

# Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of December 2, 2007

Prayers must be red hot. It is the fervent prayer that is effectual and that availeth. Coldness of spirit hinders praying; prayer cannot live in a wintry atmosphere. Chilly surroundings freeze out petitioning; and dry up the springs of supplication. It takes fire to make prayers go. Warmth of soul creates an atmosphere favourable to prayer, because it is favourable to fervency. By flame, prayer ascends to heaven. Yet fire is not fuss, nor heat, noise. Heat is intensity—something that glows and burns. Heaven is a mighty poor market for ice. E. M. Bounds

## *The Life of Prayer*

### **Expectation**

David Williamson

One of the problems people experience in their prayer life is low expectations. Our low expectations limit answers to prayer. We ask for a few things because we expect to only get a few things. It is almost as if we think God has only a limited number of answers available and we do not want to use up all of His supply. We also have limited expectations in what God can and will answer. We act as though God answers big requests but only for some people. It is as though we say God answers the prayers of special people, but I am not one of them. So our expectations limit the answers to prayers we could receive. We get what we ask for and we ask for very little. We need to make changes to this practice, if we are going to do the job that is before us, we must change our expectations.

In the Gospels we see four main levels of expectation. Within these four levels there is a description of our goal as well as the levels where most people find themselves. The first level is to expect answers to prayer like Jesus. He is our best example in every aspect of life. We truly want to, or should want to, be like Him. We talk of being like him in our love for one another and He is our great example for daily living, but we too often fail to seek to be like Him in His power. Paul longed for and sought to be like Jesus; he wanted to be like Him in all things, including Jesus' power.

***that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection,  
and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,***

Philip. 3:10 (NKJV)

The power of His resurrection is the power for every aspect of life. This power is for now in this life. This power is for us to use as the Holy Spirit guides and directs, to deal with the needs and problems we face in this life. This includes power in prayer. Jesus knew that God answered His prayers. His expectation was that God would hear and answer His prayer. "God always hears Me," is a high expectation for prayer. It is especially powerful when coupled with 1 John 5:15.

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***And I know that You always hear Me,  
but because of the people who are standing by I said this,  
that they may believe that You sent Me."***

John 11:42 (NKJV)

***And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask,  
we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.***

1 John 5:15 (NKJV)

The next level of expectation is asking for help. We know we have not obtained our goal of being like Jesus. We do not dismiss this goal as impossible, but we have not reached the goal yet. To work toward the goal and to get answers to prayer as we grow and mature in prayer, we ask for help. Look at the man who had a son with a mute spirit and the disciples could not cast out the spirit. When the man asked Jesus for help we have the following exchange.

***Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."  
Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears,  
"Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"***

Mark 9:23-24 (NKJV)

The cry of this father is the next level of expectation. He believed that Jesus was telling the truth and that Jesus was able to help his son. His expectation was high, he just needed help. This is a better place for us compared to the next two lower levels. Here we are seeking the answers God longs to give us. This is seeking to meet the needs of those around us and this generation. We just need help. Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!

The third level is low expectation. When the crowds of people had gathered to hear Jesus, they became hungry. The low expectations of the disciples could see no further than sending the people away to get food. In this example, Jesus had to overcome their low expectation. When He commanded them to act, they did so. This was an act of faith, but it was a very limited faith. They would do what ever Jesus asked, but they had no expectation of the great thing Jesus was about to do. However, even on this little faith Jesus built. Even with low expectation we can and do see Jesus move for us. He still answers prayers when our expectation is low. Far too often we are stuck in this level. We see the problems, we see areas we need answers from God, but we do not see God moving powerfully in answer to prayers. We must come up out of this level, if we are going to meet the needs of this generation. We must move up from this level of expectation if we are to have effective prayer.

The final level is the lowest of the four. It is seen in the people of Jesus' home region. Here we read the Jesus could do no miracle, except to heal a few sickly people.

***So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them,***

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***“A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.”  
Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.  
Matthew 13:57-58 (NKJV)***

***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)***

So what do we do? It is easy to see we need to be in the higher levels of expectation, but how do we move up to the place of success in prayer we long to reach? There are several things we can do. First we need to study the life and work of the master of high expectation, Jesus. His example is the best example for all aspects of life, including high expectations for answers to prayers. We need to study his prayer life; both the prayers and the results. If we seek to follow after His example, we should expect to have his results. This should be our expectation.

***Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery;  
but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.  
Daniel 11:32 (NKJV)***

***Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me,  
the works that I do he will do also;  
and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.  
John 14:12 (NKJV)***

We should also study the prayers of Paul and others mentioned in the Bible. Men and women of prayer fill the Bible with their high expectations in prayers. We should long to pray like these great men and women of prayer. We should have high expectations of answers as they did.

We must also place the burden of the answers to prayers on God. Jesus prayed and God answered. It was God who answered His prayer. It is God who answers our prayers, if we will ask Him to answer. He may ask us to do something as an act of faith, but it is His strength and ability that brings the results we desire.

***So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God.  
For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain,  
‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart,  
but believes that those things he says will be done,  
he will have whatever he says.  
Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray,  
believe that you receive them, and you will have them.  
Mark 11:22-24 (NKJV)***

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We must deal with our areas of unbelief. Just as the man asked Jesus for help, so we need to ask for help. A key in this area is watching what we say. We can ask for great things in prayer, the meeting of the needs of this generation, but we can bring unbelief to our prayers by what we say.

*“Either make the tree good and its fruit good,  
or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit.  
Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things?  
For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.  
A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things,  
and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.  
But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak,  
they will give account of it in the day of judgment.  
For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”*  
Matthew 12:33-37 (NKJV)

Our prayers can avail much. That is what we need today, men and women of prayer who have high expectations on God for answers to prayers. The prayer we pray can be powerful prayers. The needs of this generation will be met by powerful prayers. Powerful prayers are prayed by men and women of high expectation.

*Let us Pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

**Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem** – Pray for the leadership of the nation of Israel. Pray they will respond to God and His plan for the nation.

**Pray for the church in Belarus and Lithuania** – Pray for the growth of these churches.

**Joyce Abrahamson** – Pray for supply of daily needs for the students of the school.

**Jacek Gromadzki** – Pray for Jack and for opportunities to share the Gospel message.

**Marianne and David Dean** – Pray for David and Marianne and opportunities for them to share the Gospel message freely and boldly.

**Marek Kaminski** – Pray that God would continue to supply for Marek and his family.

**DK Limbu Daniel** – Pray for Pastor Daniel and his work in and around Nepal.

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1. *Pastors and Leaders Conference and Healing Rallies* from 9-21st December. This will be held in different parts of east Nepal and mid central Nepal. Pray for the peace and security and for a mighty manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. We need God's favor for this great work to take salvation, deliverance and healing to the people.
2. At the last but not least; our goal is plant 100 churches by 2010 and so far we are coming up with 42 churches and fellowships. Please pray that things in the world may not distract us from our goal and that the needs and areas of lack may not derail us from our trek to our goal.

**Mark Spencer** – Pray for continued faithful obedience to God's call and command.

**Patty Spencer** – Pray for completion of a new worship CD. Pray for the details of mastering the final product and the finances to get it produced.

**John Coon** – Pray for his health and safety.

**Pray for Prayer Initiative Seminars** – Pray for an understanding of God's plan for teaching about Prayer.

**Bernhard and Lisa Prumbach** – Pray for the supply of every need.

**Pray for your Home Church** – Pray for outreaches for your church. Pray that each member will do the work of the ministry as God gives them the means to do so.

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

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