

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Inner Court Ministries

For the Week of February 29, 2004

A Call to Prayer

Jesus closes His life with inimitable calmness, confidence and sublimity. "I have glorified Thee; I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." The annals of earth have nothing comparable to it in real security and sublimity. May we come to our end thus, in supreme loyalty to Christ.—Edward Bounds

This Week in Prayer

- Pray for Israel. Pray for safety for the people, not a safety of man's words or deed or rules, but safety in the redeemers hands.
- Pray for our brothers and sisters in regions where free worship is not the norm or even possible. Pray for open doors of opportunity for the Gospel.
- Pray for the ***Brotherhood Beyond Boundaries*** Conference in June 2004. Pray again this week for travel plans. This is a very important time that plans can be made opening the way to attend the conference.
- Pray for outreaches. These are opportunities for you to be a part of reaching nations with the Gospel. Pray for John who will be speaking in Austria and Switzerland in April. Pray for Mark, he will be speaking to pastors from across Poland in April. Pray for David and Duane, they will be working in Germany and Austria on Verein business and preparing for outreaches in late March. Pray for their safe journeys and open doors of opportunity.
- Pray for the outreaches of your local church or fellowship. Now is the day of salvation, these ministries working to reach your community needs your prayers. Pray for creative ideas for ministry and fulfillment of the job they are assigned.

Praying Always for You

Pray for one another. Pray that we would yield to the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit who is causing Christ to be formed in us.

*My little children,
for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,
Galatians 4:19 (NKJV)*

Imperative Importance of the Work of Prayer

The Forge of Faith
Part two

***But without faith it is impossible to please Him,
for he who comes to God must believe that He is,
and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.***

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

Black is white and red is green. The Western world has whole heartily joined the chorus, proclaiming the new definitions of words and ideas. The dictionary is now nothing more than a good door stop; its definitions no longer have meaning. What was, is no more, now is what we make it.

The Bible foresaw this age, with everything turned around. Even in prayer we try to change the rules and requirements. God says, "Impossible", we say "what He means by that is..." We change the rules. We claim to please Him by doing His will, by doing our thing and many others; conveniences that we declare are pleasing to God. We want life and prayer on our terms and will twist God and His Word to get what we want. But God does not join in our new definition festival. He hasn't joined the modern ways.

***"For I am the Lord, I do not change;
Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.***

Malachi 3:6 (NKJV)

Since He will not change we must. We must live the Christian life His way. We must pray His way. So once again it is back to the forge of faith for us. The bottom line for prayer is, we must pray in faith, nothing less will do. The forge of faith requires pleasing Him; this is the place where we can pray, the only place where we can pray. The forge of faith; faith comes, faith challenged, and faith conquers.

Faith Comes

The first "C", faith comes. Only an ogre would require faith and then not make provision for us to get faith. People have missed this key; faith comes. With out this they must make alternate plans to replace faith. By far the most common is works. Men love to require works, because they can define it as they will. They can justify themselves as they will. And condemn others as they will. The will of man loves the power, adulation and control of works. From the Pharisees to religious people of today, works has been the replacement for faith.

God knows about human will, He knows "the evil that lurks in the heart of man". He has seen the will in action from Satan, Adam and today's man, I did it my way, could be our theme song of every generation. Even Jesus fought self will, in the Garden, but He came through to victory,

***He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying,
"O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless,
not as I will, but as You will."***

Matthew 26:39 (NKJV)

The Father demands faith.

***But without faith it is impossible to please Him,
for he who comes to God must believe that He is,
and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.***

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

Impossible means impossible; specifically: to be incapable of being done, attained, or fulfilled. Now we know we must have faith, God requires it. Without it we cannot get things done, attained or fulfilled. If you want your prayers fulfilled prayer must be by faith. The good news, faith comes.

***So then faith comes by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God.***

Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

Faith is Challenged

With faith comes challenge. On the forge of faith there are three challenges. First there is the challenge by Satan. He knows without faith it is impossible to please God, so he works to destroy faith. He works to keep us from faith, to minimize the use of faith, or turn and twist our thinking to rob us of faith. Satan hates anything pleasing to God. He hates people, they are like God. Living by faith is intolerable to Satan. So he challenges faith. He comes to steal, kill and destroy faith.

***The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.
I have come that they may have life,
and that they may have it more abundantly.***

John 10:10 (NKJV)

People challenge faith, we play with fire. Like little kids, our flesh, sinful nature; longs to do things that weaken our faith. Like the child that plays with fire, only to get burned, so we play around until we get burned. We play on the line, flirting with fire, and shocked when burned. Fulfilling the desires of our flesh we destroy faith. The second challenge to faith is from our flesh. We challenge our faith. The key to this challenge is to put to death the deeds of the flesh so we do not fulfill its desires. We put aside sin and run with endurance the race and Jesus the author and finisher of our faith will work His work for us.

***Therefore we also,
since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us,
and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.***

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV)

The third challenge is from God. Yes, God, He challenges faith. He challenges our faith so we might know what He knows. We tend to be a poor judge of our status. We love to judge others, and would seem to be wonderfully skilled at judgment. But when it comes to looking at our self we suffer from

eye problems. (Specks and beams ring any bells?) God knows we must know about our faith, so He allows challenges to reveal our faith. When challenges come do you come through victorious like Jesus?

*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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV)

Success on the forge of faith requires that we come to know which challenge is which. The key is to identify each of the three. If it is Satan's challenge, then resist and he will flee. If it is self's, mortify the flesh. If it is God's then submit, so He can reveal the true nature of the heart. This is the challenge of the forge of faith.

Faith Conquers

The modern world is compromise and conditions; faith is conquering. The man or woman of prayer conquers. If we do not conquer we are not men or women of faith or prayer.

*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world.
And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.*

1 John 5:4 (NKJV)

*And from the days of John the Baptist until now
the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*

Matthew 11:12 (NKJV)

Faith comes, is challenged, and conquers

Faith comes, challenges, and conquers. The forge of faith works, daily. The forge molds. The forge forces action. Will the forge work or will you remove yourself from its force?

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

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