

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of May 18, 2008

“Go back! Back to that upper room; back to your knees; back to searching of heart and habit, thought and life; back to pleading, praying, waiting, till the Spirit of the Lord floods the soul with light, and you are endued with power from on high. Then go forth in the power of Pentecost, and the Christ-life shall be lived, and the works of Christ shall be done. You shall open blind eyes, cleanse foul hearts, break men’s fetters, and save men’s souls. In the power of the indwelling Spirit, miracles become the commonplace of daily living.”—SAMUEL CHADWICK.

The Life of Prayer

Obsession

David Williamson

Have you ever been obsessed with an idea? Okay that does not sound very good, so let’s say, have you ever been fanatical or gripped or preoccupied or infatuated or fixated or passionate with an idea? We live in a time where obsession has a generally negative meaning; the obsessed is deranged and out of control. Obsession is not seen as politically correct or fashionable today. However, this was not always the case. There have been many great men and women of faith who we must describe as obsessed. They focused on what they were called to do; nothing could deter or detain them. Sure there were obstacles and hindrances to overcome and these people overcame; their obsession drove them through to completion. These were men and women of faith and prayer, carried by their obsession.

Why does the word obsession have such a negative connotation for many people? Well, read the definition, a persistent disturbing preoccupation with an often unreasonable idea or feeling. This is very negative, right? Well, not always. It depends on who is disturbed by the preoccupation. It depends onto whom the idea or feeling is unreasonable. Much of the life and work of Jesus was disturbing to the Jews. For many people then and now the idea of salvation by faith was unreasonable. However, Jesus was obsessed with going to the cross to provide the meeting of the righteous requirements of salvation for you and me.

Paul preached and taught salvation by faith available to all. For this he was beaten time and again, but he was obsessed with salvation for all men. He tried to go to every place he could, to preach to all the people he could find, especially to those who have never heard the Good News. He had views and did things considered unreasonable and disturbing to many people. He had obsession of getting people saved.

Time precludes a long description of the obsessions of Andrew Murray, C. T. Studd, D. L. Moody, Rees Howells, Hudson Taylor, Praying Hyde, George Müller, all of these and many others who have been obsessed. They did what God called them to do, how He called them to do it. The world

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

laughed at them, hated them, ignored them (as long as then could), and claimed to know that what they were doing was unreasonable. These greats of the Christian faith disturbed the world. A question that comes to mind at this point, could they have done the great things they did if they had not been obsessed.

How about you, could anyone label you as obsessed and if so is it a Christian obsession? There are many today who have worldly obsessions; they seek after money, position, and power. They have run to folly and reaped its reward. They give obsession a bad name. In their hand obsession is unreasonable and disturbing. There are Christians who seem to follow Christ, but they are hard on the trail of worldly obsessions. Their judgment of success is based on worldly values. Their programs are modeled on worldly models. Their values are those of the world. They deny the power of Christianity by their choices and actions. So their prayers have no power, if they pray at all.

But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. Jude 1:17-18 (NKJV)

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1 Cor. 1:18 (NKJV)

Things can be different for us; we can walk in a positive Christian obsession? To do so we must first hear from God. We need to find out what He want us to do in life and in prayer? Ask God for direction. The Holy Spirit will guide and direct us if we seek His guidance.

For You are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name's sake, Lead me and guide me. Psalm 31:3 (NKJV)

The second step is to emulate our best example, Jesus. In all Christian life He is our best example and this is true for obsessions as well. When the time had come for Jesus to go to Jerusalem He set his face to go and do what He was called to do. The prophesy telling of Jesus' action found in Isaiah says He set His face like a flint. Flint is a hard rock that was used as a cutting tool. To fulfill our obsession we must be like flint cutting through every obstacle hindering completion of our assignment. Note the great man of prayer Daniel, he set his face to make request by prayer.

