

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of February 3, 2008

“If Jacob’s desire had been given him in time for him to get a good night’s sleep he might never have become the prince of prayers we know today. If Hannah’s prayer for a son had been answered at the time she set for herself, the nation might never have known the mighty man of God it found in Samuel. Hannah wanted only a son, but God wanted more. He wanted a prophet, and a saviour, and a ruler for His people. Someone said that ‘God had to get a woman before He could get a man.’ This woman He got in Hannah precisely by those weeks and months and years there came a woman with a vision like God’s, with tempered soul and gentle spirit and a seasoned will, prepared to be the kind of a mother for the kind of a man God knew the nation needed.” W. E. Bindewolf

The Life of Prayer

Nevertheless
David Williamson

Prayer is a powerful force. Its record far exceeds that of other forces known to man. Man has exposed the power of the atom, for good and bad. He has put the strength and economy of entire nations to the accomplishments of desired results. However, these forces are far from the strength of prayer. What force can claim something as impressive as stopping rain for three years? That is a very powerful force. That is the power of prayer.

As powerful as it can be, at times it seems the power of prayer has all leaked away. It gives the impression that prayer is all words and no power. We long for times of great power in response to our prayers. There are keys to get the power in prayer. We know some of the keys; keys to invigorating and empowering our prayers. One of the most important is found in one of my favorite scriptures, this key is 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)

Anyone who has read much of *Voice of Thanksgiving* knows that I refer to this verse often. It speaks to me of the importance of faith in our prayer life. It speaks to the importance of seeking Him, bringing our requests and needs before Him. It speaks of the confidence we can and must have that God’s will is to reward those who pray. Faith is very powerful! We must take this key and run with it. If we are going to pray we must come with faith filled prayers.

Another key that has been important in the articles of *Voice of Thanksgiving* is thanksgiving. Our attitude in prayer makes a difference. We are commanded to come to God with a grateful heart. A

Voice of Thanksgiving

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good test is to check our heart attitude. Simply put we need to check if we are thankful for what God has done. If our prayer comes from a hardened heart and unthankful heart, we are cutting off the blessing of God's answers.

***Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication,
with thanksgiving,
let your requests be made known to God;***

Philip. 4:6 (NKJV)

Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;

Col. 4:2 (NKJV)

Still another key in powerful prayer is not as commonly noticed. It often seems contrary to our wants, we are coming to God in prayer to get answers for the things we want and need. Praying for answers to prayers is important. So what is this key? It is praying the will of God.

Often one of the weaknesses of studies on prayer is to ignore the prayer life of Jesus. There are reasons people miss this great wealth of teaching on the subject. It is easy to be overwhelmed by His example. His prayers are always answered. We know the Fathers always heard His prayers. The results of His prayers came instantly and were complete. The miraculous was and is a constant companion to His prayers. While His record is amazing and exhilarating, we can learn a great deal from Him. Look at this example of His prayer. Jesus is in the Garden.

***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)

We know that Jesus applied faith to His prayer. We know that Jesus came to the Father with thanksgiving and that He applied all the keys to prayer. However, we would be wise to look at the key the Holy Spirit shares here. Jesus prayed with power and great effect because He prayed the will of God. A man of the scriptures, Jesus knew they were the key to every aspect of life and Jesus delighted to do the will of God.

I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart. "

Psalm 40:8 (NKJV)

Never had a man had more reason to pray for a change of God's will. God's will would subject Him to the most horrible experience any man could experience. The description, from the scriptures, makes clear that in the next few hours His experience would be terrible, ghastly, appalling, and unspeakably bad. No man could desire to take on the sin of the whole world. Every fiber of His

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

being demanded anything other than that which was the will of God for Him for this moment. “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me.”

We have all prayed this prayer, or one like it. We face things that do not please us. We face hard times, difficult, even scary things. We long for the good life and do not want to follow Jesus in His life, ministry, and example. He went to the cross and now He is calling us to go to the cross as well.

***Then Jesus said to His disciples,
“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself,
and take up his cross, and follow Me.***

Matthew 16:24 (NKJV)

Far too often prayer is prayed just to receive our will. While perhaps our prayers are higher than some form of, “God give me this and that”, we may not pray for selfish lust, but we often pray for what we want. We too often seek our will instead of praying like Jesus, seeking God’s will; “nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will”. A key to power in prayer is praying God’s will. This one of the great “carte blanche” of prayer, we can have whatever we ask. The condition for use of this prayer, if we ask according to God’s will.

