

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of March 9, 2008

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

Breakthrough

David Williamson

When I was a boy there were many Bible stories that caught my attention. These stories were so well told that they made clear images in my mind as I listen to my mom or dad read them to me and then once I began to read them myself. They are also so compelling as to grip us with the power and love of Jesus and His ministry. How could we help being touched by Jesus stopping under the tree and calling to Zacchaeus? How can we help but be thrilled when our hero stops the weeping and squelches the laughter concerning a dead little girl and He presents her back to her parents, alive and well. It takes a callused heart not to marvel at the disciple's delivery of armfuls of bread and fish to group after group of people as they feed the thousands.

A story that always caught my attention was the four men bring their ill friend to see Jesus. They carried him on a mat, but when they got to the place where Jesus was speaking they could not get in. They went up on the roof and lowered the man down in front of Jesus and their faith in action got their friend healed!

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." Mark 2:1-5 (NKJV)

"I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were

Voice of Thanksgiving

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amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!" Mark 2:11-12 (NKJV)

There are many important keys to Christian life and for successful prayer. Perhaps today we could focus on one of the keys. It is made graphic for us in this story and is part of what made this story very interesting to a little boy; the men broke through the roof. I never wondered what type of mat they used or if they tried to fight their way in through the crowd or how far they carried this man. My thoughts always turned to the breaking through of the roof. As a boy I wondered what the owner of the house had to say about this. I wondered if Jesus stopped preaching and just watched as they worked away. I wondered if the people who had pressed in to get the best seats were mad because the guys were dumping roofing materials on them. Okay I thought about strange things sometimes when I was young, yes it is true, I sometimes still do. But the key for us today is focus on one point, these men who broke through the roof had a breakthrough.

So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." Mark 2:4-5 (NKJV)

These were men of faith. They had by faith decided to take their friend to see Jesus. They had the kind of faith that made the woman with the issue of blood famous.

When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well." Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. Mark 5:27-29 (NKJV)

These men believed that if they could get their friend to Jesus, Jesus would heal him. That is faith in action. They went to the meeting; that was faith in action. The meeting was packed out; there was no way for them to do what they wanted to do. But faith in action would not take no for an answer. And you know how they acted on their faith. There were plenty of opportunities for them to be stopped. There were many opportunities for them to give-up. But they broke through.

They broke through more than just the roof. They broke through every barrier to faith. They broke through every barrier to action. Just as they broke through, we need to breakthrough in faith and action. Just as their friend needed the breakthrough so people today are desperate for breakthrough. In many situations there is no real hope except for a breakthrough. Just getting by is not enough, we must have something more. We must have breakthrough.

Prayer is a force of change in this world. We pray and get answers from God. For us to meet the needs of today we must have breakthrough. Business as usual is not enough. Trying harder is not enough. Good intentions are not enough. More meetings are not enough. The use of technology is not enough. We must have breakthrough and this takes prayer.

Voice of Thanksgiving

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Paul knew about breaking through. He lived a life filled with breakthrough. Time-after-time from the moment of his conversion to the time of his death he had breakthrough. He also knew the source of his breakthrough. Read what he wrote to the Philippians:

For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, Philip. 1:19 (NKJV)

His breakthrough was from their prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Please note that at the time Paul wrote this and continuing to today, Jesus is making intercession for Paul and for us! Breakthrough comes by prayer. It was as though Paul was telling the Philippians the problems I face today will be overcome. I will breakthrough, because of your prayers along with those of Jesus. As the Philippians joined with Jesus in prayer for Paul, breakthrough would come; He had lived it so he knew it would happen.

Through out Christian history this principle has been true. Paul knew it and lived it and Christians have experienced breakthrough time and again. Too often we have been satisfied with moving things along little-by-little and we have missed breakthroughs. If we are going to be effective in prayer we must guard against anemic expectations. Remember the men of our story; they would not be deterred from their plan and goal. They were going to get their friend to Jesus even if they had to tear the roof off the house! You can almost hear them, “My friend you are going to see Jesus this night. I do not care what it takes.” They got a breakthrough and their friend got healed!

In our life, our family, our church, our business, our ministry we cannot continue with the daily norm. We must have breakthrough. We cannot continue to just get along, we must have breakthrough. By prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ we can reach this generation for Christ. We can turn darkness into the light of life in Christ Jesus. We can reach the nations and win souls from every nation. To accomplish this you need to pray and you must not pray as you have in the past, you must demand of yourself and of your faith, breakthrough. John Knox reached a point where he had to have breakthrough. His cry “Give me Scotland or give me death!” and he had breakthrough! How about you? Will you give yourself to prayer? Will you demand of yourself effective, fervent prayer? Will you stop being satisfied with prayer for the status quo? Will you have breakthrough?

Breakthrough can come for us just as it did for the men breaking through the roof. Look at the steps they followed to get to the point of having this need met; that is getting their friend healed. First, they hear the Word of the Lord. The word on the street was Jesus heals, they heard this. Second, they believed the Word. Third, they acted on the Word; they believed Jesus would heal if they could get their friend to Him. Fourth, they were men of faith. Fifth, they put their faith into action. Sixth, they would not be deterred; there was no hindrance that they would let stop them. Seventh, God met them at the point where their need and faith met. If we follow their pattern, God will meet us with a breakthrough at our point of need.

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." Mark 2:1-5 (NKJV)

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Matthew 21:21-22 (NKJV)

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem – Pray for safety for the people of Israel.

Marek Kaminski – Pray for safety as Marek travels. Pray Marek and the people of his church to have opportunities for sharing the Gospel.

Pray for the church in Belarus and Lithuania – Pray for opportunities for the open and free preaching of the Gospel.

Marianne and David Dean – Pray for help in preparing students to walk with Christ after graduation.

Joyce Abrahamson – Pray for safety for the young people of the school, as well as for Joyce and the staff.

Jacek Gromadzki – Pray for open doors of opportunity to share the Gospel with the people of Kolobrzeg, Poland, especially the young people.

William Williamson – Pray for Bill and that he would be free from pain from the accident involving his ankle many months ago.

DK Limbu Daniel – Pray for new opportunities for planting churches and the means of doing so. Pray for the reaching of young people in these new areas.

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 plans for outreaches and trips this spring and summer. Pray for his ministry with young people.

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

John Coon – Pray for his health and safety.

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

Pray for 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 young people of the world.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephes. 3:20-21 (NKJV)

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Host a Prayer Initiative Seminar. You can do something special for your church, fellowship, or community in the area of prayer, offer a Prayer Initiative Seminar. If you would be interested in hosting a Prayer Initiative Seminar contact David Williamson, at dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com

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

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

For *Voice of Thanksgiving* in German read *Stimme der Dankbarkeit*

<http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/SdDPPage.htm>

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