

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Inner Court Ministries

For the Week of January 9, 2005

A Call to Prayer

Prayer is a solemn service due to God, an adoration, a worship, an approach to God for some request, the presenting of some desire, the expression of some need to Him, who supplies all need, and who satisfies all desires; who, as a Father, finds His greatest pleasure in relieving the wants and granting the desires of His children. Prayer is the child's request, not to the winds nor to the world, but to the Father. Prayer is the outstretched arms of the child for the Father's help. Prayer is the child's cry calling to the Father's ear, the Father's heart, and to the Father's ability, which the Father is to hear, the Father is to feel, and which the Father is to relieve. Prayer is the seeking of God's great and greatest good, which will not come if we do not pray.

E. M. Bounds from *The reality of Prayer*

This Week in Prayer

- Pray for Israel. As the currents shift in politics and society in the Middle East, pray for the people of the region to meet with the true God. Pray for opened eyes and softened hearts, so they may see and know the Messiah.

*"I do not pray for these alone,
but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;
that they all may be one, as You,
Father, are in Me, and I in You;
that they also may be one in Us,
that the world may believe that You sent Me.
And the glory which You gave Me I have given them,
that they may be one just as We are one:
I in them, and You in Me;
that they may be made perfect in one,
and that the world may know that You have sent Me,
and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

John 17:20-23 (NKJV)

- The persecution of Christians continues. Men and women are standing for their faith. In many places, this stand comes with persecution and the threat of death. Please pray for Christians in Indonesia, they struggle to meet, with persecution on every side, often by the blast of a bomb. (also see the notes on Marianne Burns and D.K. Daniel in the section *Continue Earnestly in Prayer*)

- Pray for the ***Brotherhood Beyond Boundaries*** Conference in Poland, June 24-26, 2005. Pray for support for the conference and for continued support for the pastors supported by this outreach. The support for the conference and for the pastors is a continuing need, pray for God's provision. (If you would like to help meet this need, email dave@innercourt.com for details).
- Pray for the ministry of the ICM eV (our German Verein). The Verein conference will be in Germany, June 16-18, 2005. Pray for the Rosenheim region pastors meeting January 18, 2005. Mark Spencer senior pastor of Inner Court Ministries will be sharing the vision of this summer's Verein conference.

Souls from Every Nation

This is a new section for ***Voice of Thanksgiving***, but one of great importance. We have prayed for many people and events, this has been good, but it is imperative we pray for the lost to be saved. There is no higher or more important calling for those who pray.

***Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost
those who come to God through Him,
since He always lives to make intercession for them.***

Hebrews 7:25 (NKJV)

He always lives to make intercession for the lost, will you join in His intercession?

***He saw that there was no man,
And wondered that there was no intercessor;
Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him;
And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.***

Isaiah 59:16 (NKJV)

Continue Earnestly in Prayer

Please continue earnestly in prayer for these ministries and outreaches.

Mark Spencer and David Williamson – Pray for Mark and David as they travel to German, January 14-19, 2005. We will be meeting with pastors of Rosenheim area, January 18, 2005, sharing the vision of ICM eV (our German Verein) and our plans for the ICM eV, June conference, *The Inntal Prayer Initiative*.

DK Limbu Daniel – Pray for his work across Nepal. There fields are white unto harvest, but there are many who oppose the work. Pastor Daniel emails news that there are now two new churches in difficult areas. Please continue to pray for the work of the Gospel in Nepal and especially for these new churches. Pray for churches and individual members, all firmly planted in Christ Jesus.

Marianne Burns – Marianne is a missionary to China with Campus Crusade for Christ. Pray for the work of follow-up with three girls who have just come to know the Lord. One girl is a cause for special prayer, as she knows very little English; this will be the first person Marianne has reached in Marianne's second language. Pray for the work on several campuses and an upcoming special presentation for students (there are no English majors on some campus and so all outreach must be in Chinese). Pray for the holiday season, the work has been very hard and intense and it is tiring and difficult to be away from home. Pray for God's love and ministry to help and encourage the teams. Pray for Marianne, the Lord is showing her His plans for the next few years.

John Coon – John will be traveling to Poland June 3 through 12. He will meet with Marek in Koszalin for a few days. He will then be ministering to and with many of the pastors throughout this region. Many of these men and women John has worked with for many years.

Jacek Gromadzki – Jack and Agnes are a young couple who pastor a church plant in a town about 30 or 40 minutes from Koszalin, Poland. Remember this church, pray for the 20 members, saved and baptized by the end of the year.

