "because your adversary, the devil, walketh about seeking whom he may devour."

God's Church is a militant host. Its warfare is with unseen forces of evil. God's people compose an army fighting to establish His kingdom in the earth. Their aim is to destroy the sovereignty of Satan, and over its ruins, erect the Kingdom of God, which is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." This militant army is composed of individual soldiers of the Cross, and the armour of God is needed for its defence. Prayer must be added as that which crowns the whole.

"Stand then in His great might,
With all His strength endued;
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God."

Prayer is too simple, too evident a duty, to need definition. Necessity gives being and shape to prayer. Its importance is so absolute, that the Christian soldier's life, in all the breadth and intensity of it, should be one of prayer. The entire life of a Christian soldier -- its being, intention, implication and action -- are all dependent on its being a life of prayer. Without prayer -- no matter what else he have -- the Christian soldier's life will be feeble, and ineffective, and constitute him an easy prey for his spiritual enemies.

Christian experience will be sapless, and Christian influence will be dry and arid, unless prayer has a high place in the life. Without prayer the Christian graces will wither and die. Without

prayer, we may add, preaching is edgeless and a vain thing, and the Gospel loses its wings and its loins. Christ is the lawgiver of prayer, and Paul is His Apostle of prayer. Both declare its primacy and importance, and demonstrate the fact of its indispensability. Their prayer-directions cover all places, include all times, and comprehend all things. How, then, can the Christian soldier hope or dream of victory, unless he be fortified by its power? How can he fail, if in addition to putting on the armour of God he be, at all times and seasons, "watching unto 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
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