

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of July 13, 2008

Samuel knew God in boyhood. As a consequence he knew God in manhood. He recognized God in childhood, obeyed him and prayed unto him. The result was that he recognized God in manhood, obeyed him, and prayed unto him. If more children were born of praying mothers, brought up in direct contact with “the house of prayer,” and reared under prayer environments, more children would hear the voice of God’s spirit speaking to them, and would more quickly respond to those divine calls to a religious life. Would we have praying men in our churches? We must have praying mothers to give them birth, praying homes to color their lives, and praying surroundings to impress their minds and to lay the foundations for praying lives. Praying Samuels come from praying Hannahs. Praying priests come from “the house of prayer.” Praying leaders come from praying homes.

From *Power and Praying Men* by E.M. Bounds

The Life of Prayer

Essential Ingredients

David Williamson

We live in a complicated world. There are so many things we use and enjoy today that are very complicated. There are people around us who understand the inner workings of technology and machines. They could explain how these things work, but most of us would become confused very quickly. Most software for our computers is that way. Very few of us know how it works; we just push this button and hope the software works. Most of us just do this or that, but we do not know why. Cars have joined this same situation. I once owned a car that you could tune with a screwdriver and a stick. Now you have to have fancy computerized equipment to do the simplest things on a car. And a coffee grinder is a museum piece at a great schnitzel restaurant. No one grinds coffee; they use a coffee maker that is so complicated you must have an instruction book to operate it. Even then most of us just know the essentials of operating the maker; only the basic steps.

Nearly every thing, these days, has multiple levels of complication. There is the basic just push this button, then more and more complex understanding of the process or machine. We see this in Christian life as well. There is nothing as simple or as complex as the Gospel message. It is so simple a child can understand it and so complex that men have devoted a lifetime of study and contemplation of its mysteries. God has given us the instruction book, the Bible, and it takes all of the many chapters and verses to explain His Gospel message. However, at the same time, the Holy Spirit, working through Paul, was able to present it to the Corinthians so simply that most people miss it. Here it is in the simple form.

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word

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which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

1 Cor. 15:1-4 (NKJV)

A life of prayer falls into this same spectrum of complexity. It is so simple to pray and if you pray every day you have a prayer life, yet so complex that few if any man has broached its depth, breadth, and height. We study the life of great men and women of prayer, those who have given their life to prayer, and we see that they were learning more about prayer all of their life. There were lessons to be learned after 40, 50, 60 and even 70 years of learning about prayer. That is a lot to learn!

When Jesus taught His Disciples to pray He gave them a prayer outline. He gave them an outline that they could follow and know what to pray. Begin by say this and then go to this part and then finish with this part. He knew and they soon learned that what they prayed in each of the parts of the outline was different. It would often be different every time they prayed. Today you might spend a lot of time on daily bread, tomorrow might be focused on forgive us our debts. This is simple and complex. Near all Christians know the Lords Prayer in outline form. They can pray the outline any time anywhere. That is simple. At the same time there have been many books written about this prayer outline and some written just on individual parts of the outline. Now that is complex.

Last week we mentioned an attempt to simplify the concept of an effective prayer life. In this case the simplification is made by boiling prayer life down to the basics. The essence of something is its ultimate nature; the properties or attributes by which we can identify something. The essence is the simple nature that makes it unique from other things. It would be informative and helpful to us to look at a prayer life in terms of its essence. When E. M. Bounds, the great writer on prayer, was asked what made up the essence of a meaningful prayer life, he gave the following. "The essentials of a meaningful prayer life are: faith, trust, desire, fervency, persistence, good character and conduct, obedience, and vigilance," We might add an item or two or call an item by another name, but this is a very good list. It would be safe to say, that the man or woman desiring to be effective in prayer could focus on these eight items. If we have all of these in growing measure in our prayer life we will have an effective prayer life. There undoubtedly would be more to learn, including more about these eight, but this would be a good and powerful starting point for an effective prayer life.

When we go off to college we do not know everything we need to learn. Even if we know the focus of our study, the type of degree and the major we will pursue, we do not know all that we must learn to meet the requirements of the pursuit. We are given a list of classes we must take and often there will be some surprises on the list. In each of the classes we learn much more than we first thought when we first heard about the class. So the overall body of knowledge and understanding is far greater than what we first imagine. The same is true about an effective prayer life.

It is a long way from the simple idea of, pray everyday and you have a prayer life to have each of these eight essentials and fully comprehending their nature, skillfully functioning in their use. The

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transformation of a person's life takes time and training. Going from a simple form of a prayer life to a more complex, is a life time of study, practice, training, and work. In the college we have a professor who takes students through the study of each part of the process. In prayer and for an effective prayer life, we have our personal prayer trainer the Holy Spirit.

The University of Warsaw is a great university. They have many students graduate every year, but it of no value to me because I have never longed to go there and I have never applied to be accepted as a student there. The Holy Spirit's school of an effective prayer life is only of interest to a few people. Most people do not know about it or care to be a part of its great studies and training. Fewer still apply to be enrolled as students at this school. And fewer still will apply themselves to the rigorous course of study and compete their training.

How about you? We know that many are called. The Holy Spirit is willing and desirous of having all Christians partake in his school. The door is open to all who are called by the name of Jesus. However, in learning to have an effective prayer life, just like so many things in the Christian life, few choose themselves to be chosen. God calls many, but He does not sit and go, you were called but you can not participate. He is not like that. The chosen are those who are faithful to His call and choose to do what He asks and requires. They are the chosen.

For many are called, but few are chosen. Matthew 22:14 (NKJV)

These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.

Rev. 17:14 (NKJV)

So, how about you? You are called to have an effective prayer life, are you willing to study under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit? Are you willing to work hard to learn his lessons and complete His training? If so, then you can be one of the chosen. You can learn the essentials ingredients of a meaningful prayer life. You can make a difference in prayer for the world and this generation.

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for the opening of doors. In all our ministries, personal and corporate, we have areas that are closed to the Gospel. For some it is a person that we need to speak with, but they have rebuffed our efforts. In another case it is a town, city, or region that is closed to the Gospel. This can be by many factors, government, tradition, errant thinking, and other reason, but we need to see a change so we can share. Pray for the doors to be opened to the Gospel message and its delivery and acceptance.

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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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