Imperative Importance of the Work of Prayer

Wrestling with God

David Williamson

Have you ever gotten into trouble, no really gotten into trouble? A mistake, an error, a bad deed, a failure, a lie, a catastrophe, things are bad. Everything looks as bleak as possible. You are beyond hope and open to fear, doubt, and terror. There is no way out, you cannot fix the problem, and the light at the end of the tunnel is not the end of the tunnel, but a train coming at you. This is trouble. It may be of your making, or someone else may be the cause, but the bottom line is very simple, you are in trouble.

Jacob faced this kind of trouble. Not a little bit of trouble, he was in so deep there seemed to be no escape and no hope. All his life he had taken advantage of his brother Esau. Jacob had tricked, connived, cheated, mocked, and robbed from his brother. Esau's anger had grown until Jacob had to move away from home and live in Paddan-Aram. However, as is often the case, just moving away did not end trouble it just delayed the consequences. Now there was nothing left for Jacob to do but face his trouble.

Jacob had become rich with many wives, children, and flocks, but now he had to face his long time trouble. Here came Esau. Jacob was so concerned he split his family, sending group after group toward Esau, hoping to appease him with presents. Finally, Jacob is the only one left on this side of the river. This is his wilderness and it became his place of prayer, a place to wrestle with God.

***And he arose that night and took his two wives,
his two female servants, and his eleven sons,
and crossed over the ford of Jabbok.
He took them, sent them over the brook,
and sent over what he had.***

*Then Jacob was left alone;
and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.
Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him,
He touched the socket of his hip;
and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.
And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks."
But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"
So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob."
And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel;
for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."
Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray."
And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?"
And He blessed him there.
And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel:
"For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."
Just as he crossed over Peniel the sun rose on him,
and he limped on his hip.
Genesis 32:22-31 (NKJV)*

The wilderness is a place of wrestling in prayer. Alone with God we face our troubles. Alone with God we have nothing left, but to struggle with Him. Our strength is at an end, we no longer can lean on our abilities, our gifts, our intelligence, our schemes, nothing is left. Here we grapple with God. It is not a fight to prevail over God, but a struggle to end all claims. Jacob "prevailed" in his struggle with God, but notice at just a touch, Jacob's hip was out of joint. Jacob had not beaten God, but had come to the end, an end of Jacob. Jacob knew who was stronger and it was God. He named the place Peniel, because he knew it was amazing that he did not die after seeing God face to face. Now Jacob held on for a blessing. By definition, the greater blesses the lesser, here Jacob was no longer superior, and he yielded to God.

In prayer, we come to the wilderness to wrestle with God. This is not to overcome God; those who would strive to overcome God are megalomaniacs, of the likes of Hitler, Stalin, or Satan. We wrestle with God over our troubles. We would scheme and bamboozle, working out our solutions. We would make God our genie in a bottle, ready at our every beckon call. Commanding Him to work our works and with us taking credit for the fix. All that ends in the wilderness in prayer. Here the wrestle is to come to the end of ourselves, to end our schemes and plans, to settle who is greater and lesser, who shall bless and be blessed.

This type of wrestling seldom comes in public prayer. It is reserved for the solitude of the wilderness, where we stand alone with God. Would you pray? Would you wrestle with God in prayer? If your answer is yes, then the Holy Spirit will drive you into the wilderness to pray.

*Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit,
returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,
being tempted for forty days by the devil.
And in those days He ate nothing,
and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.
Luke 4:1-2 (NKJV)*

The word, Led, means to drive or induce. The Holy Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness to wrestle with God. Satan tempted Him, but He wrestled with God. With each temptation, there was a battle. Would Jesus accept the fix presented by Satan? Would He yield to God or to temptation? It is the same for us today. The Holy Spirit drives us into the wilderness to wrestle. Often people take the first temptation and the fight is over. There is not power with God or man, because we are fixing our own fixes and yielding to temptation, not God. Our prayer becomes, “Oh God let me fix this problem, and You just sit and watch.” As a gentleman would do, God yields to our demands.

The school of prayer based on the example of Jesus, follows a completely different tack. Driven into the wilderness we wrestle as Jacob did. Holding on to God until he (Jacob) yielded to God. We wrestle with God, holding on until we yield to God. Our prayer becomes, “Oh God, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done.”

Prayer in the Wilderness
Wrestling with God – Yielding to God

Joining This Company

All Christians who will pray are welcome. Voice of Thanksgiving is available by e-mail to all who will commit to prayer as members of this company. Voice of Thanksgiving 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. Also, tell your friends and prayer partners about Voice of Thanksgiving. We are gathering a company of believers who will pray. Together we will reach nations for Jesus Christ.

To receive Voice of Thanksgiving
Send an e-mail with word JOIN in the subject line to
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