

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

For the week of June 1, 2003

A Call to Prayer

*And the heavens shall praise thy wonders,
O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.
For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD?
who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?
God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints,
and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.
O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee?
or to thy faithfulness round about thee?
Thou rulest the raging of the sea:
when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.
Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain;
thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.
The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine:
as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.
The north and the south thou hast created them:
Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.
Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand,
and high is thy right hand.
Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne:
mercy and truth shall go before thy face.
Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound:
they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.
In thy name shall they rejoice all the day:
and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.
For thou art the glory of their strength:
and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.*

Psalms 89:5-17

This Week In Prayer

- Pray for the *Brotherhood Beyond Boundaries* conference for pastors from Belarus, Ukraine, and Lithuania, June 13-15, 2003. Pray for the pastors coming to Koszalin for the conference.

Pray that they will be able to come and have safe, uncomplicated travel to Poland and home again.

Pray that they will be further strengthened and established for the job they have been called to do.

Pray that there will develop deeper and stronger relationships with the pastors and Marek from Poland and Mark from Longmont the host of the conference.

Pray that this will be a time of blessing and refreshing for these pastors.

- Pray for members of our company going on mission trips this summer. Pray for God's protection and provision. Pray for the Holy Spirit to work mightily in and through each member of these teams.
- Pray for Israel.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:10

And he said unto them,

When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Luke 11:2

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. This week we continue to looking at a very simple yet profound prayer of Paul. ***Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.*** Romans 15:33

For this we are indebted to AW Pink and this teaching from his book *Gleanings from Paul*.

“The God of peace.” According to the usage of this expression in the New Testament and in view of the teaching of Scripture as a whole concerning the triune Jehovah and peace, we believe it will be best opened up to the reader if we make use of the following outline. This title, “the God of peace,” tells us First of all what He is essentially, namely, the Fountain of peace. Second, it announces what He is economically or dispensationally, namely, the Ordainer or Covenanter of peace. Third, it reveals what He is judicially, namely, the Provider of peace—the reconciled God. Fourth, it declares what He is paternally, namely, the Giver of peace to His children. Fifth, it proclaims what He is governmentally, namely, the Orderer of peace in all the churches and in the world. The meaning of these terms will become plainer—and simpler, we trust—as we fill in our outline.

The Triune Jehovah

First, “the God of peace” tells us what He is *essentially*, that is, what God is in Himself. As pointed out above, peace is one of grand perfections of the divine nature and character. We regard this title as referring not so much to what God is absolutely, nor only to the Father, but to the triune Jehovah. First, because there is nothing in the context or in the remainder of the verse which requires us to limit this prayer to any particular person in the Godhead. Second, because we should ever take the terms of Scripture in their widest latitude and most comprehensive meaning when there is nothing obliging us to restrict

their scope. Third, because it is a fact, a divinely revealed truth, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are alike “the God of peace.” Nor could there be any force to the objection that since prayer is here made unto “the God of peace,” we are obliged to regard the reference as being to the Father for, in Scripture, prayer is also made to the Son and to the Spirit. True, the reference in Hebrews 13:20 is to the Father, for He is there distinguished from the Lord Jesus, but since no such distinction is here made we decline to make any.

That this title belongs to God the Father scarcely needs any arguing, for the opening words of the salutation found at the beginning of most of the New Testament epistles will readily occur to the reader: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father” (Rom. 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2, etc.)—grace from Him as He is “the God of all grace” (1 Pet. 5:10), peace from Him as “the God of peace.” The added words of that salutation, “and the Lord Jesus Christ,” establish the same fact concerning His Son, for grace and peace could not proceed from Him unless He were also the Fountain of both. It will be remembered that in Isaiah 9:6 He is expressly denominated “the Prince of peace,” which—coming immediately after His other titles there (“the mighty God, the everlasting Father”)—shows that He is “the Prince of peace” in His essential person. In 2 Thessalonians 3:16 Christ is designated “the Lord of peace.” Hebrews 7:2 tells us that He is the “King of peace,” typified as such by Melchizedek the priest-king. In Romans 16:20 the apostle announced, “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly,” and in the light of Genesis 3:15 there can be no doubt that the reference is immediately to the incarnate Son.

