

# **Voice of Thanksgiving**

## **Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer**

Inner Court Ministries

For the Week of July 4, 2004

### **A Call to Prayer**

Not many people realize that in the wake of the American Revolution (following 1776-1781) there was a moral slump. Drunkenness became epidemic. Out of a population of five million, 300,000 were confirmed drunkards; they were burying fifteen thousand of them each year. Profanity was of the most shocking kind. For the first time in the history of the American settlement, women were afraid to go out at night for fear of assault. Bank robberies were a daily occurrence. The Chief Justice of the United States, John Marshall, wrote to the Bishop of Virginia, James Madison, that the Church "was too far gone ever to be redeemed." Voltaire averred and Tom Paine echoed, "Christianity will be forgotten in thirty years". How did the situation change? It came through a concert of prayer.

There was a Scottish Presbyterian minister in Edinburgh named John Erskine, who published a Memorial (as he called it) pleading with the people of Scotland and elsewhere to unite in prayer for the revival of religion. He sent one copy of this little book to Jonathan Edwards in New England. The great theologian was so moved he wrote a response which grew longer than a letter, so that finally he published it is a book entitled *A Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of all God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture Promises and Prophecies...*

This movement had started in Britain through William Carey, Andrew Fuller and John Sutcliffe and other leaders who began what the British called the Union of Prayer. Hence, the year after John Wesley died (he died in 1791); the second great awakening began and swept Great Britain. In New England, there was a man of prayer named Isaac Backus, a Baptist pastor, who in 1794, when conditions were at their worst, addressed an urgent plea for prayer for revival to pastors of every Christian denomination in the United States.

Churches knew that their backs were to the wall. All the churches adopted the plan until America, like Britain was interlaced with a network of prayer meetings, which set aside the first Monday of each month to pray. It was not long before revival came. Dr. J. Edwin Orr

### **This Week in Prayer**

- Pray for America.

***A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.***  
***Lord, how they have increased who trouble me!***  
***Many are they who rise up against me.***  
***Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God." Selah***

***But You, O Lord, are a shield for me,***

***My glory and the One who lifts up my head.  
I cried to the Lord with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah***

***I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.  
I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people  
Who have set themselves against me all around.  
Arise, O Lord; Save me, O my God!  
For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;  
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.  
Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah  
Psalm 3:1-8 (NKJV)***

- Pray for Israel.

***Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.***  
Psalm 122:6

- The clanking of the chains harasses our every step, surely our brothers chains must be our chains. Pray for those bound by chains and decrees, those hindered by lash and law, but yet they continue to preach the Gospel.

***Remember the prisoners as if chained  
with them--those who are mistreated--since  
you yourselves are in the body also.***  
Hebrews 13:3 (NKJV)

- Pray for outreaches in your local church or fellowship. Your prayers are the difference between success and failure in these ministries. Take responsibility in prayer for the success of the work and then join with them in the work.

### **Praying Always for You**

Pray for one another. Pray for the deliverance of God, manifest in our lives. Day-by-day we face struggles and difficulties, but the Lord has promised to bring us out of them all.

***You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble;  
You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah***  
Psalm 32:7 (NKJV)

### **Imperative Importance of the Work of Prayer**

The Reaper

The Bible book of Ruth is filled with wonderful pictures of Christ and His salvation. The kinsman redeeming Ruth and Naomi is filled with imagery of our relationship with our redeemer. The

description of the harvest, seen here, also gives us valuable instruction. Boaz is lord of the harvest; he has a servant set over the harvesters and gleaners. This is a picture of the harvest in Israel before King David reigned; a picture still useful for us today.

The last few weeks we have been looking at an interesting passage from the book of Amos. We have not dealt with an interpretation of the verse or it's soon to be fulfillment, our interest has been the activities listed in a verse (Amos 9:13), the plowman, the sower, the treader of grapes, and the reaper.

***"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord,  
"When the plowman shall overtake the reaper,  
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;  
The mountains shall drip with sweet wine,  
And all the hills shall flow with it.***

Amos 9:13 (NKJV)

The four activities are working in the Body of Christ today; they are the activities of a living, growing church, one preparing for the return of the Lord. Daily the activities from this verse in Amos are in ever increasing measure to be the work of the church, our work. Jesus gave command concerning this work.

***"Who then is a faithful and wise servant,  
whom his master made ruler over his household,  
to give them food in due season?  
Blessed is that servant whom his master,  
when he comes, will find so doing.***

Matthew 24:45-46 (NKJV)

The reapers are the final stop in our progression, the plowman has prepared, the sower has broadcast, and the treader of grapes has pressed; now the harvest must be brought in. From the word picture in the book of Ruth we see four positions in the activity of the reaper; gleaner, harvesters, servant set over the harvesters, and the lord of the harvest.

First the gleaners, the word glean means to pick up, to gather. Gleaners pick up the wheat that has fallen. The Western world is filled with people who have fallen. They have heard a little of the Gospel, or they have been wounded in some way. They are everywhere. Street evangelists struggle to win the lost; the streets are filled with people who know too much, but not enough to get saved. They need the gleaners, men and women who will pick them up. A popular phrase of some years ago had people being saved, "from the gutter most to the utter most." This is the job of the gleaners, every day we come in contact with people desperate for salvation, but, no matter the reason, unable to find what they need. They need the pick up power of Christ working through willing servants, befriending, guiding, and helping them to find His salvation.

The gleaners also gather. Jesus is coming back for His bride the Church. Yet too many Christians are running around like the Lone Ranger, distaining His directive to be an active participant in the local church. The gleaners gather the lost and gather the saved, all gathered together in the church.

The harvesters work the fields. From the time of Jesus and still today, the fields are white to harvest, they are ready! Good times and bad times are good times for harvest. Peter wrote to Christians to be ready to harvest.

***But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,  
and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you  
a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;***  
1 Peter 3:15 (NKJV)

The ready defense is the Gospel message. The harvester is not involved in defense as in protecting the Gospel; the work is to answer, to tell, of the hope that is in us. This ranges from declaring the condition of ones heart to telling of His love, but for each man and woman the harvester's message is the Gospel. While at times the work of each of the activities, plowman, sower, and treader merge with the reaper, the work here is bringing in the harvest, bring men and women into the safe confines of the Gospel message and the church of Jesus Christ. The treader gets decisions, the reapers brings in the harvest.

The servant set over the harvest, guides and directs the work of the harvesters and gleaners. This ranges from training to guidance and direction. The Holy Spirit is working to make the harvest successful, making way for the harvesters and gleaners. Finally there is the Lord of the harvest. His command still calls for prayer, for the thrusting of labors into the harvest fields.

***Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few;  
therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.***  
Luke 10:2 (NKJV)

The members of the Body of Christ are daily to be engaged in these activities. Honing our skills and ability to listen to the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, we are daily bringing in the harvest. This company is about prayer, so we have one more job to do, we are to pray for the harvest. Pray for the plowman, sower, treader, and the reaper, for today's harvest.

Plowman, Sower, Treader, and Reaper  
For the Harvest

## **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](mailto: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  
Longmont, CO 80502-2125