

# *Voice of Thanksgiving*

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of July 6, 2008

You know the value of prayer: it is precious beyond all price. Never, never neglect it—SIR THOMAS BUXTON

Prayer is the first thing, the second thing, the third thing necessary to a minister. Pray, then, my dear brother: pray, pray, pray—EDWARD PAYSON

## *The Life of Prayer*

### **Essential Ingredients**

David Williamson

As I write this article Americans are celebrating our independence. This event we call the Fourth of July celebration. Which is not a very original name as it is held on the fourth of July and all countries on the same calendar as America have a fourth of July every year; it comes the day after the third of July. We have parades and picnics, families get together, and BBQ. It is a fun day. Tonight in cities all over America there will be fireworks and fun late into the night. The prayer of many Americans today is and should be, God bless America.

When I am at events like those of today's celebration, sometimes I step back and look at the event as just an onlooker. I have caught myself doing this at time at large gatherings and wondered why do we do things a certain way. Other times I have wondered how many people at an event know Jesus as Lord and Savior. It can be useful for us to step back and get some perspective on an event or practice. As a historian by training, I like to get perspective. A general rule of history is that the first true history cannot be written until we are 50 years past the event, so we can get some perspective and the first good history of an event come at 100 years. So today I encourage us to use some perspective and look at an important subject. I know that many of you are not old enough to have fifty years for perspective, but men and women have been practicing prayer for thousands of years so we can lean on the perspective of the general practice. Let us look at prayer.

There are hundreds of ways we could go about this review, but for this article we will narrow our study to one question, what are the essential ingredients of a meaningful prayer life? E. M. Bounds once wrote the following list in response to that question. "The essentials of a meaningful prayer life are: faith, trust, desire, fervency, persistence, good character and conduct, obedience, and vigilance," he said. Always one to challenge his readers, Bound's list is a long and powerful challenge to those who would aspire to have a meaningful prayer life. Do you agree with Bounds on this list? Would you take something off the list? Would you add to the list? I hesitate to even write this next question, but I must, can you honestly say you have all these ingredients actively and fully operating in your prayer life?

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Perhaps the Lord will allow us to explore these ingredients more fully one-by-one; that would make a wonderful series for the study of a great prayer life. However, today we must look at this list as a whole. Bound's list covers many aspects of Christian living and a powerful prayer life. There are things on this list to challenge the most experienced man or woman of prayer among us. This also is a good list for the student of prayer. If we long to be powerful in prayer, to have our prayers avail much, we must deal with everything on this list. Some items on the list are strait forward, for example, persistence. We must continue to pray and not draw back. Persistence cannot be done in a moment, but it is fairly simple to understand. We are called to continue to pray for those things we are dealing with until our Father says to stop or we get the answer we seek. This is persistence. The Bible calls persistence steadfastness.

***For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.*** Col. 2:5 (NKJV)

Persistence takes a life time, but it is made of moments of continuing on with God. When the world and all that is in it would attempt to draw you away from God and your prayers, we must continue in faith and desire, fervently continuing to believe God and that He will answer our prayer. Diligence in seeking of God is a key to success in prayer, but diligence does not end. We must faithfully continue in prayer.

***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)

This week review the list. Notice how the eight items on the list all tie together. It is hard to talk about persistence without bringing in the other items. Take some time and ask the Holy Spirit, your personal prayer trainer, to measure your walk in these essentials. Where would He have you work to grow and mature in these areas? What is He telling you is lacking? Do not be condemned, a powerful prayer life is made of a lifetime of study and practice. Even the greats of prayer were still studying, learning, and growing in the essentials of a meaningful prayer life when they went to be with the Lord. So it is okay, and to be expected, that we would have some areas where we need to continue to grow.

*Let us Pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

Pray for the opportunities to share the Gospel. Pray for hearts to be softened and prepared to hear the message and respond positively. Pray for men and women, including ourselves, to be prepared, bold, and willing to share the Gospel.

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## 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

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*Voice of Thanksgiving* is published in a weekly version in English. There are two monthly versions, one in German and one in Polish. Now available as a book, *Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer*. To order go to <http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/Book/Book.htm>.

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- ✓ You may write to me at: [dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com](mailto:dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com)
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