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, Luke 9:51 (NKJV)

For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed. Isaiah 50:7 (NKJV)

Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. Daniel 9:3 (NKJV)

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

The third step in our plan for obsession is to set the matter in stone. This stone is not the cutting tool of flint, but like a marker stone. These stones were set on the corners of a tract of land and designate the ownership of the land. We must be committed to own the job we are assigned and not have room to turn away. In the Garden Jesus prayed, He was committed to God's will not His own.

Finally we must fend off the attacks that will come. When we are obsessed the world will see us as unreasonable and disturbing. We will be attacked. Most Christians today are not under attack because they are not obsessed. The best way to fend off attacks is to stay on the Word. We must read and study, we must memorize and rehearse, and we must confess it daily, or better yet moment-by-moment. To walk through an obsession we must keep our eyes on Jesus and to do so we must speak what He says, if not the world will help us to drift from our obsession.

It is impossible to pray without obsession. We must be driven to reach the goal set before us. People will see us as unreasonable and disturbing if we believe in the effectiveness of prayer, if it is our obsession. We need to be obsessed with seeing answers to prayer. We need to be obsessed with seeing God move mightily to change nations and individual lives. Will you be fanatical, gripped, preoccupied, fixated, and passionate to see answers to prayers? Will you take up your obsession?

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

This week I ask you to pray for David and Marianne Dean. They minister on college campuses in East Asia. They are safe and secure where they live; however, the focus of the world is on the disasters that have hit Asia so hard these last few weeks. There is so much to pray for in these areas, remember the rescue workers, the relief efforts, and provision of supplies for the victims of these disasters; please be lead by the Holy Spirit as to how to pray.

Please also pray for the spiritual aspects of this time. People are dealing with the very real and powerful issues of life and death. This is a time to be comforting, but also to share the Gospel. Sometimes it is hard to answer the burning questions; however, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the timely, perfect answer to people's questions and concerns. Pray for David and Marianne that they would have Holy Spirit guidance knowing how and when to share. Pray that they would be good news, in season, to those around them on the campus and throughout the city and region.

A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, And a word spoken in due season, how good it is! Proverbs 15:23 (NKJV)

The Lord God has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned. Isaiah 50:4 (NKJV)

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Basic Prayer Focus

Praying for Israel and the Peace of Jerusalem

Praying for the reaching of Souls from Every Nation

Praying for the government of your country (so the Gospel can be preached)

Praying for your home Church

Continuing Faithful in Prayer

Pray for these ministers and ministries. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct your prayers.

Joyce Abrahamson – Head of school in Brazil

John Coon – Ministry in Europe and the USA

Churches in Belarus – Growing number of churches in Belarus

Churches in Lithuania – Growing number of churches in Lithuania

DK Limbu Daniel – Pastor of a church in Nepal and church planting among Nepalese people

Marianne and David Dean – Missionaries on college campuses in East Asia

Jacek Gromadzki – Pastor of a church in Kolobrzeg, Poland

Marek Kaminski – Pastor of church in Kaszalin, Poland, leader in Polish churches, and co-founder and leader of BBB Conference

Bernd and Heike Pastor – Ministry in Germany

Mark Spencer – Pastor of church in Longmont, Colorado, worldwide ministry, and co-founder and leader of BBB Conference

Patty Spencer – Pastor of church in Longmont, Colorado and worship leader

William Williamson – Pastor of church in Holly, Colorado

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Voice of Thanksgiving is published in a weekly version in English. There are two monthly versions, one in German and one in Polish. And coming soon is a series of books on prayer. This first book (the first of four) is called ***Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer.***

- ✓ For an archive of past articles, short notes and studies on prayer, and other information go to www.voiceofthanksgiving.com
- ✓ For a shortcut to ***Stimme der Dankbarkeit*** the German version go to: <http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/SdDPage.htm>
- ✓ For a shortcut to ***Głos Dziękczynienia*** the Polish version go to: <http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/VoTPPage.htm>
- ✓ You may write to me at: dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com
- ✓ If you would be interested in hosting a ***Prayer Initiative Seminar*** contact me, Dave Williamson, at dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com