***Now this is the confidence that we have in Him,
that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
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 5:14-15 (NKJV)

To be powerful in prayer we need to be seeking to know and to be obedient to the will of God. Jesus walked in complete knowledge of and obedience to the will of God. So it is not surprising that God always answered His prayers. The surprise is our reluctance to knowing and obeying the will of God and thus having answers to prayer like Jesus. The opportunity is there for us. We seem to think this is a hard thing, but in reality knowing and obeying the will of God is enlightened self interest. God knows what is good for us. He has our best in mind, but also we have been crucified with Christ and are no longer our own. We belong to Him. Is this just talk or are we His? Also even if God’s will brings us to difficult situations, His grace is sufficient to take us through.

Thru out the centuries there have been men and women who have faced death for the faith. For example there were the two men who stood in their jail cell waiting to be burn at the stake. One was schedule for the day before the other. As they prepared to face the flames, they encouraged one another about the grace of God. They agreed that on the next day the one would signal to the other concerning the sufficiency of God grace. The first man promised to signal by flashing one finger although his arms would be tied to the post, if God’s grace was sufficient to take him though. The next day, while watching the flames leap around the first man, the second man saw the first man flash not one, but two finger. God’s grace was not just enough, it was more than enough!

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Jesus has shown us the way and provided for us to have opportunity to walk as He walked. The question is will we? Will we allow the desires of our flesh, the pride of life, and sin to keep us from seeking to know God's will? Will we settle for a life of struggles in prayer, frustrated by lack of answers and emptiness of provision? Or will we seek God with our whole heart; seeking to know His will for every aspect of our life, ministry, and prayers. This is not a simple step to take, it was a challenge even for Jesus, but he quickly came to the point of "nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will". We can know God's will and with this knowledge we can pray powerful prayers.

*who, in the days of His flesh,
when He had offered up prayers and supplications,
with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death,
and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son,
yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.*

Hebrews 5:7-8 (NKJV)

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

*Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me,
and I will listen to you.*

Jeremiah 29:12 (NKJV)

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem – Pray for outreach to Jews bringing recognition of the Messiah.

Jacek Gromadzki – Pray for Jacek and his church that God would continue the deep work of grace that God has begun.

DK Limbu Daniel – Pray for the people in areas of Nepal and beyond. Pray for their hearts to be open to the Gospel message.

Joyce Abrahamson – Pray for financial provision for meeting the needs of the school and staff.

Pray for the church in Belarus and Lithuania – Pray for opportunities for personal evangelism.

Marianne and David Dean – Pray for a breaking of traditions and other hindrances that would try to keep people from hearing and responding to the Gospel.

Marek Kaminski – Pray for Marek and his church to continue to grow in the love of the Lord.

Bernhard and Lisa Prumbach – Pray for the supply of the needs of the family in Germany.

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Patty Spencer – Pray for her new worship CD. Pray that it will be ready for release very soon and that it will minister life and grace to people around the world.

Mark Spencer – Pray for God's provision for meeting the requests to minister.

John Coon – Pray for his health and safety.

William Williamson – Pray for Bill and his church and new opportunities to share the Gospel.

Pray for Prayer Initiative Seminars and David Williamson – Pray for the completion of his first book on prayer.

Pray for your Home Church – Pray for your church that it would be a church of outreach to the local community and to the people of the world.

Pray for your work in Prayer – Pray that God would bless these areas where you are responsible for support by prayer.

*And my God shall supply all your need
according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
Philip. 4:19 (NKJV)*

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New for *Voice of Thanksgiving*, a monthly issue in Polish!

Głos Dziękczynienia w języku polskim: <http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/VoTPPage.htm>

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www.voiceofthanksgiving.com

For additional information and articles on prayer visit the *Voice of Thanksgiving Blog*
www.voiceofthanksgiving.com/blog/

For *Voice of Thanksgiving* in German read *Stimme der Dankbarkeit*
<http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/SdDPage.htm>

To receive *Voice of Thanksgiving* the newsletter weekly by e-mail, send an email with the word JOIN in the subject line to dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com

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