Less is explicitly revealed in Scripture concerning the person of the Holy Spirit because He is not presented to us objectively like the Father and the Son, inasmuch as He works within and indwells the saints. Nevertheless, clear and full proof is given in the sacred oracles that He is God, co-essential, coequal, and co-glorious with the Father and the Son. As a careful examination of Scripture and a comparison of one passage with another will demonstrate, it is a most serious mistake to conclude from theologians referring to the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Godhead that He is in any wise inferior to the other two. If in Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14 He is mentioned after the Father and Son, in Revelation 1:4-5 He is named (as “the seven Spirits,” the Spirit in His fullness) before Jesus Christ, while in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 and Ephesians 4:4-6 He is named before both the Son and the Father—such variation of order manifesting Their co-equality. Thus, as equal with the Father and the Son the Holy Spirit must also be “the God of peace,” which is evidenced by His communicating divine peace to the hearts of the redeemed. When He descended from heaven on our baptized Savior it was in the form of a dove (Matthew 3:16), the bird of peace.

So let us meditate on “The God of peace” and pray for our further understanding and walking in His peace.

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Imperative Importance Of The Work Of Prayer

The Cleansing

From the True Vine by Andrew Murray

*Every Branch That Beareth Fruit, He Cleanseth It,
That It May Bear More Fruit*

John 15:2

There are two remarkable things about the vine. There is not a plant of which the fruit has so much spirit in it, of which spirit can be so abundantly distilled as the vine. And there is not a plant which so soon runs into wild wood, that hinders its fruit, and therefore needs the most merciless pruning. I look out of my window here on large vineyards: the chief care of the vinedresser is the pruning. You may have a trellis vine rooting so deep in good soil that it needs neither digging, nor manuring, nor watering; pruning it cannot dispense with, if it is to bear good fruit. Some tree needs occasional pruning; others bear perfect fruit without any; the vine must have it. And so our Lord tells us, here at the very outset of the parable, that the one work the Father does to the branch that bears fruit is: He cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.

Consider a moment what this pruning or cleansing is. It is not the removal of weeds or thorns, or anything from without that may hinder the growth. No; it is the cutting off of the long shoots of the previous year, the removal of something that comes from within, that has been produced by the life of the vine itself. It is the removal of something that is a proof of the vigor of its life; the more vigorous the growth has been, the greater the need for the pruning. It is the honest, healthy wood of the vine that has to be cut away. And why? Because it would consume too much of the sap to fill all the long shoots of last year's growth: the sap must be saved up and used for fruit alone. The branches, sometimes eight and ten feet long, are cut down close to the stem, and nothing is left but just one or two inches of wood, enough to bear the grapes. It is when everything that is not needful for fruit-bearing has been relentlessly cut down, and just as little of the branches as possible has been left, that full, rich fruit may be expected.

What a solemn, precious lesson! It is not to sin only that the cleansing of the Husbandman here refers. It is to our own religious activity, as it is developed in the very act of bearing fruit. It is this that must be cut down and cleansed away. We have, in working for God, to use our natural gifts of wisdom, or eloquence, or influence, or zeal. And yet they are ever in danger of being unduly developed, and then trusted in. And so, after each season of work, God has to bring us to the end of ourselves, to the consciousness of the helplessness and the danger of all that is of man, to feel that we are nothing. All that is to be left of us is just enough to receive the power of the life-giving sap of the Holy Spirit. What is of man must be reduced to its very lowest measure. All that is inconsistent with the most entire devotion to Christ's service must be removed. The more perfect the cleansing and cutting away of all that is of self, the less of surface over which the Holy Spirit is to be spread, so much the more intense can be the concentration of our whole being, to be entirely at the disposal of the Spirit. This is the true circumcision of the heart, the circumcision of Christ. This is the true crucifixion with Christ, bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus in the body.

Blessed cleansing, God's own cleansing! How we may rejoice in the assurance that we shall bring forth more fruit. O our holy Husbandman, cleanse and cut away all that there is in us that would make a fair show, or could become a source of self-confidence and glorying. Lord, keep us very low, that no flesh may glory in Thy presence.

We do trust Thee to do Thy work

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:

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If you have questions or comments

Send them to David Williamson:

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To have your address removed from our list

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